

How to read a water meter and find leaks

How to read a water meter

Find your water meter. It is usually at the front of your property. If you are reading a school meter, and your school has more than one meter, you should add the readings of all meters together. Your water meter will look something like the ones in the pictures below.



Water meters



A digital display

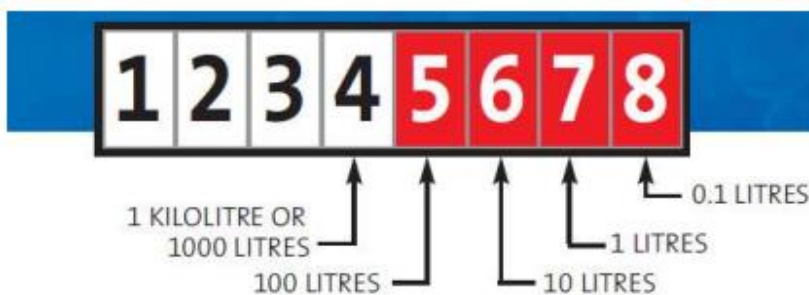


A dial face display

On the face of the meter you will see a series of numbers. The numbers measure the amount of water used in kilolitres and litres. On most water meters the black numbers measure kilolitres (thousands of litres) and the red numbers measure litres.

Digital display meters

These meters have six, seven or eight digits displayed.

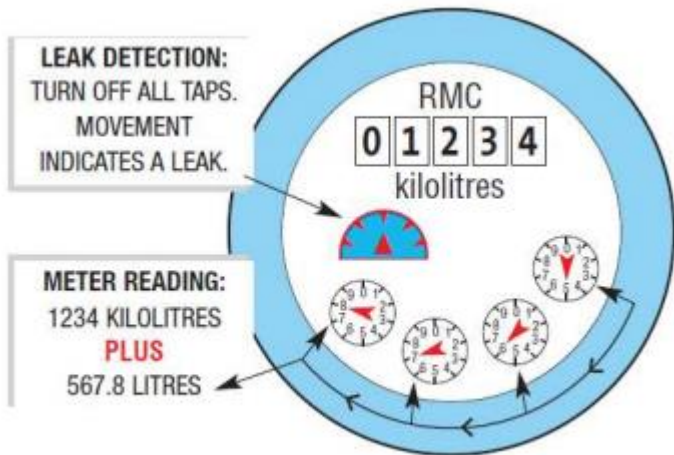


The current reading on this meter is 1,234 kilolitres plus 567.8 litres or 1,234.5678 kilolitres.

Record on the blank spaces below the numbers displayed on the meter/s. Use a black pen for kilolitres (1,000s of litres) and a red pen for litres.



Dial face display meters



If your meter looks like this one, kilolitres are shown by the black digital display and litres by the dials. The dials are read from right to left.

When a pointer rests between two numbers use the lower number. The current reading on this meter is the same as the one on the previous page: 1,234 kilolitres and 567.8 litres or 1,234.5678 kilolitres.

Monitoring water use at home

To find out your daily water use, write down the first meter reading. In seven days, at about the same time, write down the second meter reading. The difference between the two readings is your weekly water use. Divide this by seven to estimate your home's daily use.

1st reading = _____

2nd reading = _____

Weekly water use (1st reading – 2nd reading). = _____

Daily water use (weekly water use ÷ 7) = _____

Checking for leaks

The best time to check for a leak is when no water is being used, such as when nobody will be home or late at night (make sure no one flushes the toilet overnight).

Write down your meter reading at night before the last person goes to bed. Read the meter again in the morning before anyone starts using the water. If the number has increased and you have not used any water, you may have a leak.

Monitoring your school's water use

Fill in the table over the page to work out how much water your school uses in a week. The following steps will help you.

Step 1 Make a roster of students who will read the meter just before school starts and at the end of each day. Try to keep the same times each day as early and as late as possible. Remember - if your school has more than one meter, you will have to read each meter and add the amounts together.

Step 2 Write the amounts in the table.

Water meter readings					
Day	Date	Time	Morning reading	Afternoon reading	Difference
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					
Monday					

Questions

1. How would you work out if water is being used after school has finished?
2. Who do you think might be using the water after school finishes and overnight?
3. How would you work out if your school has a water leak?
4. How much water is used on average during school time each day? (Hint add Monday to Fridays 'difference' amounts and divide by 5)
5. How much water is used on average per person each day during school time? (Hint use the number 4 answer and divide by the number of people in your school)
6. Can you work out a way of showing how much water was used over the weekend?
7. If water is being used on the weekend, who or what do you think is using it?

How water efficient is your school?

Subtract the last Monday morning reading from the first Monday morning reading. This is the amount of water used in one week. What is it? _____

Multiply this amount by 52. This is the amount of water used in one year. What is it? _____

Divide this by 365. This is the amount of water used in one day. What is it? _____

Divide this by the number of students in your school. This equals the average amount of water used per day by each student. What is it? _____

Compare this amount to the table. How water efficient is your school? _____

Water efficiency for primary schools	
Water used a student a day	Rating
< 3 L	Very low water use (may be due to very high water efficiency)
3 – 9 L	Normal/efficient water use
9 – 18 L	Medium water use
18 – 50 L	High water use
> 50 L	Extremely high water use