

CONSERVING COSTS BY REDUCING WATER LOSS

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When we think about energy efficiency, we often focus on how to reduce the amount of energy used to treat a volume of water. We concentrate on new technologies, energy rates, and implementing new operational procedures. But there is another side to this, actually reducing the volume of water you treat.



There are two ways to go about this. You can take on the noble battle of convincing your system users to use less water. This would involve: education, ad campaigns, conservation initiatives, and ultimately changing public perception. Or, you can reduce the amount of water you lose throughout the distribution process.

It is no secret that our infrastructure is aging. Faulty pipelines and valves lead to leakage. Water loss not only affects how much water your system treats, but your bottom line as well.

Percentages lost are a convenient way to think about how much water your system is losing, but revenues lost are a more meaningful way to display that data. Let's just say that your water system is operating at the state average and it costs your system around \$0.10 to treat each thousand gallons of drinking water. If your system is losing 10,000 gallons of water per month, the cost to treat the lost water would be \$1,000/month. This cost will not be recouped as it will not be delivered to metered customers.

Over time these losses can become quite large. A leak that brings water to the surface will be quickly fixed, but smaller leaks or leaks that find an unnoticed discharge path, can become an ongoing and nagging issue. If your system is losing a significant percentage of water, it may be time to implement a leak detection and repair strategy. In most cases, the savings from reducing water loss will be greater than the cost to find and repair leaks.

One of the most important parts of implementing a useful leak detection and repair strategy is accurate record keeping. A strong plan will include monthly reports on unaccounted for water, leak repair reports, and up to date maps of the distribution system showing the types and locations of previous leaks. For any help with leak detection or formulating a leak repair plan feel free to reach out to your region's NYRWA circuit rider for assistance. 💧💧