



TOWN OF MARBLEHEAD

Water and Sewer Commission

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Why Is My Water Usage So High This Quarter?

Does the water usage shown on your current quarterly bill seem higher than on your previous bill or the bill before that? There are several possible reasons for this.

First, you should compare the usage on your current bill to the usage during the *same period* in previous years. The amount of water used often varies by the season or time of year. (We can provide a history of your past usage if the earlier bills are not available.)

If you still feel that your usage is higher than normal after comparing like periods, there are several possible reasons that should be considered:

- A dryer spring or summer with more outside watering than usual;
- A newly-installed irrigation system;
- Car and/or boat washing;
- Filling a swimming pool or backyard ice skating rink;
- A new member of the family;
- Children back home from college;
- Visitors for extended periods.

All of these would cause a significant increase in your water usage.

If none of the above are probable, the most likely culprit is a leaky toilet. A leak the size of the point of a pencil, which is often not detectable by sight or sound, can use almost 74,000 gallons of water (9,850 cubic feet) over a three month period.

We have dye tablets available at the water and sewer office that you would simply dissolve in some water and put into the **tank** of your toilet(s). Food coloring would serve the same purpose. After waiting two to three hours, check to see if any of the blue dye or coloring appears in the toilet bowl. Any hint of color in the bowl would indicate a leak.

If you try the dye test and it does reveal a leak, it is recommended that you contact a plumber immediately to correct the problem. Excessive water use will continue until the problem is repaired. If the dye test does not indicate a leak, you should contact us for further advice.

Please feel free to visit the water and sewer office to pick up some dye tablets or to contact us if you have any questions.