

# Where does your water go?

A practical guide to tracking down excess water usage.

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Dŵr Cymru  
Welsh Water

[www.dwrcymru.com](http://www.dwrcymru.com)

PRE0061

## Introduction

We have sent you this booklet to help you understand and to find out why you may be using more water than expected. This could be due to:

- appliances that use a lot of water e.g. power showers and hosepipes
- faulty plumbing or appliances on your pipework
- other household members using more water than you might assume
- possible leakage
- previously estimated bills
- building/renovation work.

### Did you know?

- You are responsible for maintaining the pipe work that runs from the boundary of the highway in which our main is laid into your home or premises, regardless of the location of the meter
- Your bill is based on cubic metres of water supplied and 1 cubic metre equals 1,000 litres (220 gallons)
- Our meters are manufactured and tested to a British Standard specification (BS 5728/1 and ISO 4064/1)
- No household meter in England or Wales that has been tested to date has failed for over recording consumption. We will independently test them only if you agree to pay
- We strongly recommend that you consider alternative approaches first.

We want to help our customers find an answer to their query but any advice and help given is in good faith and customers are reminded that the pipework and plumbing

on their property is their responsibility. Alternative approaches are set out on the following pages.

### What to do now to investigate your water usage

We recommend that you follow the 7 steps listed in this booklet. If you have already carried out an overnight test, please go straight to step 6. If you are a household customer and you are unable to read or check your meter because of a disability and you live alone or there is no one to help you please contact us on **0800 052 0140**.

### Step 1 - Where to locate your stop tap

Check your internal stop tap is working. It's often located under the kitchen sink or in a connecting garage. It is important that your stop tap is operable in order to complete all checks on your supply and to be able to shut off your mains water in an emergency (if it is not, please call a plumber). **You must be able to fully close your internal stop tap.**

### Step 2 - Where to find your water meter

You will normally find your meter in a boundary box to the front of the property, at the boundary or in the pavement. In some cases, particularly in rural areas, the meter may be some distance from your property. If it is safe to do so you can access the external meter by, carefully lifting the lid of the boundary box, removing the polystyrene frost cover (if necessary) and pulling up the inner meter lid, if fitted, to view the meter face. The meter will be sitting inside a chamber and is connected to your water supply pipe at the bottom of this chamber. Don't worry if you see some water in the chamber when you read the meter, as this is likely to be ground water.

However, if you do find water in the chamber after a prolonged dry spell, and your water usage is high, it may be the sign of a leak and may have to be checked.

In some cases the meter is inside the property at the main internal stop tap (e.g. in the kitchen or downstairs toilet).

Each water meter has its own unique serial number, which is also shown on your bill. **Please ensure you have located the correct meter.**

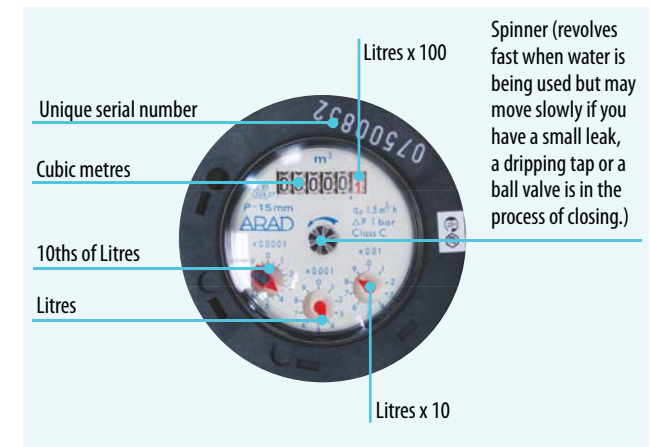
### Step 3 - Reading your water meter

Look at the meter face (some may be under a hinged cover) and read the white on black or black on white numbers as they record the

cubic metres of water used. Only these numbers are used to bill you.

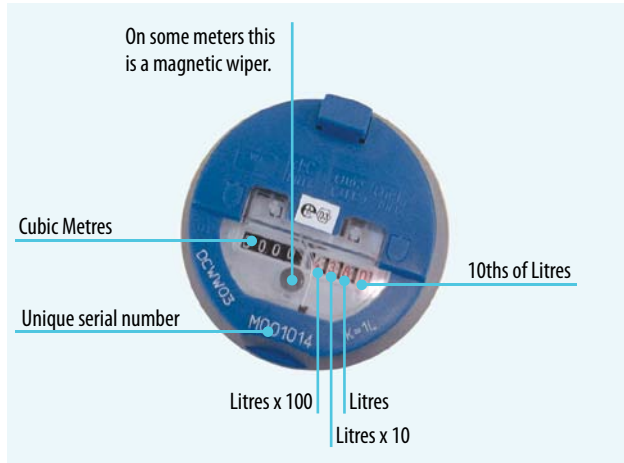
If carrying out the tests in Step 4 and 5 or checking the water use of individual appliances in Step 6, you will also need to read the white dials or numbers on red (sometimes red on white), which measure litres. Write these numbers down.

