

GREENWorks

Ideas for a Cleaner Environment

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Small Water Leaks Could Be Big Problems

Drip. Drip. Drip. The average American household wastes more than 10,000 gallons each year from easy-to-fix water leaks – that’s the amount of water needed to wash 270 loads of laundry. If that doesn’t seem like a lot, consider that across the country, easy-to-fix household leaks can add up to nearly 1 trillion gallons of water lost every year.

That’s why the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) encourages homeowners to find and fix leaks during the annual Fix a Leak Week, which will take place this year March 18 through 24. Sponsored by EPA’s WaterSense program, Fix a Leak Week reminds homeowners of the easy steps they can take to help save water in their community now and for future generations. Fixing household leaks not only saves water but reduces water utility bills – by about 10%. Be for water and start saving today with three simple steps: Check. Twist. Replace.



1. Check

First, check your home for leaks. An easy way to start is to examine your winter water use. If it exceeds 12,000 gallons per month for a family of four, you probably have leaks. Walk around your home with eyes and ears open to find leaks, and don’t forget to check pipes and outdoor spigots. You can also detect silent toilet leaks, a common water-wasting culprit, by adding a few drops of food coloring to the toilet tank and waiting 10 minutes before flushing. If any color appears in the bowl, your toilet has a leak. Visit www.epa.gov/watersense for do-it-yourself repair tips or contact a plumbing professional.

2. Twist

Be sure plumbing fixture connections are sealed tight and give leaking faucets and showerheads a firm *twist* with a wrench. If you can’t stop those drops yourself, contact your favorite plumbing professional. For additional savings, twist a WaterSense labeled aerator onto each bathroom faucet to save water without noticing a difference in flow. Faucet aerators cost a few dollars or less and can save a household more than 500 gallons each year – the amount it takes to shower 180 times!

3. Replace

If you just can’t nip that drip, it may be time to replace the fixture. Look for WaterSense labeled models, which use at least 20% less water and are independently certified to perform as well or better than standard plumbing fixtures. Replacing an old, inefficient showerhead with a WaterSense labeled model will shrink your household’s water footprint by 2,700 gallons annually while still letting you shower with power, thanks to EPA’s efficiency and performance criteria. With less hot water passing through, WaterSense labeled showerheads can also save enough energy to power a television for a year.

For more information and tips for conserving water, check out our [NH Is For Water](#) webpage. And be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) during Fix a Leak week as we share more tips and tricks throughout the week.

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