

Printed 8/6/05 in The Daily Sentinel

Late summer a good time to check for leaks

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Special to the Sentinel

Although you probably conducted an initial check for leaks when you fired up your swamp cooler and irrigation system this spring, it's a good idea to check again periodically. As summer winds down and back-to-school time approaches, now is a good time to check for leaks before you get busy again.

Indoors:

- Check your sink and tub faucets for drips. While they may appear insignificant, they can actually waste hundreds of gallons of water a month, which adds up to thousands of gallons annually.
- Check your toilets for leaks resulting from worn flapper valves and overflow floats positioned incorrectly. Placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank will provide a visual indicator of a leak entering the bowl.
- Check your low-flow shower heads for scale deposits and buildup (that white stuff that clogs the holes). A weak vinegar solution can remove the buildup, making your low-flow shower head work better.

Outdoors:

- Check your evaporative (swamp) cooler for overflow leaks. If water is running down the roof from the swamp cooler, check the cooler pan for rusted-out areas. You may only need to re-adjust the overflow drain and fill float to stop the overflow. However, be aware that some newer models are designed to continually spill water. You can minimize this spill rate by adjusting the overflow.
- Check your irrigation system's filters on a regular basis. Remember, some spray heads have individual filters inside which can also become clogged.
- Check your sprinklers for overspray on areas that don't need watering, such as driveways, sidewalks and rock landscape. Adjust the sprinklers to water what needs watering.

By performing these late-summer leak checks you'll prevent costly water leaks and help conserve one of our most precious natural resources. For more conservation tips, visit www.thedripwebsite.com.

We live in a semiarid climate where droughts will always be a part of our environment. Water for our future means conserving now. The Drought Response Information Project (DRIP) is a collaboration between the valley's domestic water utilities and CSU Cooperative Extension to provide information and educate the public about drought and the importance of water conservation.