The red dials or numbers on the meter will move rapidly when water is being used. Please note that there are normally three or four red



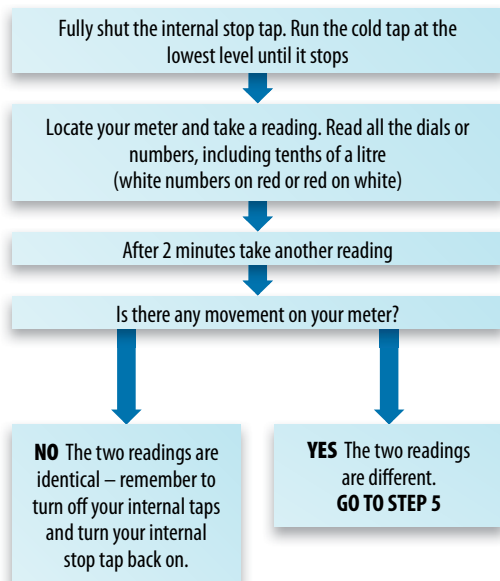
dials or numbers although sometimes the fourth one is located separately on the meter face. This dial or number measures tenths of a litre.

A 'spinner' may also be found on the meter face. This device is helpful in conducting leakage tests.

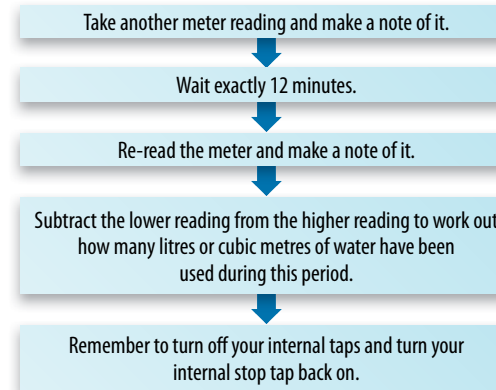


#### Step 4 - Testing your supply pipe

How to carry out an initial test on your water supply pipe, between your meter and internal stop tap.



