Use Water Wisely — Control Water Costs

As your drinking water provider, we work to control costs by eliminating leaks in the treatment and distribution systems. Leaks inside homes and businesses are the responsibility of the property owner.

Leaks waste large amounts of water. A toilet that “keeps running” or a dripping faucet can waste hundreds of gallons and dollars in a short time. Sewer charges are based on the amount of water that passes through your water meter, whether you used the water or it leaked and was wasted. A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons a day down the sewer. At that rate, it would cost you $102.72 each quarter (water charge $40.32 + MMSD charge $34.56 + Milwaukee city sewer charge $27.84 = $102.72), or $410.88 a year.

Check for leaks throughout your home at least once every season of the year and control your water costs by fixing leaks. Check your Municipal Services Bill each quarter for water use and compare it to past bills. Find your water use history at www.milwaukee.gov/water, Account Information. Large fluctuations in use can indicate leaks. Expect increased water use during warm weather months if you water your lawn and garden, fill a pool, or frequently wash your car. Water use is measured in units called Ccf, which stands for 100 cubic feet. One Ccf of water equals 748 gallons of water. The typical person in Milwaukee uses 10 Ccf of water per quarter. Multiply 10 by the number of people in your household to give you the number of Ccf for water used in one quarter (for example, 4 people x 10 = 40 Ccf). If you are using considerably much more than 10 Ccf per person per quarter, you may have water leaks.

Contact or visit our Customer Service Center to receive a worksheet and toilet leak detection dye packet. Most leaks are easy to repair with parts from a hardware store. Or, call a professional plumber for help. Learn more about finding and fixing leaks at www.milwaukee.gov/water/usewaterwisely

Milwaukee Water Works Drinking Water Treatment Process

1. **Ozone Disinfection**  
   Ozone gas is bubbled through the incoming lake water. Ozone destroys disease-causing microorganisms including *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*, controls taste and odor, and reduces the formation of chlorinated disinfection byproducts.

2. **Coagulation and Flocculation**  
   Aluminum sulfate is added to the water to neutralize the charge on microscopic particles in the water. The water is then gently mixed to encourage the suspended particles to stick together to form floc.

3. **Sedimentation**  
   Sedimentation is the process in which the floc settles out and is removed from the water.

4. **Chlorine Disinfection**  
   After filtration, chlorine is added as a secondary disinfectant. This provides extra protection from potentially harmful microorganisms.

5. **Fluoridation**  
   Fluoride, when administered at low levels, is proven to help prevent tooth decay.

6. **Clearwell Storage**  
   Treated water is stored in deep underground tanks and pumped as needed through the distribution system.

7. **Biologically Active Filtration**  
   The water is slowly filtered through 24" of anthracite coal and 12" of crushed sand to remove very small particles.

8. **Corrosion Control**  
   A phosphorous compound is added to help control corrosion of pipes. This helps prevent lead and copper from leaching from plumbing into the water.

9. **Chloramine Protection**  
   Ammonia changes the chlorine to chloramine, a disinfectant that maintains bacteriological protection in the distribution system.

The Milwaukee Water Works is a member of the American Water Works Association, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, the Water Research Foundation, and the Wisconsin Water Association.