

**Q. Should I adjust the pressure regulator?**

A. Pressure regulators are preset at the factory at about 60 psi. In most instances, you should never need to adjust your regulator. If you do, it could cause water pressure to be too high or too low on the inside of the house. You should always have a qualified plumber make adjustments.



WATER METER DIAL

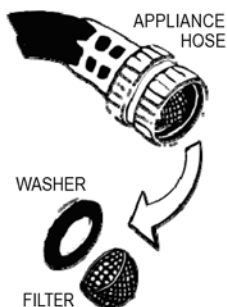
**Q. If I suspect a leak on my property, what should I do?**

A. Water pressure loss can be caused by an undetected leak. Your water meter can

help you detect a leak. Shut off all running water inside and outside your home. (Don't forget icemakers, auto-fill pools and reverse osmosis systems). Locate your meter box, usually at the front of your property, and look at the triangle on the meter face. If the triangle is still spinning, you have a leak. You are responsible for fixing the leaks on the customer side of the meter serving your property.

**Q. How can mineral deposits affect my water pressure?**

A. Mineral deposits from hard water can clog hose and faucet filters carrying water to your washer, shower heads, faucet aerators, and landscape irrigation parts. The deposits are not harmful and can be easily removed by soaking the filter in vinegar periodically.



**Q. Why is the water pressure sometimes higher in the early morning and lower during the remainder of the day?**

A. Neighborhood water consumption is less in the early hours, before families are awake using their washers, showering, and watering their lawns. So pressure is normally higher at this time. Landscape irrigation is normally designed to operate best at certain pressure levels. If you are experiencing problems with the effectiveness of your system, try changing the schedule of your system.



*Published by Olivenhain Municipal Water District in the interest of an informed public. OMWD has delivered water to the area since 1961.*



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## Household **Water Pressure** *Simple Solutions*



OMWD often receives questions from customers regarding water pressure. This handout is designed to address such inquiries in an easy-to-understand format. OMWD has provided this handout as a service for customers to understand how to maintain their water lines from the meter to their plumbing fixtures, their irrigation system, and other uses on private property. It is our hope that this guideline may assist you in troubleshooting common water system challenges.

If low pressure has existed for days, weeks, or longer, it is usually a problem with a fixture or other parts of the private plumbing system. OMWD recommends that you call your plumber.

## Common Factors That Affect Water Pressure

- Ground elevation and OMWD pressure zone
- Faulty adjustment or blockage of the pressure regulator
- Water leak on the customer's property
- Mineral deposits inside pipes and hoses causing constricted flow
- Simultaneous household appliance water use
- Landscape irrigation scheduling, valve, and sprinkler design
- Recent plumbing modifications inside or to the irrigation system
- The shuttle valve on your water softener was not turned back on after a cylinder exchange
- Any valve from the meter to a fixture is closed or partially closed - call plumber to assist if needed
- A pipe size or point-of-connection change in your system - this could happen if you have relocated or added a pressure regulator or outdoor irrigation system
- Area emergency, construction, or power outage
- Time of water use during the day

### Fixtures & Outdoor Sprinklers

#### Is low pressure a problem in all fixtures, some or one fixture, or an irrigation system?

If irrigation pressure is fine, but the house pressure is low, the problem is in the household system.

If the irrigation system has low pressure, but the house is fine: irrigation system could be faulty with old, damaged valves, or clogged, maladjusted sprinkler heads, or clogged screens.

If the pressure problem is only in certain fixtures, you may have a closed or partially closed valve or clogged screens.

OMWD water pressure in many areas is in excess of 150 PSI (pounds per square inch). It's a good idea to check incoming pressure before troubleshooting.