#### Step 5 - Quantifying usage

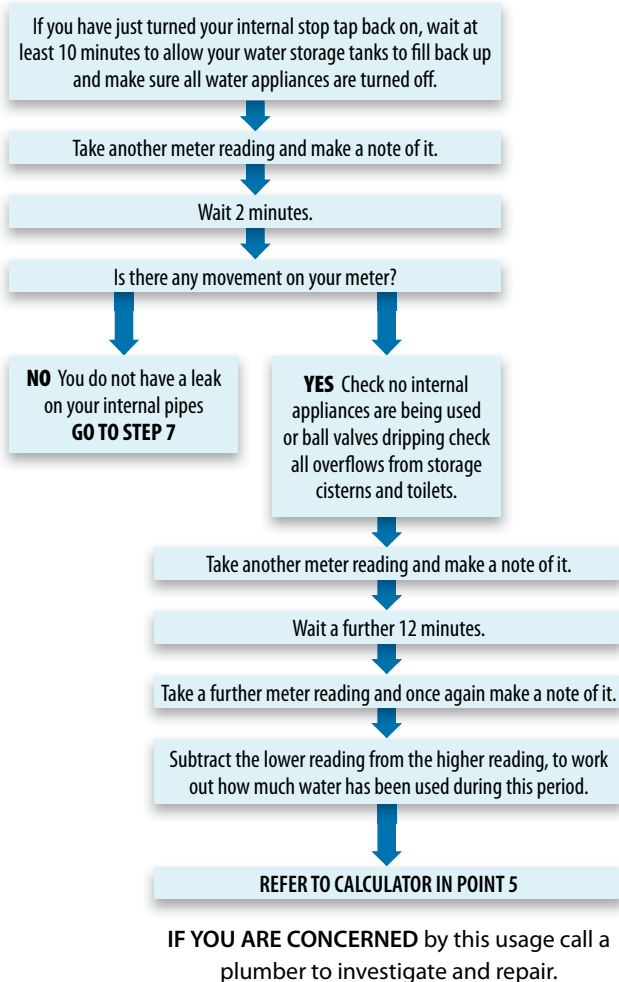


#### Converting the 12 minute recorded use into an annual charge

| Volume Recorded in 12 minutes | Litres | Equivalent Annual Usage<br>m <sup>3</sup> | Water Charge      | Sewerage Charge | Combined Charge |
|-------------------------------|--------|---|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                               |        |   | (indicative cost) |                 |                 |
| 10th of a litre               | 0.10   | 4.4                                       | £6                | £6              | £12             |
| 2 10th's of a litre           | 0.20   | 8.8                                       | £11               | £12             | £24             |
| 3 10th's of a litre           | 0.30   | 13.1                                      | £17               | £18             | £36             |
| 4 10th's of a litre           | 0.40   | 17.5                                      | £23               | £25             | £48             |
| 5 10th's of a litre           | 0.50   | 21.9                                      | £29               | £31             | £59             |
| 6 10th's of a litre           | 0.60   | 26.3                                      | £34               | £37             | £71             |
| 7 10th's of a litre           | 0.70   | 30.7                                      | £40               | £43             | £83             |
| 8 10th's of a litre           | 0.80   | 35.0                                      | £46               | £49             | £95             |
| 9 10th's of a litre           | 0.90   | 39.4                                      | £52               | £55             | £107            |
| 1 litre                       | 1.00   | 43.8                                      | £57               | £62             | £119            |

If your readings are different and you are concerned please contact a Plumber to investigate further.

## Step 6 - Testing the internal plumbing



## Step 7 - Consider how much water each appliance uses

Look at how much water can be used by the appliances listed. Use your meter to measure your own usage and find out why you may be using more water than you expected. We have included a water audit table on page 13 for you to estimate your average daily consumption, which can then be compared against your actual recordings.

### Watering gardens

Using a garden hose or sprinkler for just one hour can use up to 1 cubic metre (1,000 litres) of water. That's equivalent to an average family's usage in 48 hours.

### Power showers

A normal shower uses around 35 litres but power showers can use much more, approximately 90 litres per use (assuming a 4-6 minute shower). To work out your shower's consumption, simply take a meter reading before and after you shower, making sure that no other appliances are in use.

Also check how often other members of the household use the shower and for how long.

### Toilet flushing

Older toilets use around 9 litres and a dual flush toilet uses around 6 litres. In fact, toilets on average account for 33% of water use in the home. If you spend most of your time at home, this figure and your overall water consumption will be higher. Putting a water saving device, such as a hippo bag, in old toilet cisterns may help to reduce the amount of water used when you flush your toilet. Please call us on **0800 052 0138** to request a hippo bag or you can request one via our website [www.dwrcymru.com/waterefficiency](http://www.dwrcymru.com/waterefficiency)

### Urinals

Urinals have an auto-flush. Please remember to turn the supply off overnight to conserve water and prevent wastage.

### Baths

An average bath uses about 80 litres of water. Again, you can use the meter to determine how much water you use in your average bath by taking a reading before

and after you've run your bath.

### Overflows

These can waste a lot of water and it may not always be obvious. For example, in some cases, the overflow pipe is plumbed into bath overflows or even the flush of the toilet and so wastage is not always noticeable. Some modern WCs overflow down the back of the pan and this can lead to a build up of limescale.

### Dripping taps

Check all your taps and make sure they are shut off securely. Change washers if necessary. A dripping tap can waste at least 130 litres of water a day.

### Extra visitors

Visitors to your home or business will increase the water consumption at your premises.

### Swimming and paddling pools and ponds

Topping up pools and ponds uses up to 1,000 litres per hour by hosepipe and some pools automatically refill when the level is low. Assess how much water you use by taking a meter reading before and after topping up your pool or pond.

### Summer consumption

Most people use more water in summer, not only because they water their gardens but also through 'spring cleaning' and taking more showers. Check your metered bills from the same time last year and also from other seasons to compare usage.

### Combi boilers

These need to be installed properly, for example, to avoid long lengths of pipe reducing the need for running the tap before you get hot water. They also need to be serviced regularly to ensure they operate efficiently.

### Building/Renovation work

You are responsible for any water or sewerage services you receive. This includes if you are renovating or decorating your property, it is empty (but contains furniture) or is occupied.

### Other uses

Consider how often you use your washing machine or dishwasher and check any other plumbed in appliance with an overflow. You can save water by waiting until you have a full load.

