

# Belview Bulletin

July 2013

## It's Only A Small Drip....Right?

Slow drips of water can add up quickly. A toilet that “keeps running” after you flush or a sink that drips after it is turned off can waste thousands of gallons of water a year. If the drip is hot water, you are paying for wasted energy too. Fix leaks as soon as you find them. They won't go away on there on.

One of the most costly household wastes of water is a leaky toilet. According to the American Water Works Association, toilets account for 45% of all indoor water use in a typical residence. It is estimated that 20% of all toilets leak!

Toilet leaks can range from small to large, constant to random, or being heard or silent. They all cause wasted water. Depending on the water pressure to your home, a running toilet can leak 1 gallon of water per minute which adds up to 1,440 gallons per day.

Most toilets leaks are relatively easy to fix. In a properly functioning toilet, no water should move from the tank to the bowl, unless the toilet is being flushed. A leaking toilet loses water from the tank to the bowl without being flushed. A toilet can also waste water due to an improperly adjusted or broken fill (ballcock) valve causing water to enter the tank and flow into the overflow tube.

Most toilet leaks are caused by a faulty valve. A flapper valve should be replaced every 3 to 5 years. Here's how to check for a leaky flush valve. Carefully remove and set aside the tank lid. Add some food coloring or dye tablet to turn the water a different color. Put the lid back on. Wait 15 minutes and do not flush. If dye appears in the toilet bowl, the flapper valve in your toilet is leaking and should be replaced.

The second most-common type of toilet leak is caused by an improperly adjusted or broken fill valve. If the float is set too high or if the shut-off valve fails to close completely, water will continue to enter the tank and flow into the overflow tube. This type of leak can be seen simply by taking the tank top off and observing if water is flowing into the overflow tube once the tank is full.

A leaking faucet is frequently the result of a bad rubber washer. A leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can use more than 3000 gallons per year. A shower head leaking 10 drips per minute can use more than 500 gallons per year.

## **REDWOOD COUNTY EMPTY PESTICIDE CONTAINER COLLECTION:**

The collection will be August 21<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Redwood County Recycling Center. All pesticide containers (2 ½ gallon or smaller) that are High Density Polyethylene Plastic (imprint of HDPE & #2 on bottom). All containers must be triple or pressure-rinsed and must be free of pesticide. Caps and labels must be removed. Questions? Call the Redwood County Environmental Office 507-637-4023.