

**Discussion Item**

Water Savings/Unit Leak Repair Proposal

# Parkfairfax Unit Water Savings Program

## OVERVIEW

**Fix anything that leaks in unit either totally free parts and labor, or free labor with parts at cost.** See what is covered and rough estimates on cost of parts below. Under program, owners would contact Parkfairfax and request repair/inspection of a specific leak in unit and or request a free plumbing inspection of entire unit, which is already offered.

### **Water usage could be cut by as much as half.**

See one-pager case study of a condominium in Washington, DC, that offers a similar program that resulted in cutting monthly water usage in half on average.

In addition, the Parkfairfax Building and Utilities Committee would implement a program to review monthly water usage of each metered loop of residential buildings in an effort to track savings, if any, from this program and to determine if there are buildings that appear to be using excessive amounts of water. With PF water bill estimated at \$522,000 and Sewer estimated at \$1,042,000 for FY 2025, the savings could be significant even if water usage is cut by 20-25 percent.

## WHAT'S COVERED AND ROUGH ESTIMATES ON COST OF PARTS

### **Toilet Running and/or Leaking (Free Labor and Free Parts)**

#### **Parts included if needed:**

**Fluidmaster valve and flapper repair kit:** Cost to Parkfairfax \$12.88 @ Home Depot

**Toilet Water Shut-Off Valve Replacement or Repair:** Cost to Parkfairfax \$4.97 each when at least 20 valves are purchased or valve stem repair kit for \$2.97 @ Home Depot

**Toilet Water Supply Line:** Cost to Parkfairfax \$3.63 each when at least 25 are purchased @ Home Depot

### **Toilet Replacement (Free Installation and Free Toilet up to \$100)**

Parkfairfax will replace the old water-guzzling toilets and install a new water-saving model of 1.28 gallons per flush available at Home Depot as a round bowl or elongated bowl model, which ranges in price from \$80 to \$95. This Glacier Bay model is recommended by Consumer Reports and appears to be identical to the Premier brand toilet currently offered by Parkfairfax. Old PF toilets are 3.5 gallons per flush or more. Owners also have the option to provide a water-saving toilet of their choice (must be pre-approved by Parkfairfax) that Parkfairfax will install for free.

### **Bathroom Faucet Leaking**

**Repair or Replace:** Free Labor and Free Parts if under \$10, at cost if parts are \$10 or more for repair. Or new faucet at cost if in Parkfairfax inventory or Unit Owner provides faucet (must be pre-approved for use by Parkfairfax). If determined that leaking faucet needs to be replaced, PF will install new faucet for free.

**Sink Hot & Cold Water Shut-Off Valve Replacement or Repair:** Free Labor and Free Parts. \$4.97 each when at least 20 valves are purchased or valve stem repair kit for \$2.97 @ Home Depot

**Sink Hot & Cold Water Supply Lines:** \$2.99 to \$3.64 each when at least 25 are purchased @ Home Depot

## **Kitchen Faucet Leaking**

**Repair or Replace:** Free Labor, Parts at Cost, or New Faucet at cost if in Parkfairfax inventory or Unit Owner provides faucet (must be pre-approved for use by Parkfairfax). If determined that leaking faucet needs to be replaced, PF will install new faucet for free.

**Sink Hot & Cold Water Shut-Off Valve Replacement or Repair:** \$4.97 each when at least 20 valves are purchased or valve stem repair kit for \$2.97 @ Home Depot

**Sink Hot & Cold Water Supply Lines:** \$2.99 to \$3.64 each depending on length when at least 25 are purchased @ Home Depot

## **Main In-Unit Hot & Cold Shut-Off Valves**

**Repair or Replace:** Free Labor, Free Parts (Cost to Parkfairfax: \$4.97 each when at least 20 valves are purchased or valve stem repair kit for \$2.97 @ Home Depot)

## **Bathroom Shower Bradley Cole Mixing Valve Leak (Fix leak or replace Mixer Valve)**

**Replace old Bradely Cole cartridge** (Free labor, parts at cost) Cost for Danco cartridge \$8.95 @ Home Depot  
**Install New Mixer Valve with integrated screwdriver water stops** (Charge unit owner set labor fee of \$150 to \$200, plus parts at cost). Mixer valves with screw water stops range in price at Home Depot from \$60 to \$128 and more.

## **CASE STUDY**

### **Apolline Condo Water Use Savings Program (v.1 - 5/6/24)**

Following is a summary of email correspondence I had with the general manager of the Apolline Condominium concerning their leak repair program. The effort resulted in reducing water usage from 1 million gallons per month to an average of 500,000 gallons per month. This resulted in a savings between \$7,000 to \$10,000 per month.

The Apolline, located at 1330 New Hampshire Avenue NW in Washington, DC, has 235 units, with about 40 percent of them being rentals.

### **PROBLEM**

The GM noticed that water bills were higher than normal so he started tracking daily usage and determined that it was quite a bit higher than normal. At first he thought it was a meter issue, but after checking found that the meter wasn't the problem.

### **SOLUTION**

1. He set up inspections of every unit looking for the source. Most of the time the culprit was a running toilet. But dripping faucets were also a contributor to the higher than normal water bills.
2. After completing the inspections they ran a special for free labor for anything that would save water. They charge for materials used at cost. Most repairs were completed in 30 minutes or less. The special generally runs for a month. Ran first special in 2021, and cut usage nearly in half, and have run it several times to date.
4. They plan to continue offering the special at least 1 time per year to encourage people to not delay in reporting anything that wasted water.
5. To build awareness of the issue, they post data in the building's elevators to inform people how much water a running toilet can waste in a day and how much water the building uses in a month.
6. When people see that the building used a million gallons of water in a month they tend to pay more attention in the units and get issues repaired.
7. He found that renters, which make up about 40 percent of units, don't seem to report things as quickly as they should. He felt this was because they don't feel the impact directly of the cost of wasting water and, consequently money, due to running toilets and other leaks. To work to combat this, they post flyers on a regular basis reminding everyone to keep an eye on certain things and how much water can be wasted if left unrepaired.
8. Unlike Parkfairfax, all the units already have water saving toilets.

## **Some Facts About Leaks and Water Consumption**

- 1.** Parkfairfax's water bill for fiscal 2025, which began on June 1, is budgeted for \$522,445.
- 2.** Parkfairfax's wastewater treatment bill is budgeted for \$1,042,630 for fiscal 2025.
- 3.** The wastewater treatment bill is based on water use as reported by Virginia American Water, the utility providing clean water to Parkfairfax.
- 4.** Our condo fees pay for our clean water and wastewater treatment. Any decrease in water usage not only reduces our water utility bill, but also our wastewater treatment bill.
- 5.** A leaking/running toilet can waste 200 gallons or more per day (and as much as 8,640 gallons).
- 6.** A dripping faucet can waste anywhere from 10 gallons to 200 gallons per day.
- 7.** Switching from the older Parkfairfax 3.5 gallon per flush (gpf) water-guzzling toilets to a 1.28 gpf toilet can save over 10 gallons per day and 4,051 gallons per year per person at an average of 5 flushes per day per person.
- 8.** Parkfairfax has some 130 water meters serving our community of 285 buildings and 1,684 units.