



UTILITY TALK

March/April 2025

Providing safe and reliable water and gas services.

Serving Richmond, Henrico and North Chesterfield

Top 5 Common Household Leaks and How to Stop Them

Mark your calendar for March 17 through 23. The City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities will join the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other utilities across the country to raise awareness for Fix a Leak Week. Fix A Leak Week reminds customers to identify and address leaks in their homes as soon as possible. The average household's leaks can account for more than 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year, or the amount of water needed to wash 270 loads of laundry. Leaks around the house can lead to higher water bills and unnecessary water wastage. Here's how you can check for some of the most common leaks in homes:

Sprinklers
Inspect your sprinklers for wet spots on the ground or puddles, especially if it hasn't rained recently.

Under the Sink
Dry the area beneath the sink. Then run water through the faucet and check all connections and pipes with a dry paper towel for any visible moisture.

Showerheads
Turn on the shower and visually inspect the area where the showerhead connects to the shower arm, looking for visible drips or moisture.

Toilets
Perform a dye test* by adding food coloring to the toilet tank. Wait 15 minutes then flush. If the color appears in the bowl, your toilet is leaking.

Faucets
Dry off your sink, then place a paper towel around the faucet and observe for wetness. Also, listen for faint dripping sounds.

*Dye tablets are available to customers upon request at our walk-in Customer Care Centers at City Hall (900 E Broad St, Room 115) and East District Initiative (701 North 25th St).

Identifying and fixing leaks early can save you money and prevent water damage to your home. Take time to inspect your home during Fix a Leak Week.

Richmond's Infrastructure for Flood Protection

This year during Flood Awareness Week, on March 9 through 15, we urge residents to learn more about the infrastructure that manages flooding. As we continue to face the challenges of climate change and extreme weather events, these flood protection systems play an even more crucial role in safeguarding lives and property. Flooding is a natural disaster that can devastate communities, causing extensive damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure. However, well-planned infrastructure, such as floodwalls and stormwater systems, plays a critical role in mitigating these risks and protecting cities from the destructive force of floods. Richmond, with its closeness to the James River, has long been vulnerable to flooding, especially during heavy rain and rising river levels.

DID YOU KNOW?

April is Safe Digging Month. Before starting any digging project, always call 811 at least 3 business day in advance to have underground utilities lines marked, preventing damage and ensuring safety.

Richmond's Infrastructure for Flood Protection (Cont.)

In 1995, Richmond completed the construction of its flood protection system, significantly improving the ability to protect the city from river flooding. This system includes a combination of concrete floodwalls, earthen levees and pump stations designed to direct floodwaters away from vulnerable areas. The concrete floodwall has 22,000 cubic yards of concrete, 1,050 tons of reinforcing steel and 55,000 linear feet of steel piles, creating a robust defense against rising waters. The system spans 3.28 miles and protects over 750 acres of land, valued at approximately \$153 million.



The floodwall has been instrumental in preventing floodwaters from flooding critical infrastructure and neighborhoods. The flood protection system also includes three pump stations, ponding areas to store excess water and designated closure points for roadways and railways to ensure safety during flood events. In addition to the concrete floodwall, the system has two main alignments: the southside alignment, which features a combination of levees and floodwalls and the northern alignment, which provides protection for the Shockoe Valley area with a 4,500 foot-long concrete floodwall. These measures protect not only residential areas but also important infrastructure, including transportation networks and businesses.

Tips for Spring Landscaping to Prepare for Flood Season

As spring approaches, it's the perfect time to prepare your yard for rainy days and potential flooding. Proper landscaping can prevent water from accumulating near your home and reduce the risk of flooding.

Here are some tips to get your yard storm-ready:

Raise Plants and Gardens. Consider raising garden beds or planting in containers to avoid waterlogging during heavy rains.



Improve Drainage. Ensure your yard has proper drainage by checking gutters, downspouts and drains. Clean any blockages to allow water to flow freely away from your home.

Plant Native Vegetation. Native plants have deeper root systems that help prevent soil erosion and absorb excess water. They're also more resistant to flooding.

Create Swales. Swales are shallow depressions in the landscape that direct water flow away from your house. They can be planted with grass or other vegetation to reduce water runoff.


Mulch Properly. Mulching your garden beds can help absorb water and reduce the risk of flooding while providing nutrients to plants.



By following these tips, you'll help protect your home and landscape from the damaging effects of floods while making your yard more resilient to storms.

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