

# City of Chino Hills RESIDENTIAL Water Guide



## INDOOR



# Welcome

This publication is produced by the City of Chino Hills. We feel it is important to encourage responsible water use. The information contained within this booklet will help you reduce your water use and your water bill.

Our staff is ready to help with any questions you may have regarding your water use, leaks, water quality and your monthly bill. A list of the most frequently called numbers appears below.

City of Chino Hills  
14000 City Center Drive

**Web site:** [www.chinohills.org](http://www.chinohills.org)

**Water Billing:** (909) 364-2660

**Water Quality:** (909) 364-2808

**Water Conservation:** (909) 364-2804

**After-hours Emergency:** (909) 364-2860

*Special thanks to Truckee Meadows Water Authority for design usage.*

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## Using Water Wisely Is Easy and Makes Sense

Thank you for your interest in using water wisely in the City of Chino Hills. This handbook is a guide to help you make the best use of your water with minimal effort. It provides information on efficient ways to use water both inside and outside your home, as well as leak detection and repairs.

If you keep turning these blue pages, you will find all the indoor water tips. The gray pages of the center section provide general information on our water resources, your water bill and meter reading. Flip this book over to the green pages to find all the outdoor water tips.

We hope this guide book answers most of your water questions. For expert lawn and garden information, visit any of these Web sites:

Chino Basin Water Conservation District  
[www.cbwcd.org](http://www.cbwcd.org)

Metropolitan Water District  
[www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com)

Inland Empire Utilities Agency  
[www.ieua.org](http://www.ieua.org)

# Quick Check on Indoor Water Use



Read these tips to discover how your water use practices measure up. More information on each tip can be found on the pages following these tips.

- 1. I have checked my toilet for leaks.** A leak in your toilet may be wasting more than 100 gallons of water a day. To check for a leak, put food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the coloring begins to appear in the bowl, you have a leak. Replace the flapper valve, adjust or replace the flush valve, or call a plumber. For details, see pages 10 and 11.
- 2. I never use my toilet as a wastebasket.** Every time you flush facial tissue or other small bits of trash down the toilet you waste 1.6 to 7 gallons of water, depending on the size of your toilet. For details, see page 5.
- 3. I take shorter showers.** Long, hot showers waste 2.5 to 8 gallons every unneeded minute. Limit your showers to the time it takes to soap up, wash and rinse, and save on your hot water heating cost, too. For details, see page 6.
- 4. I installed water-saving shower heads or flow-restrictors.** Two and one-half gallons per minute is sufficient for a refreshing shower. Your local hardware or plumbing supply store stocks inexpensive water-efficient shower heads you can install easily. A slightly more expensive head may provide a higher quality flow, yet saves water. For details, see page 6.
- 5. I turn off the water after wetting my toothbrush.** After you have wet your toothbrush and filled a glass for rinsing your mouth, turn off the tap water.



Quick Check on Indoor Water Use cont.

- 6. I rinse my razor in a partially-filled sink.** Before shaving, partially fill the sink with warm water. This will rinse the blade just as well and use less water than letting the water run.
- 7. I have checked pipes and faucets for leaks.** Even the smallest drip from a worn washer can waste 50 gallons of water or more per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons per day.
- 8. I use my automatic dishwasher for full loads only.** Older dishwashers may use up to 25 gallons of water for each load. See page 7 for details.
- 9. If I wash dishes by hand, I don't leave the water running for rinsing.** If you have a double sink, fill one with soapy water and one with rinse water. If you have only one sink, gather all the washed dishes in the dish rack then rinse them in a sink of clean water or with an inexpensive spray device.
- 10. I don't let the water run while I clean my vegetables.** Putting a stopper in the sink and filling it with clean water does just as well.
- 11. I keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator.** This ends the wasteful practice of running tap water to cool it off for drinking.
- 12. I use my clothes washer for full loads only and select the correct water-level setting.** Your washer may use 30 to 35 gallons of water in a full-load cycle. That's a lot of water for three t-shirts. See page 7 for details.

# Indoor Water Use Tips



Whether you are a homeowner or renter, you can use less water indoors in two ways:

- making small changes in habits and lifestyle.
- installing devices that improve efficient water use.



## BATHROOM

**Faucet** — The faucet is the most frequently used fixture in the bathroom. It flows at a rate of up to 3 gallons per minute. Instead of letting the water run, turn it off or fill the basin.

By installing a faucet aerator with flow restrictor, you can reduce the amount of water used per minute without any noticeable flow reduction.



**Toilet** — Your toilet can use more water than any other item in your home. Some habit changes and helpful technology can hold water use in check.

If you have a habit of using your toilet to get rid of bits and pieces by flushing things like cigarette butts, gum wrappers, tissues, secret documents, insects and other small items, **STOP**. Each time you flush, you waste 1.6 to 7 gallons of water. Throw these items in the trash.

