

Good Housekeeping



Every home is subject to a certain level of unforeseen mishaps that happen outside our control. It is one of the reasons we pay for home insurance. It is also why the Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) has a leak adjustment policy because we understand that some water loss is unintentional. <https://ccwsa.com/leak-policy/> On the other hand, some mishaps can be avoided with proper preventative maintenance. We would like to share a few with you to help you avoid costly home repairs in the future. We encourage you to consult a professional if you don't feel comfortable performing any of these recommended actions.

1 Check for Leaks: Not all leaks are obvious, and even a slow and steady leak will affect your water usage. Try recording the number on your water meter, leave all water fixtures off for 2 hours, and check the number again. If the number has changed, it could indicate you have a water leak.

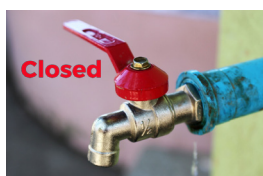
3 Inspect and Replace Damaged Lines: Once a quarter, go around your home and inspect water lines and fittings. Look for evidence of water damage such as discoloration, peeling paint, and deposits of rust-like buildup as indicators of a slow leak. Give careful inspection to supply lines into toilets and under sinks, since these are commonly problem areas.

5 Test Drains: Periodically check how long it takes for a faucet or shower to drain. Hair, soap scum, and other debris can cause these fixtures to clog. Often simply cleaning the "p" trap will solve this problem. On sink faucets, another problem area is where the stopper mechanism enters the drain. In most cases, disassembly of the drain and manually cleaning the components is required. It is important to check for leaks once you have reassembled the drain.

Understanding Valves



Notice the handle in the picture above is inline with the pipe. This indicates the valve is "open"



Notice the handle in the picture above is perpendicular to the pipe. This indicates the valve is "closed"

2 Flush Hot Water Heater: Over time, minerals in the water can deposit in water heaters causing them to lose efficiency and volume. If you prefer to perform regular maintenance yourself, consult your water heater manual for instructions specific to your tank. In general, the recommended annual maintenance includes: 1. Turn off the water heater 2. Turn off the water coming in (cold) 3. Hook up a garden hose to the drain and run the line outdoors or into a vessel 4. Let the water in the tank cool. 5. Open the valve to release the water in the tank. Once the tank is empty, reverse the steps to put it back into operation.

4 Locate Your Main Water Shutoff and Learn How to Operate it: Most homes have two main water shutoff valves: one in the meter box and another where water enters the home. In emergencies, quickly shutting off the water can prevent extensive damage. Locate these valves beforehand. *The Primary Valve:* Found in the meter box, typically a ball valve requiring a wrench to turn off (align the hatch mark perpendicular to the pipe). Verify it's off by ensuring the metal tabs with holes align. *The Secondary Valve:* Located inside the home, it may be a ball or check valve. Turn a check valve clockwise to stop the flow. In emergencies, turn off the **primary valve** first. If inaccessible, use the secondary valve for a quicker response.

6 Clean Faucet Aerators: Newer faucets come with an aerator already installed on the device to make it more efficient and use less water. Some come with a special tool to take the aerator off, while others can simply be taken off with a channel lock. With prolonged use, the aerator will begin to accumulate mineral build-up and will restrict the flow of water over time. It is recommended you take the aerator off once a year and clean it with a small bristle brush

For a more extensive list of water maintenance around the home, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/home-maintenance>