

## The Hidden Costs of Leaks

### Water vs. Sewer Rates: What's the Difference?

Your utility bill includes separate charges for **water** and **sewer** services.

**Water Rates:** Cover the cost of treating, pumping, and delivering clean water to your home.

*IMU Residential Water Rates: First 1,000 gallons = \$12.25, after the first 1,000 gallons, the rate is \$8.18 per 1,000 gallons*

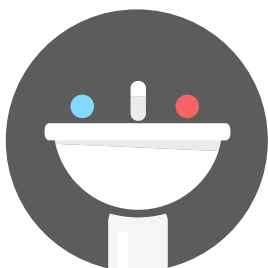
**Sewer Rates:** Cover the collection and treatment of wastewater from your property. These are based on your water consumption, as it's assumed most water used goes down the drain. *This means a water leak can also drive up your sewer bill!*

*City of Indianola Residential Sewer Rates: First 1,000 gallons = \$26.00, after the first 1,000 gallons, the rate is \$12.50 per 1,000 gallons*



## Common Household Leaks and Their Potential Costs:

Continued on Back



### Dripping Faucet or Leaky Showerhead:

- **Slow Drip (10 drips per minute):** This seemingly minor leak can waste around 3 to 5 gallons of water per day, accumulating to 90 to 150 gallons per month.
- **Fast Drip (60 drips per minute or a steady stream):** This can escalate quickly, wasting over 20 gallons per day, leading to hundreds of gallons per month.
- **Cost Impact:** A fast-dripping faucet can add roughly \$20 per month to your water and sewer bill. While the material cost for a DIY fix might be only a few dollars, professional repair could range from \$100 to \$400\*.

Here's a breakdown of how much various leaks around your house could be costing you:

# Common Household Leaks and Their Potential Costs:



## Running Toilet:

- **Impact:** A running toilet can waste as much as *12-15,000 gallons of water per month*.
- **Cost Impact:** A running toilet can add *over \$300 a month* to your water and sewer bill. Repair costs for these parts are relatively inexpensive (often under \$50 if you DIY), but professional repairs could range from *\$200 to \$400\**.



## Leaky Outdoor Spigot:

- **Impact:** A constantly dripping outdoor spigot can contribute to significant water waste.
- **Cost Impact:** The primary cost here is the wasted water itself. Repairing or replacing an outdoor spigot often involves a professional, with costs ranging from *\$150 to \$450 on average\** for parts and labor.



## Hidden Pipe Leaks:

- **Severity:** These are often the most costly and damaging, as they can go unnoticed for extended periods. A small crack the size of a pencil tip in a pipe can waste approximately *970 gallons in 24 hours*, even at low water pressure.
- **Cost Impact:** Hidden pipe leaks can cost a household anywhere from *\$100 to \$600 per month* in wasted water, and that's before considering the significant repair costs and potential damage to your home (mold, structural issues, etc.). Repairing a burst pipe can range from *\$500 to \$1,500 or more\**, especially if it's in a hard-to-access area, as it may involve demolition and restoration work.



## Key Takeaways for Saving Money:

By understanding the potential costs of various leaks, you can take proactive steps to conserve water and protect your wallet. ***Don't wait!***

- **Be Vigilant:** Regularly check for visible leaks and pay attention to unusually high water bills.
- **Put food coloring in your toilet tank;** if it appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak.
- **Address Leaks Promptly:** Even a small drip can become a big problem over time, both in terms of water waste and potential damage.
- **Consider DIY for Simple Fixes:** Replacing washers, O-rings, and flapper valves are often manageable DIY projects with inexpensive parts.
- **Know When to Call a Pro:** For more complex leaks, hidden pipe issues, or if you're uncomfortable with plumbing, hiring a licensed plumber can save you money and headaches in the long run.

\*Please note: The costs provided are estimates based on common repair types and averages. They are not guaranteed. For precise repair costs, always contact a certified plumber.

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### IMU RESOURCES

**Online bill pay:** [my.imufiber.com/ebill/login](http://my.imufiber.com/ebill/login)  
**Report outage:** [indianola.com/outages](http://indianola.com/outages)  
**IMU board meetings:** [youtube.com/@indianolamunicipalutilities](https://youtube.com/@indianolamunicipalutilities)  
**Work for IMU:** [indianola.com/careers](http://indianola.com/careers)