

## Detecting leaks and reading your water meter

Know how to check for leaks and understand how to read your water meter to help you reduce water consumption and save money.

### Did you know?

- ◆ A slow dripping tap can waste more than 9000 litres of water per year. Make sure you turn all your taps off properly and check washers for wear.
- ◆ A continuously running toilet can waste more than 60 000 litres of water per year. Check for leaks regularly and fix them as soon as possible.
- ◆ A tiny leak in your pool or spa can lose a large amount of water and cost you money.
- ◆ Many household leaks are not easily detected. It's important to find out how much water you use and investigate any unexplained increases in use.

## Measuring your household water consumption

- ◆ Check your water meter monthly or quarterly to monitor and understand how much water you use. This will also help locate leaks early, saving you both water and money.
- ◆ Check your rates notice for water usage information. The notice may include your household's daily water consumption figure as well as an average figure for all households in your area.
- ◆ Complete the Home waterwise quiz. Contact your local council for a copy of the quiz or go to <a href="http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise">www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise</a>.

## Locating your water meter

A water meter measures the amount of water that each property uses. It will generally be located outside in the ground towards the front of a property. Most are at or below ground level, and have a metal or plastic lid. If you live in a unit or apartment block, there may not be an individual water meter for each residence.

## Using your water meter to detect leaks

1. Find your water meter and write down the numbers shown.
2. Turn off all taps tightly and make sure that no-one will be using any water on the premises for the next hour.
3. After one hour, check the water meter reading. If the numbers have changed, there may be a leak.
4. If it appears there is a leak, the first item to check is the toilets. Turn off the water valves located under each toilet and then redo steps 1 to 3.
5. If the numbers haven't changed during this time, you may have a leaking toilet. To check this, put a little food colouring in the toilet cistern. If, without flushing, the colouring begins to appear in the bowl, the cistern needs to be repaired.

Note: After the test, flush your toilet twice to prevent the food colouring from staining the toilet bowl.

6. Alternatively, if the numbers have increased, there is a leak somewhere else on your property. For further investigation, contact a licenced plumber.



## How to read your water meter

There is a range of different water meters in use across the state. All have a combination of black numbers and red numbers and/or dials. Five examples are shown in the diagram below.

The black numbers register kilolitres (kL = a thousand litres).

There are three red numbers or dials registering litres. (If there is a fourth red number or dial, this indicates tenths of a litre.)

Read only the first three red numbers or dials. Numbers are read from left to right, while dials are read in a clockwise direction. If you have trouble reading your water meter, contact your local council.

### More information

To find out more, read the *Being Waterwise with your pool and spa* information sheet and complete the *Home waterwise quiz*.

For copies of these, contact your local council or distributor-retailer or visit the Department of Environment and Resource Management website at [www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise).

### NUMBERS ONLY

kilolitres     litres

#### 4 BLACK NUMBERS AND 3 RED NUMBERS



When reading these water meters **record all numbers**



#### 4 BLACK NUMBERS AND 4 RED NUMBERS



Record all **black numbers** and the first **three of the four red numbers**

This is the correct reading on this meter:

2 9 3 3

This is the correct reading on this meter:

2 9 3 3

Do not record the last number

### NUMBERS AND DIALS

kilolitres     litres

When reading water meters **with dials** record the numbers **first** then the dials **in a continuing clockwise direction**

#### NUMBERS AND 1 DIAL



Record all the numbers

**Do not record this dial**

This is the correct reading on this meter:

1 0 1



#### NUMBERS AND 2 DIALS



Record all the numbers first

Record this dial second

**Do not record this dial**

This is the correct reading on this meter:

2 8 6



#### NUMBERS AND 4 DIALS



Record all the numbers first

Record this dial second

**Do not record this dial**

Record this dial fourth

This is the correct reading on this meter:

5 4 7 6 3 8