



A HIGH WATER BILL SHOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TIME YOU CHECK YOUR METER. Check it. Photograph it. Track it.

Written by Poppy Louw

The City of Johannesburg is encouraging municipal account holders to regularly monitor their water consumption and inspect their properties for possible leaks. Early detection can help prevent unnecessary water loss and unexpectedly high municipal bills.

Following concerns from residents about unusually high or unexplained water accounts, Group Finance is reminding customers that a sudden increase in consumption may be an early indication of a hidden leak.

Customers should therefore make it a habit to check their water meters, compare monthly consumption and act quickly when they notice unusual changes. Early action can help conserve Johannesburg's water resources while protecting customers from escalating municipal debt.

6 PRACTICAL STEPS TO CHECK FOR WATER LEAKS

1. Perform a Meter Movement Test

Turn off all taps, appliances, irrigation systems and other water outlets on your property. Make sure that no water is being used. Check your water meter. If the dial or digits continue moving while everything is switched off, there may be a leak on your property.

2. Report Municipal-Side Leaks Immediately

Leaks occurring on the municipal water meter or infrastructure outside your property boundary should be reported to the City so that the matter can be investigated and attended to. Important: Always obtain a reference number when reporting a leak and keep it for follow-up purposes.

3. Repair Internal Leaks Without Delay

Leaks within the property boundary are the responsibility of the property owner. Customers should appoint a qualified plumber to repair internal leaks as soon as possible. Remember that water lost through an internal leak still passes through the meter and is recorded as consumption on the municipal account.

4. Request a Meter Test if You Suspect a Faulty Meter

If you suspect that your analogue water meter is faulty, you may lodge a request for a meter test at a Customer Service Centre upon payment of the applicable testing fee. If testing confirms that the meter is faulty, the account will be adjusted in accordance with the City's billing policies. If the meter is found to be functioning correctly, the testing fee is non-refundable and the customer remains liable for the recorded consumption.

5. Track Your Consumption and Photograph Your Meter

Compare your current consumption with previous months and look for unusual increases. Take regular, dated photographs of your meter display. These provide a useful record when monitoring consumption or lodging a formal billing query.

6. Check Whether Your Reading is ACTUAL or ESTIMATED

Check your monthly municipal statement to determine whether your water charge is based on an Actual or Estimated reading. If an estimated reading is significantly higher than the reading displayed on your meter or your normal consumption pattern, photograph the meter and lodge a billing query through an official City channel.

LEAK LOCATION	RESPONSIBILITY	REQUIRED ACTION
Inside Property Boundary	Property Owner	Appoint a qualified plumber to repair internal pipes, taps, toilets or irrigation systems.
Outside the property boundary / municipal meter	City of Johannesburg / Joburg Water	Report the leak immediately for technical investigation and repair.

HIGH BILL AFTER AN INTERNAL LEAK? ACT EARLY

If an undetected internal leak results in a high municipal bill that you cannot settle immediately, do not wait for credit-control enforcement before seeking assistance.

Approach your nearest Customer Service Centre as early as possible. You may enquire about entering into an Acknowledgement of Debt (AOD) arrangement to settle the outstanding balance through manageable monthly instalments. Important: Repairing an internal leak does not automatically cancel consumption already recorded by the meter. Any dispute or request for an account adjustment will be considered in accordance with the City's approved policies.

HOW TO LOG AND FOLLOW UP A BILLING QUERY

When you identify a possible billing problem, log the query as soon as possible and obtain a reference number.

When lodging a query, provide as much supporting information as possible, including:

- Municipal account number
- Customer/property details
- A clear description of the billing problem
- Current meter reading, where applicable
- A clear, dated photograph of the meter
- Relevant supporting documentation
- Previous query/reference numbers where the matter is being followed up

DIRECT REGIONAL REVENUE EMAILS

Region A – Midrand: regionArevenue@joburg.org.za

Region B – Randburg: regionBrevenue@joburg.org.za

Region C – Roodepoort: regionCrevenue@joburg.org.za

Region D – Jabulani/Soweto: regionDrevenue@joburg.org.za

Region E – Sandton: regionErevenue@joburg.org.za

Region F – Thuso House/Inner City: regionFrevenue@joburg.org.za

Region G – Lenasia/Ennerdale:

regionGrevenue@joburg.org.za

KEEP YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER

A reference number is important evidence that your matter has been formally reported. Keep it safely and quote it whenever you follow up.

MESSAGE TO RESIDENTS

Know your consumption. Check your meter. Detect leaks early. Report municipal leaks. Repair internal leaks promptly. Keep your reference number and follow up on unresolved billing queries.

Taking an active role in managing your municipal account can help you identify problems early, conserve water and avoid unnecessary escalation of your municipal bill.

A HIGH WATER BILL SHOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TIME YOU CHECK YOUR METER.

CHECK IT. PHOTOGRAPH IT. TRACK IT. REPORT PROBLEMS EARLY.