## Water usage checklist

Your water consumption is affected by the number of people in your household, how often you use the appliances and the general condition of your internal pipework and appliances.

To help you understand how much water you use, just complete this easy-to-follow checklist to estimate your average daily consumption.

### Be Waterwise

Using water wisely is one of the everyday activities we can all do to help manage the effects of climate change. You can be water wise by:

- Telling us about leaks
- Turning off the tap when brushing your teeth
- Taking a shower not a bath – but remember a power shower can use twice as much water as a bath
- Fixing any dripping taps
- Using a watering can or handheld device in the garden. A garden sprinkler typically uses 1000 litres of water per hour, the same as a family of four over two days.

|   | Average amount of water used (litres) | Number of times each day | Daily total            |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Baths   | 80 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Power shower (with a pump to increase the pressure).  | 90 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Ordinary shower.  | 35 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Old cistern (if the toilet has a water saving device such as a hippo bag please deduct 3 litres each time the toilet is flushed). | 9 x                                   | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| New toilet cistern (with dual flush).   | 6 x                                   | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Handwashing and cleaning your teeth without the tap running (per person per day).   | 6 x                                   | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Handwashing and cleaning your teeth with the tap running (per person per day).  | 10 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a washing machine (full or not).  | 80 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a washing machine on a half load setting.   | 60 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a washing machine which is a water efficient model.   | 55 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a dishwasher  | 35 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a dishwasher on a half load setting.  | 20 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Using a dishwasher which is a water efficient model.  | 22 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Washing dishes by hand.   | 6 x                                   | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Cooking and drinking (per person per day).  | 10 x                                  | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| Hosepipe/sprinkler or powershower.  | 1,000 litres per hour x               | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |
| <b>Total for the household per day</b>  |                                       | <input type="text"/>     | = <input type="text"/> |

*Please note – Typically 160/190 litres per person per day is the national average, although actual individual use can vary considerably around this amount.*

Putting a water saving device, such as a hippo bag, in old toilet cisterns may help to reduce the amount of water used when you flush your toilet. Please call us on **0800 052 0138** to request a hippo bag or request one from our website at [www.dwrcymru.com/waterefficiency](http://www.dwrcymru.com/waterefficiency).

You may also want to visit our website for a more comprehensive audit and for further advice on being more water efficient.

If you are still unsure of your water usage either:

- Call a plumber at your expense and ask them to investigate
- Use our meter logging service by completing the application form included with this booklet. The meter logger (available for meters up to 25mm) will measure demand over a two week period in up to 15 minute intervals. This may help customers to understand their consumption patterns and identify if there are any leaks on the supply. This service is chargeable at £60 (inclusive of VAT) and can be requested at any time.

You may want to use the table on page 8 to keep a record of your usage whilst the logger is in situ.

**Other useful publications:**  
**'Your Metered Supply'**

Incorporating our Code of Practice for Meter Reading; **'Leakage'** - Customer Information sheet; **'Leakage Code of Practice'** and **'DIY Water Audit for Homes'**.

### BE A LEAK SPOTTER!

If you see a leak in the street, then please let us know by calling **0800 281 432** or report it via our website [www.dwrcymru.com](http://www.dwrcymru.com)

### Contact details

Telephone numbers. All calls to **0800** numbers are free when dialled from a landline.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Water services and emergencies</b><br><b>0800 052 0130</b>                                     | Lines are open<br>24 hours<br>a day Seven days a week.                     |
| <b>Sewerage services and emergencies</b><br><b>0800 085 3968</b>                                  |  |
| <b>New water connection enquiries</b><br><b>0800 917 2652</b>                                     |  |
| <b>Leaks</b><br><b>0800 281 432</b>   |  |
| <b>For your nearest area office</b><br><b>0800 052 0130</b>                                       |  |
| <b>Billing and accounts</b><br><b>0800 052 0145</b>   | Lines are open:<br>Monday - Friday, 8am - 8pm<br>Saturday, 8.30am - 1.30pm |
| <b>Water meters</b><br><b>0800 052 0140</b>   |  |
| <b>Welsh language line</b><br><b>0800 052 6058</b>  |  |
| For customers with hearing difficulties call our text telephone facility.<br><b>0800 052 4125</b> |  |
| <b>Publications request line</b><br><b>0800 052 0138</b>  | Monday - Friday,<br>9am - 5pm  |

