

Concealed water leaks

Information about hidden water leaks



What is a concealed leak?

A concealed leak is a water leak on your property that is hidden from view. They are generally caused by cracked water pipes underground or inside walls. A concealed leak does **not** include:

- Leaking taps, toilets, hot water systems or appliances.
- Faulty plumbing or human error.
- Property sprinklers or irrigation.
- Swimming pools, spas or water features.

Who pays the cost?

If you own your home, you are responsible for the water pipes on your property. This means you are liable for the cost of any water lost through a leak on your property, even if the leak is hidden from view.

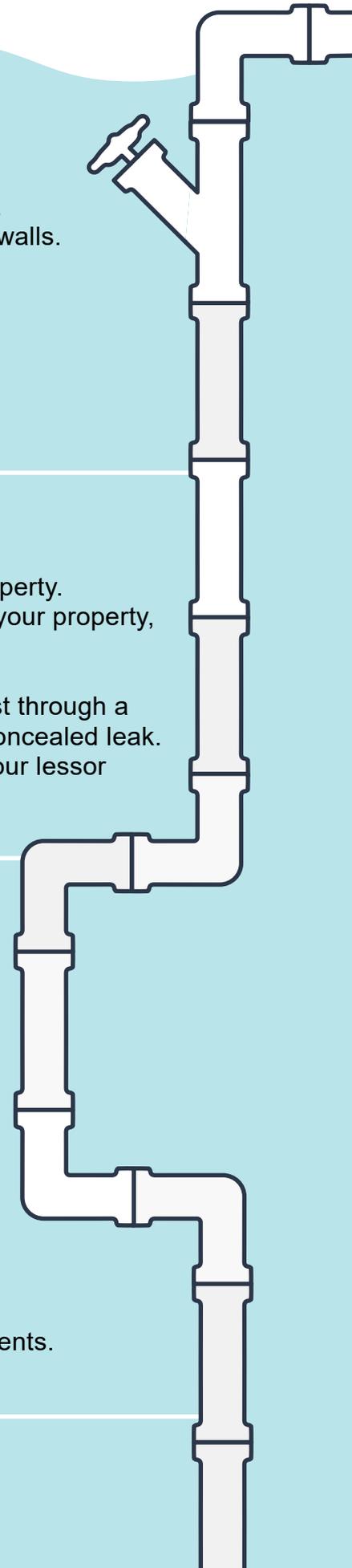
Tenants who pay for their water may also be liable for the cost of water lost through a concealed leak. Inform your lessor immediately if you suspect there is a concealed leak. It is their responsibility to fix the leak. You may be able to negotiate with your lessor about who pays for the cost of the leaked water.

What help is available?

If you identify a concealed leak, your water provider may be able to assist. If you live in South East Queensland, your water provider **must** have a concealed leaks policy. Some water providers outside South East Queensland also have concealed leak policies. Policies can vary but most will contain:

- definition of what is a concealed leak (compared to a general leak)
- how you can identify concealed leaks
- details about any remissions the water provider may pay to assist customers with the cost of a high water bill due to the concealed leak.

Even if your water provider does not offer remissions for concealed leaks, you may be able to negotiate a payment plan to pay off the cost in instalments.



Managing leaks

Test for a concealed leak

Check your water meter on a regular basis to identify leaks early. Your water provider can give you information on how to read your water meter.

Once you know how to read your meter, you can undertake this simple test to identify a concealed leak:

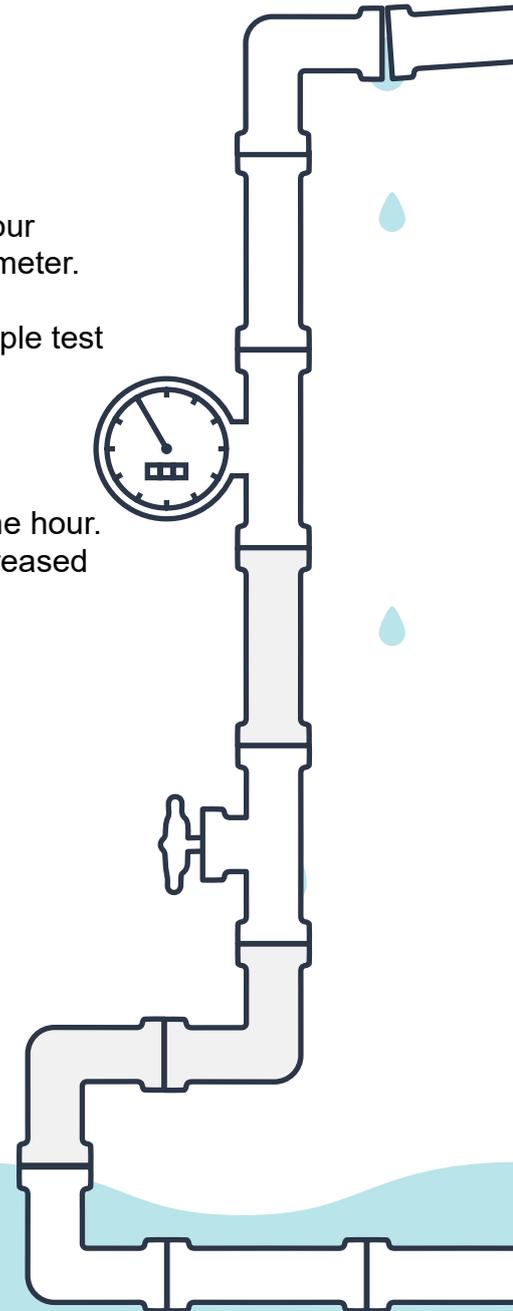
1. Turn off all taps and water appliances.
2. Read and record the numbers showing on your water meter.
3. Keep all taps switched off and don't use any water for at least one hour.
4. After an hour, read the water meter again. If the number has increased there may be a concealed leak.

Get the water leak repaired

Once you suspect a concealed leak, call a licensed plumber immediately (or your lessor if you are a tenant).

You may be able to find and repair the concealed leak yourself. However, most water providers require a licensed plumber to verify that the repairs comply with the relevant standards.

This is often a requirement for accessing a water provider's remission payment or other assistance.



Tips

- Even if you do not usually pay for water, you may be required to pay for the water used if it exceeds a 'reasonable' amount. Check your tenancy agreement to see whether this applies to you.
- If the numbers on your water meter are going up even after you've turned off all the taps and appliances, there is likely to be a leak on your property.
- If you are a tenant, notify your lessor immediately of a possible leak, and keep a written record of the notification. This can help protect you from being responsible for a high water bill should the lessor not act to fix the leak within a reasonable timeframe.