



## IF YOUR WATER USE IS HIGHER THAN EXPECTED

If you have large, unexpected water use increases, what should you do?

**Check whether you have a leak in your plumbing system.**

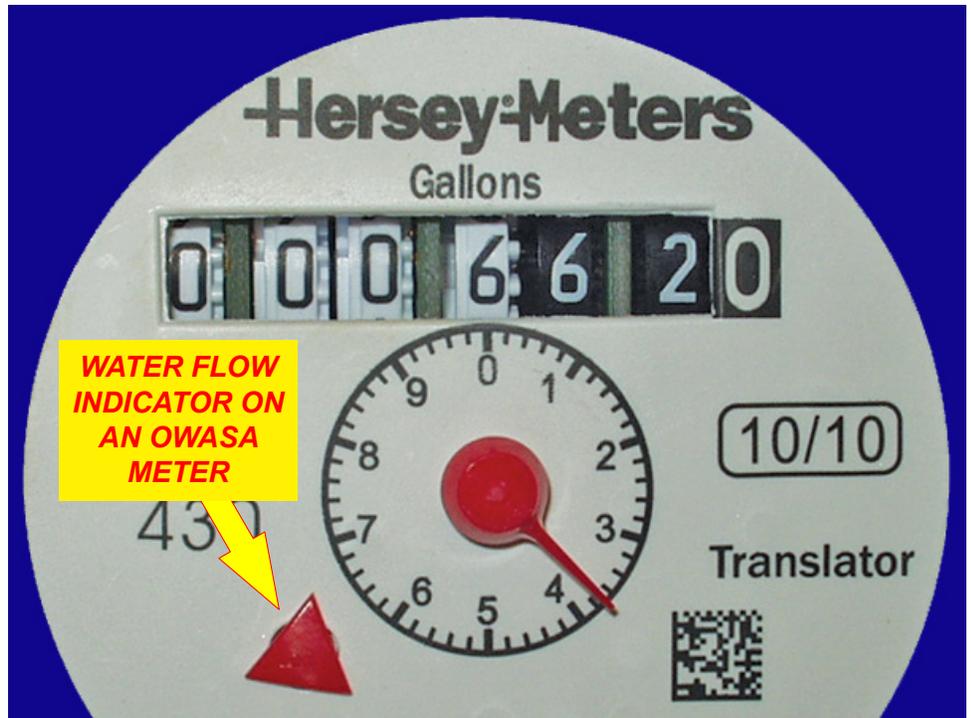
Leaks are often the reason for an unexpected increase in water use. National research indicates that about 14% of indoor residential water use results from leaks.

The best way to check whether there is a leak is to look at the water flow indicator on the meter serving your home or business.

The flow indicator may be a small triangle as in the photo, or a small wheel.

If the flow indicator moves when you are not intentionally using water, there is a leak somewhere in your plumbing system.

Meters are normally at the boundary of private property and the street right-



of-way, a few feet from the edge of the roadway.

If you are not sure of the location of our meter, please contact OWASA at 919-968-4421 or [info@owasa.org](mailto:info@owasa.org).

***If you confirm or suspect that there is a leak in your plumbing system, please check the following items.***

(We recommend checking these peri-  
*(continued on other side)*)

## OWASA Board adopts budget and rates with no increase in monthly charges

On June 14th, the OWASA Board approved the annual operating budget for July 2012 through June 2013, a 5-year infrastructure improvement plan and rates effective in October 2012. These decisions followed public hearings on May 24th.

There will be no increase in the monthly charges for water, sewer and reclaimed water service. At a typical residence, the monthly bill for 4,000 gallons of water and sewer service will continue to be \$70.66. Businesses and other customers who pay seasonal water rates will

see the normal annual changes to the lower "off-peak" water rate in October 2012 and to higher "peak" water rate in May 2013. These seasonal rates will be the same as those that were effective in October 2011 and May 2012.

Este boletín informativo contiene información sobre los servicios de agua y alcantarillado de OWASA. Para obtener una traducción, por favor llame al 537-4221 o mande un correo electrónico a [webmaster@owasa.org](mailto:webmaster@owasa.org). ¡Muchas gracias!

# If your water use is higher than expected

*(continued from other side)*

odically even if a leak is not apparent.)

1. **toilets** (the most common place for leaks),
2. **faucets and spigots** (indoors and outside),
3. **showerheads**,
4. **washers** (for clothes and dishes),
5. **pipes and hoses** (indoors and outside, and including those on washers),
6. **irrigation system** (if you have one),
7. **the water heater**,

8. **other water-using devices**, and

9. **the private service pipe** that carries water from our meter to your home or business.

If the private water service pipe has a leak, a wet area may appear in the lawn, landscaping, etc. where this pipe is installed underground from the OWASA meter to your home or business.

**Leaks should be repaired by a licensed plumber or other person who knows how to do the work properly** and in accord with plumbing codes.

Improper repairs may result in further

water loss, may affect water quality and may cause property damage.

**If you fix a leak, please let us know.** We may be able to give you an account credit based on the volume of the leak and whether the leaked water returned to our sewer system.

Account adjustments are subject to some limits and conditions.

**You can also compare the reading on our meter to the reading listed on our last bill to monitor your water use since then.** Please contact us at 919-968-4421 or [info@owasa.org](mailto:info@owasa.org) for more information about understanding the reading on our meter.

## About your plumbing system

### **Who owns and maintains which drinking water pipes?**

OWASA owns and maintains the public water lines in the street right-of-way, the small pipe that carries water to our meter serving your home or business, and the meter.

Customers/property owners are responsible for:

- the water pipes and fixtures in and under a house or other building and
- the private pipe that carries water from the OWASA meter to the customer's building.

### **Who owns which wastewater pipes?**

OWASA owns and maintains public sewer lines, which may be in street right-of-way or an off-street easement.

Customers/property owners are responsible for the pipes that carry

wastewater from toilets, sinks, showers, bathtubs, washers, etc. to OWASA's public sewer.

Private wastewater pipes include the underground "service lateral" that carries wastewater from a residence or business to the OWASA sewer.

In some situations, OWASA may repair structural damage or settling in the part of a private service lateral that is in a public street right-of-way.

Please contact us at 919-968-4421 or [info@owasa.org](mailto:info@owasa.org) if you want more information.

### **Back-ups in plumbing drains**

When there is a back-up in a private plumbing drain or service pipe, please contact us at 919-968-4421 so we can check whether a blockage in our sewer is affecting your pipes.

There is no charge for having us do this check.

### **Water shut-off valves**

We recommend that plumbing systems have shut-off valves so that water can be turned off immediately to prevent damage and water loss from leaking or burst pipes.

If you have a shut-off valve, we would be glad to send you a tag to mark the location of the shut-off valve so that you and others can find it quickly when needed. Please contact us at 919-968-4421 or [info@owasa.org](mailto:info@owasa.org), or visit the Conservation and Education part of our website and go to the page with plumbing system information.

### **Water expands when heated**

If the pressure relief valve on your water heater pops open frequently, you may need a device to handle the expansion of water due to operation of the heater. We suggest contacting a plumber for advice about whether you need such a device and information on the types that are available.