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EPA Marks March 18-24 as Fifth Annual Fix a Leak Week

One in every 10 homes has a leak that is wasting at least 90 gallons of water per day

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) WaterSense program encourages Americans to check and replace leaky plumbing fixtures and sprinkler systems, helping households save more than 10,000 gallons of water per year and as much as 10 percent on utility bills.

“Easy-to-fix household leaks waste more than 1 trillion gallons of water annually nationwide, which is equal to the amount of water used by more than 11 million homes,” said EPA Acting Administrator for the Office of Water Nancy Stoner. “We’re not just wasting water; families also lose money from leaks with higher utility bills. That’s why Fix a Leak Week is so important, and why we encourage everyone to take a few simple steps that add up to make a significant positive impact.”

In just 10 minutes, businesses and homeowners can: check winter water bills and fixtures for water waste; twist and tighten pipe and hose connections; and consider replacing broken or inefficient fixtures with WaterSense-labeled models.

If winter water usage for a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, it’s likely that the home has a leak problem. Here are some easy tips:

- Check toilets for silent leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank at the back and, if after 10 minutes, color shows up in the bowl before flushing, it may be time to make an easy repair and replace the flapper.
- Check outdoor hoses for damage from winter frost and tighten connections at the water source.
- For in-ground sprinkler systems, a professional certified through a WaterSense-labeled program can inspect sprinkler heads and pipes for signs of leakage and help homeowners maintain an efficient system and healthy lawn.
- Check additional plumbing and outdoor fixtures for leaks. They may just need a quick twist or pipe tape.

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by EPA, seeks to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, new homes, and services. Since the program's inception in 2006, WaterSense has helped consumers save 287 billion gallons of water and \$4.7 billion in water and energy bills.

Learn more about fixing leaks, find a certified irrigation professional, or search for WaterSense labeled plumbing and irrigation products: <http://www.epa.gov/watersense>.