



## Mitigating Solutions



### Water Damage Prevention

The majority of water losses can be avoided through regular inspection and maintenance. Here are some ideas of how to keep your home safe and reduce the possibility of incidents in the future.

- Know where your main shutoff is located so that if a problem occurs you can quickly stop the flow of water. Consider installing shut-off valves on water lines under sinks, toilets or on the line that leads to the washing machine.
- Three quarters of all hot water heaters fail by the time they are 12 years old. Inspect the equipment frequently for any damage, cracks or leaks. Flushing the tank every six months will help remove built up sediment that may have accumulated.
- Inspect water hoses and supply lines on your appliances (washing machines, ice-makers, dishwashers) regularly for cracks, kinks or other damage. Consider upgrading from rubber to steel braided.
- Repair cracked tiles or crumbling grout lines around tubs and showers. Test the shower pan by blocking the drain then filling with one inch of water. Leave the water standing for 8 hours, if the level decreases inspect further to determine if there is a leak.
- Visually inspect exposed plumbing pipes and look for condensation, leaks or corrosion.
- Leave indoor and outdoor faucets dripping to prevent them from freezing or bursting in the winter. Insulate pipes in attics, basements and exposed exterior areas to avoid freezing. Disconnect garden hoses when freeze notices are issued.
- Ensure good drainage by cleaning out roof gutters seasonally. Clogged gutters can spill water into your home's foundation or through your roof. Direct downspouts 5-10 feet away from the house and slope your yard away from the foundation. .
- Investigate any changes in your water bill. If it is creeping up over time or is unusually high it could signal a hidden leak.
- Install small electronic devices that sound an alarm when the sensor comes in contact with moisture. These can be installed around water heaters, appliances and toilets to prevent extensive damage and mold growth.
- If you have a sump pump follow the manufacturer's directions for regular maintenance checks and ensure that the outlet pipe is flowing away from the home. Consider installing a battery backup system as power outages are one of the leading causes of water damage incidents related to sump pumps.