

Taking protective measures about water leaks

Version of April 25, 2026

It is important to keep in mind that the Metro District end point reports meter readings to the cloud only once every six hours. This means that if there were a water leak in a particular home, any warning about the leak from the end point would be come only six or more hours after the leak had started. This means that the District's metering system ought not to be relied upon for a prompt or instant detection of a leak. The home owner who wishes to be prudent about leak monitoring should use other more direct kinds of monitoring such as a Flologic or Moen Flo device.

Note that this page is not an official recommendation from the Metro District. This page is one homeowner personally suggesting what you might want to do to be prudent about leak monitoring.

One monitoring solution is the Moen Flo which you can see at above right.

Another monitoring solution is the Flologic which you can see at right.

At least half of the homes on the Ranch already have one or the other of these monitoring systems in place.

For a one-inch pipe the Moen Flo costs \$485. For a ¾-inch pipe it costs \$436.



I have installed a Moen Flo at our house. You can see it at right.

It turns out I chose poorly when ordering this device. Our water meter is one-inch and I sort of assumed that this meant I should get the one-inch Moen Flo. Nope! The way our house got plumbed, as soon as the water got through the one-inch meter, the plumber switched over to 3/4-inch pipe. I could have used the 3/4-inch Moen Flo and saved \$49. Not only that, the 1-inch copper pipe fittings (elbows, couplings, and the pipe itself) are strikingly more expensive than 3/4-inch copper pipe fittings.

But anyway, the installation is done and now the Moen Flo device is in "learning mode" for the next week or two. Here is how they describe it:

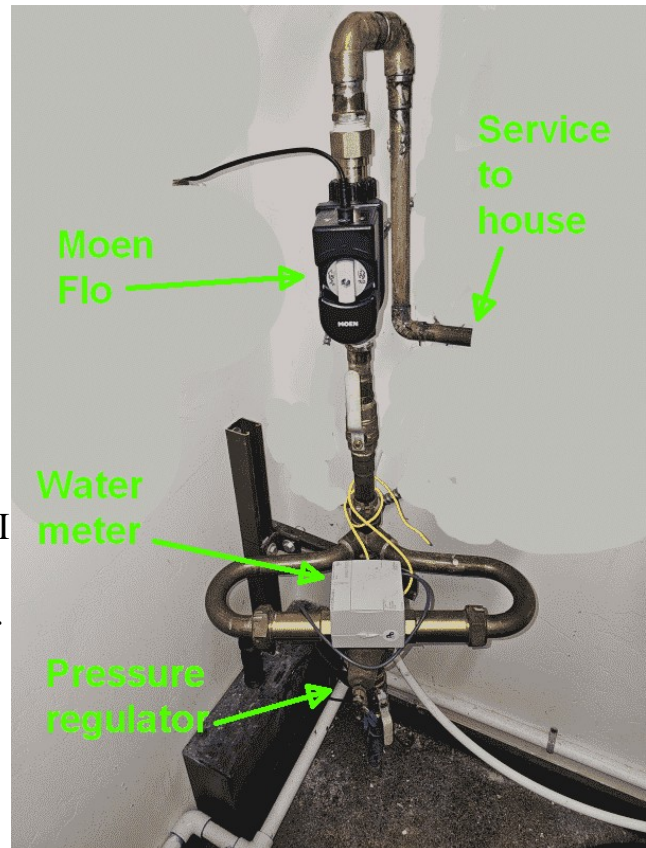
Following initial installation of the Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff on the main water supply line, the Flo system takes approximately 7-10 days to learn the home's water habits. During this time, the dashboard banner on your Moen Smart Water app will indicate that it's "Learning".

The Moen Flo has a very interesting feature that is designed to detect microleaks. (Maybe other leak monitors also have this feature.)

How does your Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff detect microleaks? Meet the Automatic Health Test.

As part of your Flo service and an integral feature of your Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff, a Flo by Moen Health Test is automatically run once every day and you can also run them manually as much as you would like. Health tests are pressure-loss tests on your plumbing system to ensure your home is leak-free by identifying tiny leaks that someone would likely never know existed but that could cause significant damage over time.