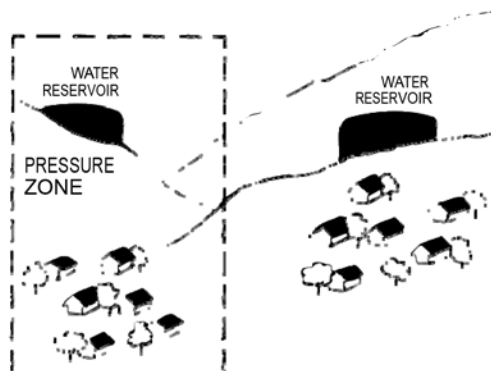
#### Q. What is water pressure?

A. Water pressure is created by the physical weight of water forcing its way throughout the distribution system to your tap. Gravity flow is the most efficient way to deliver water to your home, because no energy for pumping is required. In some portions of OMWD, water must be pumped.

#### Q. How can elevation affect water pressure?

A. Water storage tanks are located at higher elevations than your home or business to enable water to flow by gravity to neighborhood homes. Since elevations vary within OMWD's service area, your water pressure zone may also vary. In certain zones, water may even be pumped uphill to your home.

Normally, tanks fill at night when water use is lowest. The full tanks are then better able to supply the high demand for water in the daytime. Sometimes, due to a fire emergency or construction in the area, high demand slows refilling of the tank resulting in lowered water pressure.



#### Q. What amount of pressure is considered normal?

A. By the plumbing standard code for inside structures, 80 PSI is the maximum pressure as plumbing fixtures are not able to handle more than that. Typically, a good range for indoor pressure is 45-65 PSI and 65-120 PSI for outdoor pressure. Pressure varies by the elevation of your household and facilities that serve water in your area. Most structures have a pressure regulator that allows you to adjust your inside pressure.

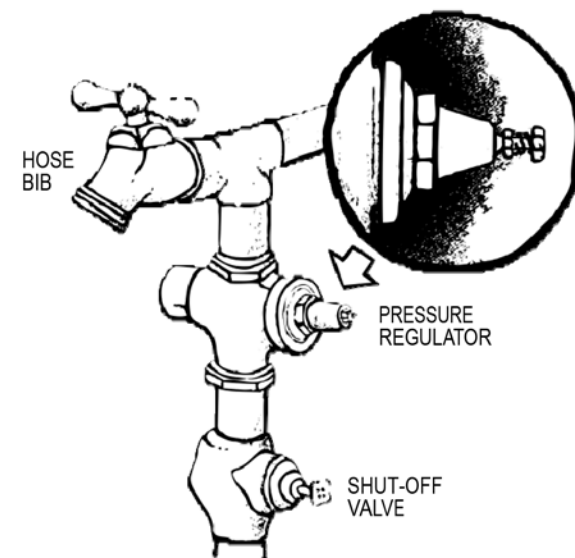
#### Q. What is a common cause for household high pressure?

A. Most OMWD customer pressure calls are due to regulator failure (if water pours out for a second, then stabilizes, your regulator may have failed). Some of these calls are due to recent plumbing work or water softener

cylinder exchanges. Rarely, calls are due to the OMWD system pressure being out of normal range. (Ask your neighbor if their pressure has also changed.)

#### Q. How can I check my water pressure?

A. Chances are, if you haven't noticed a problem with your water pressure, no action is needed. If you have experienced problems and would like to measure your water pressure, you can purchase a water pressure gauge at a hardware or building supply store. Measure at hose bibs in several areas, with and without water flowing inside the house. Changes in water flows can indicate clogged valves, partially closed valves, or a bad regulator if the pressure drops significantly. A drop of 5 lbs is generally acceptable, any more can be a sign of a problem.



#### Q. Why do some homes have a regulator? What does it do?

A. Some areas may have more than 80 PSI in the house, which can cause household appliances to malfunction. In those areas, pressure regulators are installed in compliance with local building codes. The pressure regulator provides protection to your house from unexpected water pressure surges experienced in your neighborhood due to construction or normal water system maintenance.

#### Q. Where is my pressure regulator?

A. The regulator is typically located near the front of the house or in the garage, often on the same inlet pipe as an outside water faucet. It can be on the side of the pipe or directly below a pipe joint. It looks like a saucer with an upside down cup on top. See diagram.