



Let's Save Together
waterwise
City of Santa Barbara

Is Your Toilet Running? Catch it!

Toilets are the biggest culprit for leaks inside the house and they often leak silently. It's estimated that 20 percent of all toilets leak, and each toilet can leak 200 gallons or more per day! If your toilet has been steadily leaking for years, you may not notice the increase on your water bill. It is best to check your toilets now – it only takes 10 minutes! Below are the three most common toilet leaks, two of which are due to faulty flappers. It is imperative that the rubber flapper in your toilet is the correct flapper for your toilet brand and model.

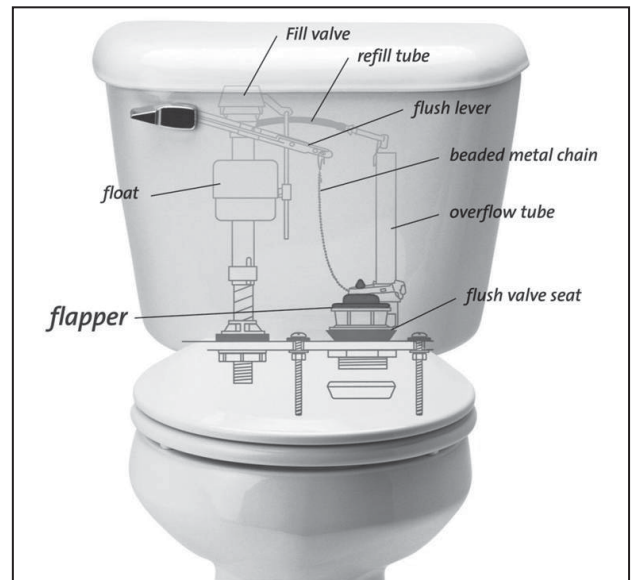
Flapper Leaks:

1. Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank or pick up free dye tablets from the Water Efficiency display counter at 630 Garden St.
2. Wait 10 minutes without flushing.
3. If you see color appear in the toilet bowl, your rubber flapper is leaking and needs to be replaced with the correct flapper for your brand and model of toilet.
4. Replace the flapper and re-test to make sure the new flapper is working properly.

Overflow Tube:

Many toilets in Santa Barbara leak overnight when the water pressure rises. The water level in the toilet tank can rise above the overflow tube and run down the tube silently.

1. Remove your tank lid and observe the water level. The water level should be one full inch below the top of the overflow tube. If it is higher, it most likely runs at night. You may sometimes see water lines in the tank where the water has risen.
2. Adjust the water level down depending on your toilet type. First, give the toilet a half-flush to empty part of the tank and make adjustments easier.
 - If you have a floating ball: adjust the screw on the top of the fill valve mechanism (turn clockwise) to lower the ball.
 - If you have a floating cylinder: adjust the "V" shaped clip on the stiff wire link (slide it down) to lower the cylinder.
3. Flush (full flush) again once adjusted to see where the water level naturally rises.
4. The following day, check the water level. Adjust as needed.



Internal diagram of toilet. Photo source: toiletflapper.org

Excessive Flush Volume:

Not all universal flappers are universal, and a mismatched flapper can result in gallons of undetected water waste per flush. To check this, you will need to look inside the tank.

1. Take off the tank lid and then watch what happens when you flush the toilet.
2. The flapper should open to drain most of the water in the tank, and then close after a few seconds to fill back up. When the flapper closes, there should be about 2 inches of water remaining in the tank before it starts to refill.
3. If your flapper stays open longer than a few seconds, or drains the tank completely on each flush, you may have a mismatched or faulty flapper.
4. Replace the old flapper with the flapper that is designed for the brand and model of your toilet.

For more information on toilet leaks and how to repair them, please visit SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterWise. The City's Water Conservation Program is here to help everyone save water with a free water checkup. Call 564-5460 for more information. Let's save together!