## Standard terms and conditions for the installation of a water meter logger

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (hereinafter called “the Company”) will install a meter logger subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Following receipt of the customer’s application and payment of the fee for the logger the Company will provide the customer with the date of installation. Where additional work is required before a logger can be installed, the Company will advise the customer of approximate timescales for completion.
2. Prior to the installation of a logger, representatives of the Company will undertake a water supply check, to determine if a logger can be fitted. By signing that they have read these terms and conditions the customer gives permission to the Company to access the premises to carry out the water supply check.
3. The water supply may be interrupted or suspended during the supply check subject to any safeguards relating to prior notification under the Company’s Service Guarantee.
4. The customer is responsible for checking that the internal stop tap is functioning and the water supply can be disconnected from inside their premises. The customer is responsible for checking that overflows, taps and other water using appliances are watertight and there are no obvious signs of a leak. By signing that they have read these terms and conditions the customer confirms that they have undertaken these checks.
5. The purpose of having a logger connected to the water meter is to identify the water that passes through the meter each minute in 24 hour periods of time, or in time periods as determined by the Company. The logger will remain in situ for at least 14 days and the Company will advise the customer of the removal date if access to the customer’s premises is required.
6. The logger remains the property of the Company and shall not be removed or in any way disturbed or interfered with except by an official of the Company. By signing that they have read these terms and conditions the customer agrees to give the Company access to install, check and remove the logger as required. If the meter is not located in the highway, and not on the customer’s own premises, the customer must have a legal right of access thereto for the benefit of himself and the Company. If remedial work is required to be undertaken by the customer to allow access to the meter and the installation of a logger, any costs will be borne by the customer and the customer will notify the Company once access is available.
7. Occasionally for practical, operational or safety reasons the Company will not be able to fit a logger. If this is the case the Company will advise the customer accordingly and a full refund of the customer’s fee will be made. A refund of the fee for the logger will be given in cases where it is established that excessive consumption is due to leakage from the Company’s pipes. Any refund will be made within 25 working days.
8. Where additional work is required to install a logger including a change of meter, excavation or other engineering activities that are the responsibility of the Company, the Company will undertake this work where it is reasonable to do so, at no additional cost to the customer and a logger will then be installed. The Company will advise the customer if any additional work is necessary, that may delay the installation of a logger.
9. The Company will notify the customer if the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004 or other regulatory or legal conditions apply that may delay the installation of a logger.
10. If the Company determines that a change of meter is required, the Company will replace the meter at its own cost and install the logger on the new meter.
11. Subject to the Company’s Service Guarantee the company shall not be responsible for any damage or loss that the customer may sustain or any accident to any of the customer’s employees by reason of any interruption or suspension of the supply or any excess or deficiency of pressure or any failure of any employees, works, machinery, pipes or apparatus of the Company.
12. Any notice from the Company under these terms and conditions may be served by leaving it for the customer at the premises supplied or at the customer’s last known address or place of business or (in the case of a company) at its registered office or by putting it into the general post addressed to the customer at such premises, and shall be sufficiently authenticated if it bears or purports to bear, in print or otherwise, the signature of the Director or any other authorised officer of the Company. Any notice from the customer to the Company shall be signed by or behalf of the customer, and shall be sent to Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, PO Box 690, Cardiff, CF3 5WL, by post or otherwise.
13. You will remain liable at all times for payment of any outstanding or future charges and your responsibilities under our standard terms and conditions for a metered water supply remain unaffected during the time a logger is installed. You can obtain a copy of ‘Your metered supply’ by telephoning us on **0800 052 0138** or by visiting our website at [www.dwrcymru.com](http://www.dwrcymru.com)

## Request for a water logger

### Application Form



## Request for a water logger

Customer reference number:

(shown on your bill)

Customer name:

(title, initials, surname)

Address:

Post code:

Telephone Numbers (Day time):

(Mobile):

Address where Logger is to be fitted:

Post code:

If you wish to receive your report by email, please provide your email address below:

***I confirm that I have read the terms and conditions and wish to proceed with my application to have a logger installed.***

***I enclose my payment by cheque, made payable to Dŵr Cymru Cyf of £60.00 inclusive of VAT;***

***Or,***

***I wish to pay the fee of £60.00 by Debit/Credit card (please indicate) and I authorise you to debit my card details shown below.***

Name as shown on the card:

Card number:

Three digit security code

(to be found on the back of your card)

Type of card (Switch/Visa etc)

Start date:

Expiry date:

Issue number:

Please tick if you require a VAT receipt

Signed:

Date:

Return to: **Dŵr Cymru Customer Services, PO Box 690, St.Mellons, Cardiff, CF3 5WL.**