The find-a-leak worksheet

Start with a quick walk-through. Allow two hours for the optional meter check.

LOOK, LISTEN, THEN WRITE IT DOWN

- [ ] Check accessible areas under sinks, around toilets and near appliance hoses for drips, dampness or staining. Do not move heavy appliances or open walls.
- [ ] Listen for a toilet that refills when no one has flushed. Record where and when it happens.
- [ ] For a standard tank toilet, add a few drops of food coloring to the tank. Wait 10 minutes without flushing. Color in the bowl indicates a leak. Flush immediately afterward to help avoid staining.

OPTIONAL: A NO-USE METER CHECK

- [ ] If your meter is safely accessible and serves only your home, record its reading. Arrange a two-hour period with no water use, including irrigation and automatic appliances.
- [ ] Read it again. A change may indicate a leak or an overlooked water use. Ask your utility or plumber to help interpret the result; a shared meter cannot isolate your unit.

These checks find clues, not every hidden leak. Active leaking, new dampness or an unexplained usage increase deserves prompt attention.

First meter reading / time

Second meter reading / time

Location, dye-test result and next step

Source: epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week