

# YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS!

By Russ Topp, Circuit Rider

OK, maybe you will. At least now I have your attention! You may have heard of this trick, but for those of you who haven't, I will try to explain it in this article.

This is for anyone who suspects they may have a leak on a water main that crosses a stream, river or swampy area. This will tell you if the water main is leaking and even how much the main is leaking! I have been to several water systems that have water lines crossing low lying areas that have cattails growing in them and I have asked "Have there always been cattails growing here?" Usually the reply is, "I don't really know." There are a lot of water systems that have water mains crossing rivers or streams, especially rural water districts. This always makes me wonder, "Is there a leak on this pipe?" This trick will work on long lengths of pipe, as long as there are no services on it and even if it is plastic pipe. Here is how it works.

You will need to install two valves in the pipe that you know shut off 100%, one on either side of the stream or length of pipe in question. On the "upstream" side of the pipe in question you will need to tap the water main on both sides of the valve. This can be a permanent installation check point by installing a meter pit and a meter yolk for checks in the future. From each tap run a 3/4 inch pipe to the meter pit and install a curb stop on each side. From the curb stop run the pipes to the meter yolk. You can use a 3/4 inch residential meter in this pit.

To check if there is a leak on the pipe in question simply shut both main valves, open the curb stops at the meter pit and see if the meter is turning. If the meter is turning you will know if the pipe is leaking and you can time the leak to determine how much it is leaking.

This will cost a little money, but will be a sure way to rule out a leak under a river, stream or a swamp. If installed with a meter pit this can be used five or ten years down the road or more.

If this is something that may work for your system give me a call and I will come out and visit with you about it.