

Checklist for Spotting Water Waste

Here are some of the places leaks may be hiding in your facility. Some leaks require a simple fix like tightening a loose connection, but other equipment malfunctions may require a licensed plumber or facility maintenance professional. Take a quick inventory of potential water waste in your facility:

Throughout the facility:

- Check for pooling water, rust, or other signs of leakage under pipe connections and near floor drains. Look for signs of moisture or mold on your walls, ceilings, or floors.
- Routinely check equipment cooling water lines for leaks and corrosion.
- Inspect shutoff valves and sensors to ensure they stop continuously running water.
- Encourage employees to report leaks and broken/loose parts.

In the mechanical spaces:

- Equipment with single-pass cooling: Check system specifications to use the minimum water flow rate required for cooling. Regularly check solenoid valves to make sure water is only flowing when needed.
- Boiler and steam systems: Regularly check steam traps and steam and hot water lines for leaks.
- Cooling towers: Read the conductivity meter and the make-up and blowdown flow meters regularly and log readings. Check the make-up and blowdown valves to make sure they cut off the flow of water cleanly.

In the kitchen:

- All equipment: Shut down or use standby mode for all continuous flow equipment between uses. Inspect shutoff valves to ensure they are working properly.
- Pre-rinse spray valves: Clean openings as needed for smooth spray. Train employees to use always-on clamps only when necessary.
- Dishwashers: Manual fill valves should close completely after the wash tank is full. Inspect and repair valves and rinse nozzles.
- Steam equipment: Inspect and replace gaskets and tighten hinges on doors to retain heat or steam.
- Food disposal systems: Turn off water to disposals during idle periods. Train users to manually scrape as much food waste as possible first.

In the restroom:

- Automatic sensors: Check and adjust sensors regularly to avoid double flushing or continuously running water.
- Toilets and Urinals: Listen for running water and time the flush cycle. Regularly inspect and replace worn diaphragm or piston valves. Test tank-type toilets for worn flappers and other leaks with food coloring.
- Faucets: Check for drips and verify that faucet aerators are still properly installed.
- Showerheads: Look for drips or stray sprays, signs of scale buildup or other malfunctions restricting flow.

Outdoors:

- Visually inspect the landscape for water pooling or puddling to prevent damage to hardscapes and overwatering plants.
- Irrigation systems: Repair broken sprinkler heads and nozzles spraying in the wrong direction. Consult an irrigation auditor certified by a WaterSense labeled program to improve system efficiency.
- Pools and Spas: Check water levels. A loss of more than 2" per week in the water level may mean a leak.

Find more information about water-efficient best practices, tools, and case studies on the WaterSense website
<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/commercial-buildings>.

Remember to look for the WaterSense label when purchasing plumbing products. WaterSense labeled products are independently certified to use at least 20 percent less water and perform as well or better than standard models.

Fixing leaks at your workplace is important, but so is fixing leaks in your household. For more information on fixing leaks wherever they are, visit
<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week>.

[epa.gov/watersense](https://www.epa.gov/watersense)

