Did You Know

Take the 10 Minute Water Leak Challenge
DETECT AND CHASE DOWN LEAKS

Did You Know that easy-to-fix water leaks account for more than one trillion gallons of water wasted each year in U.S. homes? In fact, the average household leaks more than 10,000 gallons of water per year, or the amount of water it takes to wash 270 loads of laundry, and could be costing you an extra 10 percent on your water bills.

In just 10 minutes, you can search your home for leaks and crack down on water waste. Many common household leaks are quick to find and easy to fix. Worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and leaking showerheads all are easily correctable and can save on your utility bill expenses and water in our community.

So put on your detective hat, lace up your running shoes, and take this 10-minute challenge to detect and chase down leaks!

Checklist for Chasing Down Leaks

Here are some of the places leaks may be hiding in your home.

Some leaks require a simple fix—a worn toilet flapper, loose pipe connection, or showerhead with stray spray. But you may want to consult a licensed plumber to stop your running toilet, broken sprinklers, water heater drips, or malfunctioning water supply lines. Take a quick inventory of clues to water waste:

IN THE BATHROOM

☐ Toilets: Listen for running water. Put a few drops of food coloring into the tank at the back of your toilet and let it sit for 10 minutes. If color shows up in the bowl, you have a leak.

☐ Faucets: Listen for drips and turn on the tap to check for water going the wrong direction.

☐ Showerheads: Turn on and look for drips or stray sprays that can be stopped with tape.

☐ In the tub: Turn on the tub, then divert the water to the shower and see if there’s still a lot of water coming from the tub; that could mean the tub spout diverter needs replacing.

☐ Under the sink: Check for pooling water under pipes and rust around joints and edges.

IN THE KITCHEN

☐ Faucet: Listen for drips and tighten aerators or replace fixtures if necessary.

☐ Sprayer: Check to make sure water is spraying smoothly and clean openings as needed.

Rain Barrels For Sale

For centuries, rainwater has been collected as a way for people and communities to meet their water needs. Today, this simple technology is still in use—most often for controlling stormwater runoff and conserving water.

Collecting rainwater is an easy way to conserve water—and save money on your water bill. During the drier season, when water consumption often doubles, using collected rainwater can reduce the strain on Skagit PUD’s water supply and keep more water available for fish and wildlife. Rainwater is also naturally “soft” and free of minerals and chemicals, making it ideal for plants and lawns.

Skagit PUD sells ready to install 55-gallon rain barrels for just $60 plus tax. If you would like more information about Skagit PUD’s low-cost rain barrel program, please visit our website at SkagitPUD.org or call (360) 424-7104.

How much water can you collect with a rain barrel? If a quarter inch of rain falls, and 1,000 square feet of your roof drains into your rain barrel(s), you could collect 150 gallons of water.

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Printed on 30% post-consumer waste fiber.
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**IN THE KITCHEN**

☐ **Under the sink:** Check for pooling water under pipes and rust around joints and edges.

☐ **Appliances:** Check for pooling water underneath dishwashers and refrigerators with ice makers, which could indicate a supply line leak.

**IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM OR UTILITY ROOM**

☐ **Under the sink:** Check for pooling water under pipe connections.

☐ **Clothes washer:** Check for pooling water, which could indicate a supply line leak.

**IN THE BASEMENT, UTILITY ROOM OR GARAGE**

☐ **Water heater:** Check beneath the tank for pooling water, rust, or other signs of leakage.

**DON’T FORGET TO GO OUTSIDE**

☐ **At the spigot:** Ensure tight connections with the hose and see if the hose washer needs replacing.

☐ **In-ground irrigation system:** Check for broken sprinklers or nozzles spraying in the wrong direction.

**THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE**

Check for signs of moisture or mold on your walls, ceilings, or floors. This could indicate that a pipe is wreaking havoc behind the scenes and requires the attention of a professional.

If any of your fixtures needs replacing, 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.

**Want to learn more?**

To make it easy to try a water and energy-saving showerhead, Skagit PUD offers water efficiency kits that contain a WaterSense multi-mode massage showerhead and ultra-efficient faucet aerators for just $11. The kits can be purchased at our main office. Visit [SkagitPUD.org](http://SkagitPUD.org) for more information about WaterSense labeled products.

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**PUD Protects Source Water in Cultus Mountain Watershed**

**FOR YEARS, SKAGIT PUD looked for a way to improve water quality protection for its source water. The PUD provides drinking water to over 65,000 people in Skagit County, and serves three cities as well as suburban and rural areas. Thanks in part to a Source Water Protection grant from the Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water, the PUD recently was able to purchase and protect 250 acres of critical watershed area in perpetuity for its customers.**

The Gilligan Creek area of the Cultus Mountain Watershed provides 45 percent of the PUD’s source water for its Judy Reservoir Water System. Until recently, all of the property around Gilligan Creek was owned by timber companies.

In 2012, the PUD went through a comprehensive updating of its watershed control program and determined that finding a way to protect the water quality of this stream was critical to the success of the Judy System. Recent increases in the rates of logging and road construction led to the concept that buying land near the area where water is withdrawn for the water system would work wonders to protect the long-term success of the Judy System.

Over the next several years, PUD staff began a search for partners and funding sources for this idea. “This was no easy feat, as there is great competition for the limited funding available from state and federal agencies,” explained Engineering Supervisor Bill Trueman who headed the project.

One of the first partners to be discovered was the Department of Health Office of Drinking Water. DOH provided a Source Water Protection grant to allow for an appraisal of the property early in the process. Knowing the approximate value of the property helped staff begin discussing the property purchase with the Skagit PUD board of commissioners. Local conservation groups were also brought into the conversation, and representatives of Skagit Land Trust brought up ideas for other funding sources.

A well-established relationship with the landowner helped the PUD start the complicated negotiations to buy the property in the spring of 2017. A $1.5 million deal was struck by September, and the property became the ownership of Skagit PUD in December.

“After five years of hard work, this 250-acre forest at Gilligan Creek will be used to protect the quality of drinking water for Skagit PUD’s customers for many years to come,” Trueman said.