

Public Service Commission: Recognizes March 14-20 as Fix-a-leak Week

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MADISON – In an effort to encourage Wisconsinites and state utility providers to save water and money, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC or Commission) is participating in “Fix-a-Leak Week,” March 14-20, 2022. WaterSense is a voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that provides both labels for high performing, water-efficient products and resources that help utility customers save water. The PSC has been a WaterSense Program partner since 2010. In addition, the PSC has worked closely with state utility partners who have an approved voluntary conservation program. Since 2019, these programs have helped customers in those programs save an estimated 26 million gallons of water each year.

“Wisconsin’s infrastructure is aging, and many water utilities face funding challenges related to the need to replace, refurbish, or repair water mains and service lines and construct new facilities to ensure public health, safety, and reliability.” said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “As necessary investments in infrastructure continue to place upward pressure on rates, conservation and efficiency can help utilities and their customers save money. I am proud of the work the PSC does in working with Wisconsin utilities to make sure their systems are more efficient and affordable, and I encourage all utilities to raise awareness among their customers of steps they can take to lower their bills through conservation and efficiency.”

Leaks in distribution systems lead to higher water bills and are a waste of valuable resources. Leaks and inefficient water fixtures in homes can be a major cost for homeowners and can often be addressed through simple fixes. The typical household leak can add up to 10,000 gallons of water wasted each year. This amount would supply the average Wisconsin household with 2 ½ months’ worth of

water.

To determine if a home has a water leak, customers should check their water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter number has changed after the two-hour period of non-use, a leak may be present. Finding leaks is a simple and smart way to save money for households, and save our water and energy resources. Below are a few examples of how to fix common leaks someone may find in a home or business:

- Leaky toilets are most often the result of a worn toilet flapper. Replacing the rubber flapper is a quick fix that could save a home with a constantly running toilet up to 200 gallons of water per day.
- A leaky faucet dripping at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons of water each year, which is the amount of water needed to take more than 180 showers. Reduce faucet leaks by checking faucet washers and gaskets for wear and, if necessary, replace the faucet with a WaterSense labeled model.
- To fix a leaky garden hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.
- An in-ground irrigation system that has a leak 1/32nd of an inch in diameter (about the thickness of a dime) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month. Irrigation systems should be checked each spring before use to make sure they have not been damaged by frost or freezing.

Homeowners that need to replace a plumbing fixture should check first for a WaterSense labeled product. WaterSense labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads have been independently tested and certified to save water and perform as well as or better than standard models. WaterSense also partners with certified landscape irrigation auditors, designers, installers, and maintenance professionals. You can find water saving products with instant rebates available at the [Focus on Energy marketplace](#).

For more information on Fix-a-Leak Week, visit [here](#).

For more on Wisconsin's water conservation efforts, visit the PSC's website [here](#) and the Department of Natural Resources' website [here](#).