

# A practical guide to **water consumption** – are you using it or losing it?

...in  
just **5**  
easy  
steps!



All you need to know about your water meter, checking for leaks and how much water you're using (or losing) every day.

YorkshireWater

# If you're using more water than you had expected, it could be that:

- Your plumbing or appliances are faulty
- You've got a leak on an underground pipe
- Your appliances, such as a hose or power shower, are using a lot of water, or
- Other members of your family are using a lot of water

You can turn investigator and follow our guide to checking whether you're using or losing water.



## Step 1

Do you have an internal water meter?

**YES.**  
Go to step 2.

**NO.**  
Go to step 4.

### How to find your water meter

#### Outside

If you don't know where your meter is try near the boundary of your property, such as in your front garden, your drive or on the footpath just outside your home. The meter sits inside a chamber connected to your supply pipe. If you see water in this chamber don't worry, it's likely to be rainwater or groundwater.

#### Inside

If your meter is in your house, it's most likely to be under the kitchen sink, in your garage or near your internal stop tap.

### How to read your water meter

#### Don't forget a pen and paper to wipe the meter face.

- Firstly check that it's safe to get to your meter if it's external.
- Again, if your meter is outside your property, lift the outer plastic or metal lid using a screwdriver and remove or tilt the polystyrene frost cover (if it has one) to view the meter face. The meter may also have an inner plastic lid which will need to be lifted.
- Each meter has a unique meter serial number – check that it matches the serial number on your bill.

- Read the white numbers on the black dials of the meter face (these measure the cubic meters and are the numbers which are used for charging). If you're checking for leaks, or water use on appliances, you'll also need to read the white numbers on the red dials which measure litres. You may notice a circular device on your meter that spins rapidly when water is being used – this is perfectly normal.



For handy audio guides to finding your stop tap, meter and taking meter readings visit [yorkshirewater.com/help](http://yorkshirewater.com/help)

## Check for overnight water usage.

To take this test, ensure none of your appliances will be used during the night. Take a meter reading before going to bed and then again first thing in the morning before any water is used.

If the two readings are different it might be due to a leak. Follow our advice to check whether you have a leak:

### First meter reading (night)

### Second meter reading (morning)

### How to check for leaks

- Turn off all appliances which use water.
- Take a meter reading of all the dials (if the dials or spinner are moving you may have a leak).
- Don't use any water for an hour then take another meter reading.

### First meter reading

### Second meter reading (after 1 hour)

Has your meter reading changed?

**YES.**

Go to **step 3** to check whether you've a leak on internal plumbing.

**NO.**

Repeat the overnight test to make sure you don't have a leak and if not go to **step 5** to see how you can save water and reduce your water bill.

## Check for leaks on internal plumbing? If your reading differs from the first reading you took in step 2 you may have a leak on your internal plumbing. If it's on hidden pipe work you may need the services of a plumber.

Here are a few examples of checks you can make:

### Roof tank overflows – are these overflowing?

Check this by looking outside the property at roof level for water flowing out of a pipe near the roof.

### Taps – are they dripping?

A dripping tap can waste as much as 5,000 litres of water each year.

### Toilet cisterns – are these overflowing?

Check that the overflow pipe has not been connected back into the toilet pan; it could be overflowing and you will not know if this has happened. You can do this by lifting the lid of the cistern and checking to see whether there is water going into the overflow. If you can't lift the lid you can try listening for the water dripping or flowing into the cistern.

### Pipework and appliances – are they leaking?

Check all internal pipework around your home and any appliances that use water as there might be a leak here.

**Did you know?**  
A dripping tap can waste as much as 5,000 litres of water each year – that's enough to fill 63 baths!

Do you think you have a leak on your internal plumbing?

**YES.**

Contact a plumber who will be able to fix any of the problems above.

**NO.**

You're using the volume of water recorded on your water meter and you therefore don't have a leak. Go to **step 5** to see how much water you're using and see how you can save water around your home.

# Check for leaks on your water supply pipe.

If you have an external water meter you can check if you've got a leak on your water supply (see Fig. 1) by turning off your internal stop tap so that no water can reach your appliances (see below for how to find yours). Take a meter reading before going to bed and then again first thing in the morning before any water is used.

If your reading changes you could have a leak on your water supply pipe.

### First meter reading (night)

### Second meter reading (morning)

**With your internal stop tap closed has your meter reading changed?**

**YES.**  
You may have a leak on your water supply pipe, contact us on **0845 1 24 24 24** and follow the advice to the right of this page.

**NO.**  
You don't have a leak on your water supply pipe. Move to the next stage and repeat the overnight test with your stop tap open.

### How to find your internal stop tap

Most internal stop taps are under the kitchen sink, or in a cellar or garage if you have one. If you can't find yours try under the bathroom sink or next to the wall on one of your kitchen units.



Get a free stop tap tag so you know exactly where to find your stop tap in an emergency. Visit [yorkshirewater.com/homekit](http://yorkshirewater.com/homekit) and order yours online.

