Water running into the toilet pan continuously, but not from the overflow pipe: This is caused by the beta valve not sealing properly.

Replacing the beta valve
Disconnect the flush arm from the valve mechanism inside the cistern. Use a wrench to unscrew the large nut holding the flush pipe onto the base of the cistern. Move the flush pipe slightly to one side, place a bucket underneath and unscrew the retaining nut which holds the siphon to the base of the cistern. Lift the siphon assembly out of the cistern and take the diaphragm or beta valve off the metal plate. Replace the worn diaphragm or beta valve with a new one of the same size. Reassemble the flushing mechanism and attach the flush pipe. Turn on the water supply and watch closely for leaks while the cistern fills.

How to test for internal pipe leaks
• Ensure that high water consumption is not caused by pipe leaks, pressure release valves, dripping taps or running toilets.
• Close all internal taps, including the stopcock at the toilet cistern.
• The small wheel on the water meter should not turn.
• Take the meter reading.
• Wait two hours and take the meter reading again.
• Subtract the first from the second meter reading.
• You have an internal leak if result is more than 0.
• Call a plumber to repair the internal pipe leak.

Did you know?
• A leaking toilet can waste up to 16 000 litres of water in one year.
• A running tap can waste up to 17 litres of water per minute.
• The bathroom uses about 49% of all water used inside the home.
• An eight-minute shower, using a regular shower head, uses around 120 litres of water. A water-efficient shower head uses less than 72 litres.
• A dripping tap can waste as much as 24 000 litres of water in one year.

• A water-efficient tap with an aerator or flow restrictor uses 50% less water than a standard tap.

How can I keep my water bills low?
• Each consumer has full control over his or her account.
• Conserve water to reduce your monthly account.
• Check your water meter readings regularly.
• Fix a dripping tap and a leaking toilet.
• Make sure that external leaks are repaired immediately.

Water facts
A five-minute shower uses 30 litres of water.
A bath uses 90 litres of water.
Flushing a toilet uses 9 litres of water.
Washing dishes in a dishwasher uses 40 litres of water.
Washing the car with a bucket uses 10 litres of water.
A sprinkler uses 540 litres of water per hour.
Cleaning your teeth with the tap running uses 6 litres of water.
Washing your hands and/or face uses 4 litres of water.
A paddling pool holds 400 litres of water.
Filling a kettle uses 2.5 litres of water.
A hose without a trigger nozzle uses 500 litres of water per hour.

REMEMBER: THE MUNICIPALITY’S RESPONSIBILITY STOPS AT THE WATER METER!

Contact numbers to report water problems:
No water supply, burst water pipes, leaking meters and blocked street sewers:
012 358 2111 / 9999 or 080 1111 556 (toll-free)
Industrial effluent enquiries:
012 358 9067 / 9078 / 9999
Spill response service:
012 358 9067 / 9078 / 9999
High water consumption

The three main causes of high water consumption are:
- A dripping tap
- A running toilet
- Pipe leaks

How to repair a dripping tap

You need the following:
- A washer
- An adjustable spanner
- A screwdriver
- Pliers
- A small spanner for the jumper nut

How to fix a dripping tap

1. Use the stopcock to close off the water supply at the water meter, open the tap fully and allow the water to run out completely.
2. Unscrew the tap cover, where provided.
3. There are three basic types of tap:
   - Star head – the screw is on the side of the star head
   - Plastic head – the screw is hidden under the black plastic cap on the tap
   - Brass garden tap – no screw; the complete head can be removed
4. Lift the head part of the tap away from the body.
5. Use pliers to hold the washer plate while unscrewing the washer retaining the nut.
6. Remove the old washer and fit a new similar one.
7. Secure the washer with the washer-retaining nut.
8. Reassemble the tap and fully close it.
9. Turn on the water supply.
10. Turn the tap on and off to check that it does not drip. If it is difficult to open and close.

11. If the tap leaks on top of the shaft at the handle piece, tighten the gland nut just a little. Make sure that you don’t tighten it too tightly.
12. Do not close the tap too tightly. New washers are softer than old ones and may be easily damaged.
13. Make sure that you use the correct size of washer.

How to repair toilet cisterns

a. Causes of leaks
Some leaks make a running sound that can easily be heard. Others can be so small or silent that the toilet may be leaking and you may not know about it. You don’t need a plumber to check it. Simply put about eight drops of food colouring into the toilet cistern. Wait for thirty minutes.
If the water in the toilet bowl is the colour of the food colouring, the cistern is leaking. Many toilets can be repaired with simple tools.

b. How to detect a leak

Adjusting the float or ball valve

The water level in a cistern tank is controlled by adjusting the float ball on the float valve assembly. The lower the float when the valve is closed, the less water is allowed in the cistern. The water level should be approximately 25 mm below the overflow outlet.

Replacing the diaphragm valve

Isolate the cistern in the plumbing system or, if there is no isolating valve, turn off the mains water supply.

Depending on the model, you may have to remove a few small screws in the top of the valve or unscrew the large retaining cap on the valve, which is located inside the cistern at the end of the float arm. The retaining nut will be either in front or behind the valve. If the retaining nut is at the front, you will see the diaphragm assembly immediately behind the cap.
If the retaining nut is at the rear, slide out the cartridge assembly to locate the washer or diaphragm behind it.
Once the cap is removed, check the washer or diaphragm for abnormal wear or cracks. Before installing a new washer or diaphragm and assembling the valve, clean all the parts in cold water to remove scale build-up. Reassemble the valve and reconnect the water supply.