

# Checking For Possible Leaks around Your Home

Phoenix's extreme temperatures can be tough on your plumbing lines, so it's a good idea to regularly check your home, indoors and out, for water leaks. This not only saves you costly repairs if a pipe were to break, it saves water and saves you money, too.

The first place to start is your City Services bill (see example below) that is mailed to you every month. On the bill we provide (A) your current and last month's water meter reading in 100 cubic feet units (CCF), (B) the current units billed (which is found by calculating the difference in the CCF numbers), and (C) the current gallons used (748 gallons = 1 Unit). If the water consumption increases significantly from one month or one year to the other and you haven't changed your water use habits, then there's a good chance you have a leak somewhere on your property.

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**City of Phoenix  
City Services Bill**

WILLIAM B. SAMPLE, JR.  
Account Number: 1234567890  
Billing Date: 3/29/2012  
Due Date: 4/19/2012  
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*Sewer charges are based on water usage shown on your January, February and March City Services bills. So, use less water in those months and you could lower future sewer charges.*

*The Municipal Services Bill is now called the City Services Bill. You can pay your bill online by visiting phoenix.gov and clicking on "Pay My City Services Bill" in the upper left hand side of the page.*

**City Services Statement as of 3/29/2012**

Previous Balance	\$49.27
Payments Received - Thank You	-49.27
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges	49.27
<b>Total Amount Due</b>	<b>\$49.27</b>

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**Service Address: 1234 W ANYSTREET RD, PHOENIX, AZ 85000**

Meter Number	Previous Meter Read Date	Previous Meter Read Reading	Current Meter Read Date	Current Meter Read Reading	Water Used in Billing Cycle
12345678	2/29/2012	675	3/29/2012	679	4 Units = 2992 Gallons 1 unit = 748 gallons

**Your Monthly Water Usage (gallons)**

**Water/Sewer Service from 3/1/2012 to 3/29/2012**

Water Base Fee	\$4.45
Environmental Mandates - Water	1.68
Sewer Fee	10.37
Environmental Mandates - Sewer	2.24
State Mandated Jail Costs	2.00
City Tax	0.51
State and Other Taxes	1.17
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$22.42</b>

**Solid Waste Service from 3/1/2012 to 3/29/2012**

Refuse	\$26.80
State Landfill Disposal Fee	0.05
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$26.85</b>

**Water/Sewer Service: (602) 262-6251**  
**Solid Waste: (602) 262-7251**  
**TDD: (602) 534-1113**  
**To Pay Online: www.phoenix.gov**

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Please detach and return the portion below with your payment.

**City of Phoenix**  
Pay Online at  
[www.phoenix.gov](http://www.phoenix.gov)

Please make checks payable to City of Phoenix.  
Do not send cash through the mail.  
Please write account number on check.

**A Late Fee will be applied if payment is received after the Due Date.**

Due Date	Total Due	Project Assist Donation	Amount Paid
4/19/2012	\$49.27	\$ _____	

Account Number: 1234567890

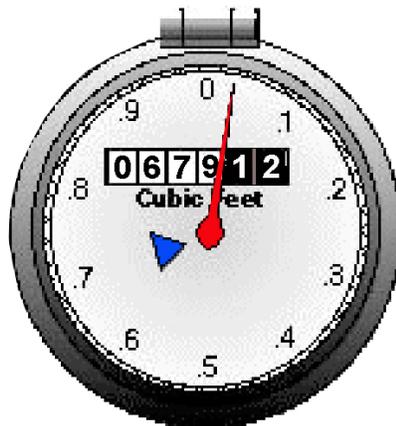
SAMPLE, JR., WILLIAM B.  
1234 W. ANYSTREET RD  
PHOENIX, AZ 85000

SEND PAYMENTS TO:  
**City of Phoenix**  
P.O. Box 78663  
Phoenix, AZ 85062-8663

00912345678907800000000000049270003293

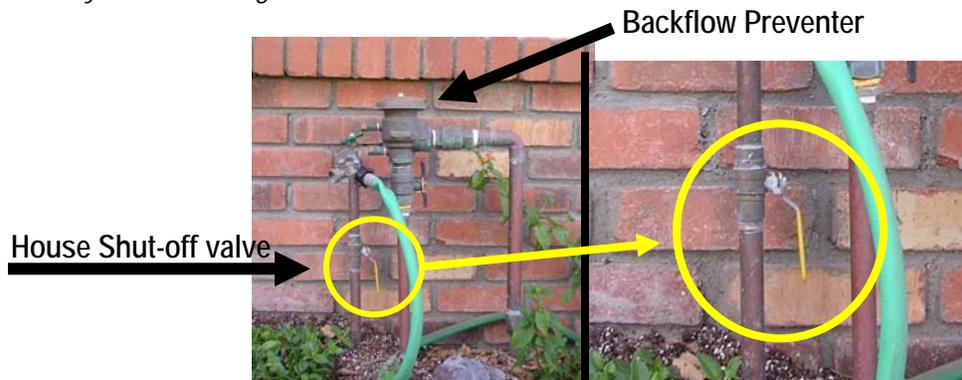
If you've seen an increase in water use, but don't see any visible signs of a leak anywhere, here are a few steps to follow to help determine if there is a leak on your property. If after following these guidelines you still think you have a leak in your house, it's best to hire a licensed, professional plumber to come and inspect the property for you.