To perform the Health Test, the Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff will close its valve to prevent any water supply from entering your home so that it can monitor



the stability of the water within your pipes. If any water usage is detected while the test is running, your Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff will stop the Health Test immediately before you even notice the valve was closed and rerun the test later. The Health Test can be as short as 30 seconds or it may take up to four minutes. If there is very little to no pressure change, you will pass your test. However, if you have a drippy fixture or a leak at any point, the test will fail and your Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff will notify you.

What USAA will pay for. Here is how it works with USAA. The USAA customer would self-install at least two water leak detectors, connect them to a cloud, and give USAA access to the cloud. This would give me, for example, a total annual premium savings of \$164.21. I could imagine you might put one detector in a boiler room, another next to your clothes washer, and another next to a dish washer. You might put one next to the top of your sump pump pit to warn you if your sump pump has stopped working.

USAA has two approved vendors: Roost and Resideo.

- Roost.*** This costs \$20.99 per month (\$251.88 per year) and requires signing a three-year contract. It provides two water leak detectors.

- Resideo.*** One path for Resideo is to purchase and install two water leak detectors. There is no monthly fee, only the purchase price of the two detectors. List purchase price is \$128.98 for two detectors, but with USAA there is a discount on the purchase price to \$103.18. Another path for Resideo is to purchase and install four water leak detectors. There is no monthly fee, only the purchase price of the four detectors. List purchase price is \$258.96 for four detectors, but with USAA there is a discount on the purchase price to \$202.77.

The Resideo water leak detectors also monitor the temperature, with the idea that if the house were to get too cold, this would also generate an alert. Here is what the detector looks like. Note that it says “First Alert” and not “Resideo”.



You lay the cord along the floor in the area being monitored. The entire length of the cord serves as a moisture sensor. It connects to your wifi and from there to a cloud. It runs on two AA batteries that you would need to replace from time to time.

I decided to get some of these sensors (from Resideo) for the simple reason that the premium discount with USAA will pay for them, and after two years it is a cost-free way of getting an ongoing premium discount.

I gave quite a bit of thought to where exactly to place these moisture sensors. The problem is that you want the white sensing cable to be at the place where you worry about things getting wet. But that place is probably behind or under lots of stuff. This means it would be really difficult to replace the batteries that are inside the beeper unit. And this means the beeping would be hard to hear because the beeper unit is behind or under lots of stuff. [Here is an article](#) describing what I think is a good way to handle the mounting and placement of these moisture sensors.

But the Resideo monitors do not monitor actual water flow to see if it looks like there is a leak. And they do not actually shut off the water automatically.

One factor to consider, when selecting a water leak monitoring system, is that your home owner’s insurance company may help to pay for it. Some insurers recommend (and help to pay for) the Flologic. Other insurers recommend (and help to pay for) the Moen Flo. Another insurer (USAA) helps pay for the Roost or Resideo leak detectors.

You can check with your insurer to see what system your insurer recommends.

Yet another protective measure, taken by two of our Ranch homeowners, is to install a whole-house water shutoff valve in a convenient location. In one of our Ranch homes, the home owner can go to a closet near the front door, and can close a ball valve. This disconnects all of the water in the house.

In another of our Ranch homes, the home owner can go downstairs to a door that opens into the crawl space. The owner can open that door and can close a ball valve. This disconnects all of the water in the house.

It is important to think about what might be an unintended consequence of the shutoff of all of the water in the house, if the house uses a boiler to circulate water in the house. The boiler will occasionally need "make-up water". This is most likely to happen if an expansion tank gets waterlogged. Each cycle of boiler heating will then use up some number of gallons in the boiler loop. If all water to the house is cut off, the result could be a starvation of make-up water to the boiler loop. The house might get too cold and then there could be frozen water pipes.

The prudent home owner who uses a whole-house water shutoff valve, whether manually operated or automatically operated, will also do whatever is needed for extremely diligent monitoring of the temperature of the house. If the temperature gets too low, then it will be very important to get somebody to the house right away to take corrective action.

Actually, a careful monitoring of the temperature of the house is extremely important regardless of how the house is heated.

The Moen Flo, the Flologic, and the Resideo (First alert) monitors all keep close track of ambient temperature in the house.

Flume monitor. Some homeowners on the Ranch used to use a Flume Monitor. Unfortunately, the Flume monitor will not work with our new ultrasonic water meters.

(Send comments and suggestions to Carl Oppedahl.)