**With your internal stop tap open has your meter reading changed?**

**YES.**  
You may have an internal leak. Go to **step 3**.

**NO.**  
Repeat the overnight test to make sure you don't have a leak and if not go to **step 5** to see how you can save water and reduce your water bill.

## If you think you have a leak on your water supply pipe; call us on 0845 1 24 24 24, we might be able to help. If you find a problem with your water supply pipe we offer:

- One free repair in 2 years for domestic, owner occupied properties.
- Financial help is available to replace the supply pipe – you can request a free estimate at any time up to 28 days after the repair has been carried out.
- We'll help by contributing 50% of the costs up to a maximum of £300 (providing one of our nominated contractors carries out the work), and you can pay the cost in interest free installments of up to 24 months.
- Please note that if the leak is found to be on internal pipe work, in a cavity wall or under a structure then you will not be eligible for a free repair under this scheme. In addition we reserve the right to withdraw our offer of a free repair at our discretion following an initial evaluation by a contractor.

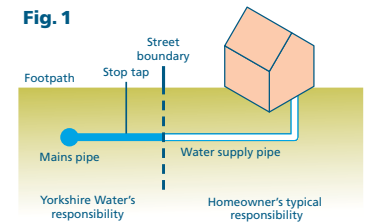
The repair service we provide is not an emergency response. In such cases you may benefit from Water Supply Pipe Cover provided by HomeServe, who can send an engineer to your property quickly.

Call 0800 694 4172 or visit [yorkshirewater.com/cover](http://yorkshirewater.com/cover) and sign up online.

### What is a water supply pipe?

Your underground water supply pipe is the pipe that brings fresh water into your home. If you're the homeowner of the property you're generally responsible for the repair and maintenance of your water supply pipe from the street boundary up to where it enters your home.

Fig. 1



# Check how much water you're using around your home. Now that you've ruled out a leak, you can check how much water you or other people in your household are using.

People are often surprised when they find out how much water they actually use. Buying a dishwasher or installing a new power shower for example can really change the amount of water you use in your home.



**Did you know?**  
A third of all water used in the home is flushed down the toilet – install a flushsaver and save 1 litre each time you flush!  
[yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing](http://yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing)

To find out more ways to save water visit [yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing](http://yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing)

**Use our water usage checklist for a rough guide to how much water your household appliances might use.**

Our water usage checklist might help explain why you're using more water than you expected. Alternatively let us do the number crunching for you by answering a few questions on our website about your weekly consumption.

## Water usage checklist

**Did you know?**  
Turning off the tap when brushing your teeth can save around 10 litres per brush!

Activity	Water used (litres)
<b>Flushing the toilet</b> – Pre 2001 – Post 2001	10 5
<b>Brushing your teeth</b> (with tap running)	6
<b>Taking a shower</b> – Power shower – Normal shower	150 40
<b>Having a bath</b>	80
<b>Using a washing machine</b>	50
<b>Using a dishwasher</b>	14
<b>Washing up (bowl or sink)</b>	12
<b>Using a hose pipe or sprinkler</b> (per hour)	1000

Visit [yorkshirewater.com/water-usage-calculator](http://yorkshirewater.com/water-usage-calculator) and we'll work out how much water you and your household typically use.

# How can you reduce your water usage?

Saving water is a great way of conserving the environment and can even help you save a little money in the process.

We've got bags of helpful tips on our website for saving water around your home.

Visit [yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing](http://yorkshirewater.com/do-one-thing)

**Changes in your water usage can also relate to a number of other things, including:**

### Time of year

You may use more water in the summer, when watering your garden, spring cleaning your home or just taking more showers.

### Visitors

The more people in your home, the higher your water consumption will be. If you've had people staying over, your water usage is likely to be higher.

### Home improvements

If you've had plumbers, builders or gardeners doing any work at your property this too could affect the amount of water you've used.

### Did you know?

A hosepipe uses 1,000 litres per hour – that's enough water to fill 1,600 pint glasses!



NOTES

A little extra space for you to use for notes and meter readings etc.

## How can I contact you?

### Opening hours

Water and waste water enquires  
Mon to Sat 6.30am-10pm, Sun 7.30am-10pm

Billing enquires

Mon to Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 9am-5pm

We're open 24 hours a day for emergency calls.

### Call us

Customer helpline 0845 1 24 24 24

Bogus caller checks on  
identity cards 0800 1 38 78 78

Leakage 0800 57 35 53

### Additional services

Asian language 0845 1 24 24 21

Text telephone/minicom 0845 1 24 24 23

24 hour automated service for  
debit and credit card payments 0845 1 247 247

(please have your customer reference  
number and debit or credit card to hand)

24 hour automated service to  
provide a meter reading 0845 1 247 247

(please have your customer reference  
number and meter reading to hand)

Calls may be recorded and monitored for training and quality purposes.

**Fax** 01274 372 800

**Website** [yorkshirewater.com](http://yorkshirewater.com)

**Or write to us** Yorkshire Water  
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Bradford BD3 7YD

**yorkshirewater.com**

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