Many older toilets use more water than necessary for an effective flush. By simply inserting a displacement device into your toilet tank, you save up to a gallon or more per flush with no noticeable difference. Toilet dams, displacement bags and other flush-limiting gadgets are available at most hardware or plumbing supply stores and are inexpensive and easy to install.

### Indoor Water Use Tips cont.

A toilet leak can silently waste hundreds of gallons of water each day. If you suspect you have a toilet leak, place several drops of food coloring in your toilet tank. **DO NOT FLUSH!** Wait 10 to 15 minutes, then check your toilet bowl. If any color has appeared in the bowl, you have a leak. Refer to page 10.



**Shower** — The shower accounts for a great amount of water used indoors. Many showers flow from 5 to 8 gallons per minute. That means an 8-minute shower can use from 40 to 64 gallons of water.

One very good way to manage water use is to simply cut down on the length of your shower. You'll find five minutes is more than enough time to take a shower.

In addition to cutting the length of your showers you can reduce the rate at which the shower flows. By installing a low-flow shower head, you can lower water use from 8 to 2.5 gallons per minute while maintaining a full flow.

Another way to control water use while showering is to install a device that lets you turn off the water while you lather and shampoo and restart it by using a switch on the shower head. This avoids having to readjust the temperature when using the faucet controls.



#### KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY

**Faucet** — Much of the water used in the kitchen is in some way related to food preparation: washing vegetables, cooking food, drinking water and washing dishes. Control the amount of water used to perform these activities by following a few helpful hints.





- Install a faucet aerator with a flow restrictor to cut faucet water use in half.
- Fill the basin with water instead of letting the water run when washing dishes or vegetables.
- Use the garbage disposal only when necessary.



**Dishwasher** — Most newer model dishwashers are just as water efficient as washing dishes by hand, but only when you wash a full load. Wait until you have a full load or use the water-level setting that allows you to wash a smaller load with less water.

Be sure when purchasing a new dishwasher that it is water efficient. It may cost the same or slightly more than a traditional model, but the savings in water and energy benefit you in the long run.



**Laundry** — Older washing machines may use 30 to 35 gallons per load. You can limit the amount of water used by following these simple steps.

- Wash full loads or choose the right water-level setting on your washer, if it has one. Some loads take less water than others. By lowering the water level, you can save water and energy and still get your clothes clean.
- When shopping for a new washer, look for one that is water and energy efficient.

## Testing for Leaks



Leaks are easier to detect if you have a water meter. To prevent any leaks from going undetected, follow these steps every six months:

1. Turn off ALL water-using devices (taps, dishwasher, sprinklers, evaporative cooler, automatic ice maker, etc.).
2. Locate your water meter and write down the number currently showing on your meter. (For instructions on reading your meter, see gray section.)
3. Check the flow indicator on water meter.
  - a. If flow indicator is not showing water flow, the system has integrity with no water leaks.
  - b. If flow indicator is showing movement, the system has a leak. Continue to How to Isolate Leaks.

### How to Isolate Leaks

1. Turn off all domestic (indoor) use water.
2. Check the flow indicator on water meter.
  - a. If flow indicator is not showing water flow, the system has integrity with no water leaks.
  - b. If flow indicator is showing movement, the system has a leak. Continue to step #3.
3. Turn off main irrigation valve.
  - a. If flow indicator is not showing usage, water usage was in the irrigation system.
  - b. If flow indicator is showing usage, then usage may be on the domestic side of service.



4. Turn off domestic water supply to the home (located outside next to building).
  - a. If flow indicator stops, usage is on the domestic side of the service. Continue to step #5.
  - b. If indicator still shows usage, leakage is in the area between the water meter, irrigation main shut-off valve, and the house shut-off valve.
5. Turn on domestic water supply at the home. Check the following locations for water usage.
  - a. Toilets (flapper valves, float arm adjustments, and inlet float valve assembly). To check flapper valves use the following methods:
    - (1) Place food coloring in tank and wait approximately 15 minutes. If colored water appears in the bowl, the flapper is leaking.
    - (2) Turn off the water supply valve for 20 minutes, then turn back on. If tank has lost water and water starts to run, water is leaking by the flapper valve.
  - b. Check inside and outside faucets for leaks.
  - c. Check water-using appliances for leaks; i.e., water heater, washing machine and ice maker.
6. After leaks have been repaired, check all valves for correct “on” positions.
7. Customer may need to obtain services of landscapers, plumbers or leak detection services to assist with finding and repairing water leaks.

To learn how to fix a leaky toilet or faucet, turn to pages 10 and 12 in the Indoor section of this guide. Or, contact a licensed plumber.

## Repairing Leaks



While some leaks — such as a dripping faucet — are easy to see, many are hidden and can waste thousands of gallons of water each year. A leaky toilet is one of the biggest water wasters found inside the home.



