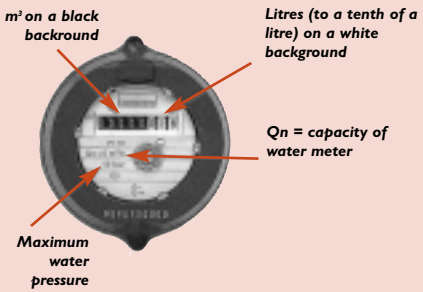
The Practicalities

Detecting a small leak:

- If you have a water meter fitted, check the reading at a time when no one is at home and no appliances are being used (perhaps at night when everyone is in bed, provided that no machines are programmed to work on a time delay for off peak electricity)
- Note the time and the volume of water used to the nearest litre on the dial[1] (e.g. 2305.112m³)
- Return several hours later and check the water meter again (e.g. 2305.132m³ after 5 hours)



The loss from the leak is equal to:
2305.132m³ – 2305.112m³ = 0.020m³ = 20 l over 5 hours, that is 4l/hour

Common reasons for water loss:

Leaky tap	0.1 litre/h	1m³/yr
Minor drips	0.5l/h	5m³/yr
Dripping tap	1.5l/h	15m³/yr
Running tap	10l/h	90m³/yr
Tap left running in garden	60l/h	500m³/yr

[1] Certain meters will be able to give very precise figures for very small losses.

Water saving appliances

A typical tap or shower running at UK mains pressure flows at 20 litres per minute – far more water than is really necessary. A lot of clean, unused water disappears directly down the drain. The easiest way to save water without changing your basin is to fit a 'flow restrictor'. This makes it possible to maintain the water flow at 6 litres/minute instead of 20 litres/minute. This type of device can also be fitted to showers, but is not suitable for all showers, so check with the