



Question: *Why is my water bill so high?*

Answer: Before we can dig into this question, we need to clarify if your property is within a CVRD metered water system. There are five water systems that are non-metered; meaning customers do not have a water meter installed at their property and pay a flat-rate fee for their water. These five non-metered water systems are Arbutus Ridge, Kerry Village, Lambourn, Mesachie Lake, and Shawnigan Lake North.

If you live within one of the other CVRD-operated water system you would have a meter installed at your property line and you would be paying metered rates; meaning your water bill is a reflection of how much water has gone through the water meter during the billing period. For metered systems the CVRD uses an inclining block rate structure for water billing in order to encourage conservation. Therefore, the more water you use, the higher the unit cost for water. The number one cause for high water bills is excessive lawn and garden watering. Many people are under the mistaken assumption that an automatic irrigation system saves water and money. In most systems, the only item saved is time. The average irrigation system uses approximately 45 litres a minute while watering a lawn. That's a cubic meter (1000L) of water every 22 minutes. How long and often does your irrigation system run? Or maybe you have a leak in your plumbing system...

Question: *How do I tell if I have a leak?*

Answer: The best method to determine if there is a leak is to turn off all sources of water in the house and garden then locate the water meter (located in a box near the property line). Check the dial on the meter for movement. If no movement is observed, record the present reading and wait 30 minutes, read the meter again. If the meter shows movement or has shown usage in 30 minutes, something is leaking. If you don't know where your meter is located call the Engineering Department at 250.746.2530 and ask for the location of your water meter.

Question: *The meter is moving but I'm not using any water. What do I do next?*

Answer: Check all faucets and pipes. Watch for drips, and quickly replace faulty parts. A leaking faucet can waste from 280 to 750 L of water in a week. The toilet is a common source of unnoticed leaks and left undetected, hundreds of litres of water can be wasted each day. To tell if your toilet is leaking, add food colouring or dye to the toilet tank and wait 20 minutes, if coloured water appears in the toilet bowl, a leak is present. Toilet leaks are not hard to fix, and you can ask for advice at your local hardware store or call a plumber.

Question: *I found a leak, am I responsible for all the water used?*

Answer: In certain circumstances the CVRD will allow a forgiveness for overages as a result of undetected leaks. Refer to your water system's webpage for specific details on the forgiveness process as it applies to your water system.

Question: *The meter must be wrong there's no way we used this much water!*

Answer: When meters break down, they either stop recording or record less than actual usage, they don't speed up and measure more flow.

Question: *We have very low water pressure, but the next-door neighbours have high pressure!*

Answer: The first thing to check is if your house has a water pressure regulator (PRV- Pressure Reducing Valve). Check to see if it functioning correctly, if you are unsure about what to look for you can ask for advice at your local hardware store or call a plumber. Also check that all valves are fully opened. If everything has been checked and pressure is still low, contact the CVRD Engineering Department at 250.746.2530 or complete a non-emergency water concern [here](#).