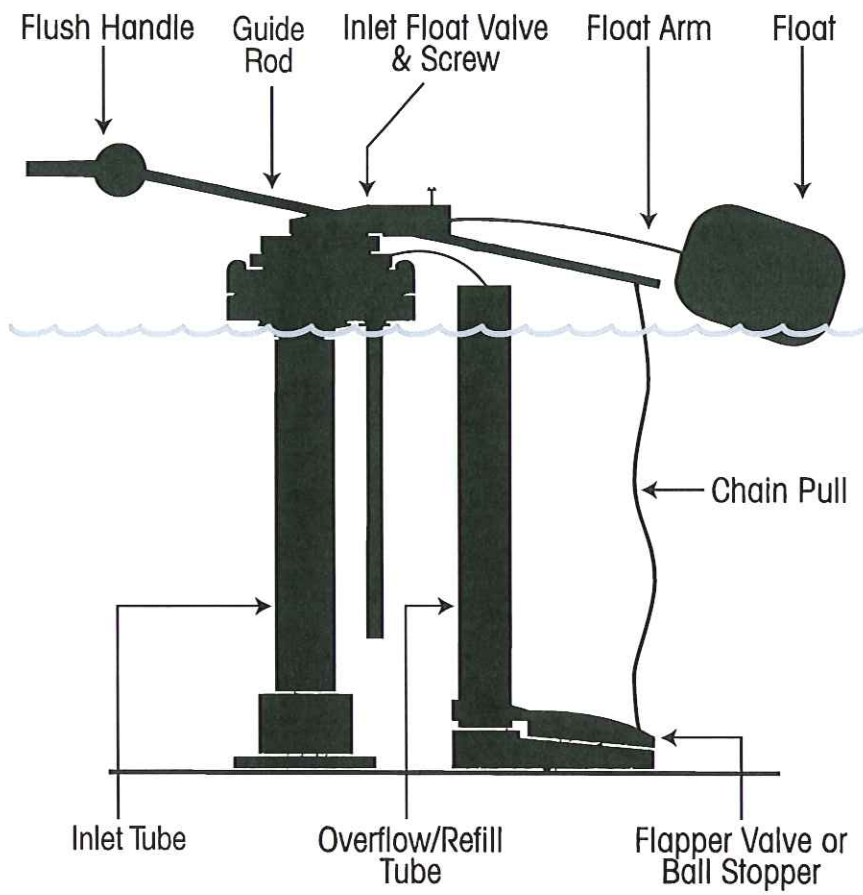
**Repairing a Toilet Leak** — These repair tips are designed for easy do-it-yourself use. However, if you feel unsure about your ability to perform any of these steps, contact a licensed plumber.

1. Check the float arm; lift it up. If the water stops running then you've found the problem. Adjust the screws or bolts to the inlet float valve until the water stops flowing.
2. If the water continues to run, turn off the water supply valve to the tank. Flush the toilet to drain out the water. Examine the inlet float valve by removing the two screws or bolts and lifting the top of the valve housing out. (See the diagram on page 11). If it is even slightly damaged or worn, replace it.
3. If the toilet continues to run, examine the flapper valve or ball stopper. It should fit flush in its seat. If not, look at the lever and guide rods that operate the flapper valve or ball stopper. If they are crooked, gently straighten them.

For toilets with a chain pull attached to the flapper valve, make sure the chain is slack when the valve is seated to ensure a snug fit. If the ball or flapper valve is worn out, replace it. Check for corrosion or deposits on the flapper valve or ball stopper. Use steel wool to remove build up so the stopper sets properly in the seat.



### TOILET DIAGRAM



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## Repairing Leaks cont.



4. Inspect the small refill tube that connects the fill valve to the refill-overflow tube to be sure the smaller tube ends slightly above the standing water level of the completely filled tank. If necessary, gently pull the small tube upward until its end is correctly placed.



**Repairing a Faucet Leak** — While these tips are designed for easy do-it-yourself use, if you feel unsure about your ability to perform any of these steps, contact a licensed plumber.

1. Be sure to wrap your wrench with masking or duct tape to prevent scratching your fixture.
2. Shut off the cold and hot water supply valves below the sink.
3. Faucet handles usually have a plastic decorative button that conceals a screw. Gently pop off the plastic button using a screwdriver. Unscrew the screw to allow the handle to be removed. Grip the large hexagonal nut and unscrew it to reveal the stem. If your faucet does not have decorative handles, simply unscrew the exposed nut.
4. With the hexagonal nut loose, pull out the stem.
5. At the bottom of the stem, you will see a rubber washer held in place by a screw. Remove the screw and replace the washer with one of the same size, then reassemble.
6. If the faucet leaks only when the faucet is on, follow steps 1-3, then replace the packing (the pliable material beneath the hexagonal nut).



7. Coat the threads of the stem with petroleum jelly.
8. Reassemble faucet and turn the water supply valves back on. Your faucet may not be identical to those described here. Single-lever and washerless faucets vary from brand to brand. Usually you can purchase a repair kit for your model. Contact a licensed plumber if you are not certain these instructions apply to your faucet.

Last page of **Indoor Guide**.  
Please flip book over for **Outdoor Guide**  
and **General Information**.