If you think you have a water leak, the first thing to do is read your water meter. Write down the numbers on the meter and keep it in a safe place. This will help you keep track of how much water is actually being used on your property. Below is an illustration of a water meter, which is reading 359 CCF (the "current" read on the bill example above).

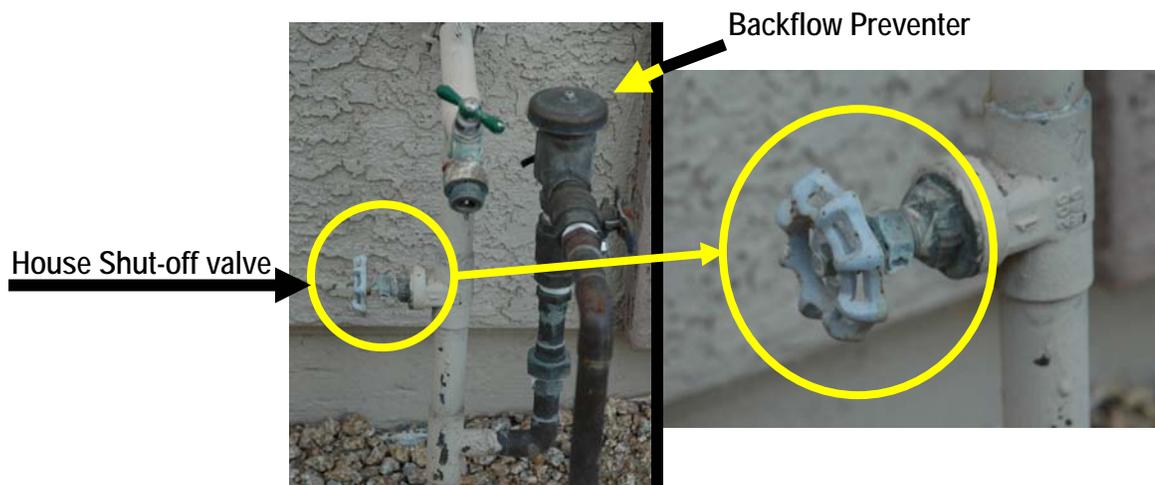


Make sure that all water is shut off both inside and outside your house, and look at the needles on the meter. The small needle, usually a triangle, measures the smallest amount of water that is passing through the meter. If this needle is moving and if all the water taps are turned off on your property, then you have a leak somewhere.

To determine if the leak is inside or outside your house, find the main house shut-off valve, which is usually located at the front of the house near a hose bib (see examples 1 and 2 below). Turn the water off to the house and then check the meter again. If the small needle stops moving, then the leak is likely inside your house. If the needle keeps moving, then the leak is between the meter and the house shut off valve. Sometimes an irrigation system is connected between the meter and the house valve through a backflow preventer, which also has shut off valves. If the house valve is closed and the backflow valves are in the open position and the irrigation system is turned off, and the blue dial on the meter is still turning, then you may have a leak in your irrigation system. *Also note that sometimes the house shut-off valve doesn't close all the way because of age or lack of use.*



Example 1



## Example 2

To be certain of where a leak is located exactly; we recommend you hire a licensed, professional plumber to inspect your property, inside and out.

Here are some other tips to help find leaks around your home:

### Outdoors

- Check the ground near every hose bib. If the ground is damp or wet, it's pretty likely there is a small leak. The same goes for your irrigation control box. If the ground inside the box is wet, there may be a leak when the irrigation system is running.
- Check your irrigation system when it's on. Look for popped sprinkler heads and other problems. Even though this isn't technically a leak, the amount of water running through a faulty sprinkler head can add up quickly, and they are pretty easy to fix.
- If you have a pool, shut the auto leveler off for a few days, and mark the water level. If the level drops significantly in a day or two, there's a good chance there's a leak in your pool's plumbing system.

### Indoors

- Check every fitting and joint in all of the exposed plumbing in the house and make sure they are dry. This is usually underneath sinks in the kitchen and bathroom. If any water is found, then there's a good chance you just need to replace a gasket.
- Look for damp spots on the ceiling, walls, or floors all around your house. This is usually a sign there is probably a water leak that you cannot see. Hiring a professional, licensed plumber to determine this is the best course of action.
- Inspect faucets and shower heads for drips. Even the slightest drip can add up quickly on your water bill, and it's usually just an old gasket that needs to be replaced.

- In the bathroom, the toilet is the most common place for a leak. To see if your toilet is working properly, put a few drops of food coloring into the tank and wait a few minutes. If the water makes its way into the toilet bowl, then your toilet is leaking. It's usually the flapper valve which is fairly easy to replace.
- If you own a water softening system, make sure to check it frequently to ensure it's not stuck in a backwash mode. This can send a lot of water and money straight down the drain and you'd never even see it.