



SENECA

Loss Prevention

Presents

Water Backup

Water leaks pose a significant threat to commercial buildings, as they use more water than residences, either for their business activities or simply due to the large number of people using the facility's water fixtures daily.

Therefore, leaks in a commercial building may lead to the waste of hundreds of gallons of water per day and can substantially increase the company's monthly bills. Additionally, some plumbing leaks can cause severe water damage to the building and necessitate expensive repairs.

To avoid these issues, property owners need to keep their buildings in excellent condition, perform regular building maintenance, and seek professional solutions at the first sign of a water problem.

A study by Insurance Journal found that water damage that was not weather-related, such as burst pipes and faulty plumbing, accounted for 19% of damage claims while 11% involved rain, snow, and melting ice.



Plumbing Leaks

Needless to say, broken water supply pipes and deteriorated sewer lines are the most common causes of water damage in a building. Water pipes can easily burst in cold weather, while sewer drains may deteriorate over time, causing extensive water leaks and severe water damage. To make matters worse, the piping systems and sewer lines are often buried underground or located inside walls, making it difficult to detect the leak. If the leakage remains unnoticed or unattended for a long time, it can create unexpected flooding or long-term water damage that is very expensive and difficult to repair.

Watch out for the first signs of a pipe leak and act quickly to fix the problem before it has become too late:

- The most common signs of underground plumbing leaks include areas of wet soil, areas where grass or other plants are growing faster than in the surrounding areas, and unstable, spongy floors.
- Bulging walls, crumbling plaster, blistering paint, water stains, cracked or loose tiles, and gaps in the grout are tell-tale signs of leaking pipes in the walls.
- Musty smells, visible mold patches, and unexplainable rises in water bills are clear indicators of hidden water leaks.



Preventing Water Backup

- Maintain gutters and downspouts, keeping them free of debris and leaves and repairing them if they are sagging.
- Inspect your gutters' capacity: install downspouts if water overflows the gutters after fifteen minutes of heavy rain.
- Extend downspouts at least ten feet away from foundation walls.
- Adjust landscaping and irrigation so that water flows away from the foundation.
- Drain subsurface groundwater and storm water with a sump pump system that uses battery backups and replacement warnings.
- Run your sump pump every few months and clean it annually before the rainy season.

- Prevent backflow of sanitary sewer water by installing backflow valves and standpipes at all basement drain locations, including sinks and toilets.
- You may want to consider a leak detection system.

Dealing with water damage can put a lot of strain on you, and during such a stressful time you will need someone to help you see the light at the end of the tunnel.

When you find yourself in a water damage crisis, find a professional to mitigate damage and preserve what you can, they have the tools and experience needed for even the messiest jobs.





The material contained in this document is for informational purposes only. Your individual circumstances may vary depending upon location, type of construction and other factors and you may therefore be required to implement unique approaches to address particular issues that exist at your location. Please consult with licensed professionals and your utility providers to ensure that any safeguards or improvements you undertake are appropriate and safe.

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