



LEAKS

A little leak loses lots! Just a slow drip can add up to 15 or 20 gallons a day, while a 1/16-inch faucet leak wastes 100 gallons in 24 hours!

Most leaks, aside from toilets, are in faucets and are most commonly caused by worn washers. Check all the faucets in the house once or twice a year. If any of them drip after you've turned them off firmly, turn off the supply line, take the faucet apart and replace the washer. Usually it's not hard, although some faucet designs do present a challenge. Any good household do-it-yourself book offers easy-to-understand advice if you need it.



It's important to get the size right. The washer has to fit inside a sort of cup on the valve stem and spread out to the edges when it's screwed down. If the drip is still there when you're done, you may have something else wrong. Get in touch with a plumber.

If the leak is in one of those faucets with a single lever or "joystick" to control both hot and cold, the disassembly and repair is still relatively simple, but entirely different from the valve stem-and-washer type. A good hardware or plumbing supply store will have necessary replacement parts and can probably direct you to a good instruction source, too, if you need it.