

kynvaux.org – Know Your Neighbor at The Vaux

Water Leaks: 01 Kohler Bathroom Faucets

Does your bathroom faucet look like this? This faucet is original equipment at The Vaux.

It's a Kohler K-14616 single-handle faucet. It has been discontinued by Kohler. It uses a #1017426 internal valve.

Why do I know all this? We woke up the other morning and there was water across our countertop and dripping down from the countertop. Yikes!

Investigate: Interestingly enough, the water was not dripping under the sink (so an under-sink moisture detector would not have alerted us about this leak).



Investigating further, we saw a narrow stream of water flowing down the back of the faucet and onto the counter.

Turn off water supply: After identifying the source, we got under the sink (removing the treasures stored there) and turned off both the hot and cold water valves. That stopped the stream of water. Because once disturbed these water valves might leak, we put a dry paper towel on the cabinet bottom to show us any drips.

Do It Yourself Next Steps:

We investigated further (the owner's manual that came with our unit actually showed a photo and the model number of the faucet and valve).

We went online and saw that leaks like this were not unusual for faucets like this. The problem is usually the deterioration of the internal valve.



We shopped online and found the proper replacement valve at Home Depot. Kohler #1017426. Got it delivered the next day, total cost \$16.95.

We also found videos online about replacing this type of valve (didn't find one specifically on this Kohler faucet). We'd done a D-I-Y replacement of a similar valve at our home in So CA several years ago and felt like we could handle this one.

The replacement valve arrived and we went to work. Removed the faucet handle (there's a little button covering the internal screw that holds the hand

in place), then removed the valve lock (looks like a big plastic nut) with a large pliers, removed the old valve, cleaned out the inside of the faucet, installed the replacement valve, reinstalled the valve lock, turned on one water line and tested. All good. Turned on the other water line and tested again. All good. Cleaned up and closed up. Left dry paper towel on the countertop near the faucet and under the water line valves overnight to detect any drips. No drips. Success!

Calling a Plumber: I'd concluded that if I couldn't install the new valve myself, I'd call a plumber. We'd live without that sink for a while. The [kynvaux.org](https://www.kynvaux.org) website Vendors / Contractors tab gets you to info on a plumber used by a Vaux resident in the past.

Important Learning for Us:

- We'd pretty much forgotten about faucet valves creating leaks.
- So glad we were home and found this as soon as we did. I'm thinking how much damage this could have done if we'd not been in that bathroom daily. What if we'd been away for a trip?
- Once you figure out the source of the leak, immediately turn off the water supply to the source. We were lucky that this leak could be stopped with two under-sink valves.
- If those valves hadn't worked, turning off the water to the whole unit would have been the next step. That would have involved getting up on a ladder and accessing the main valves (hot and cold) in the ceiling of our entry closet.
- We're glad, at least, that we know where our main valves are located and that we can get to them if we need to.
- After the fact, we found that a neighbor had had a similar problem recently with the same faucet. A reminder that our plumbing systems and fixtures are aging. We need to be vigilant.

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