Interior Water Emergencies Types - Causes - Response

Types of Interior Water Emergencies

Interior water emergencies are high-priority plumbing events that fall under our **Emergency Response** category. Typically, interior water emergencies fall under one of the following category types:

Interior Roof Drain Failure

Caused when the fittings or drain pipe connections separate due to high volumes of water coming off the roof when combined with weakened drain pipe connections (Typically near the roof decking). Roof drains can also be cracked or broken by heavy equipment and the moving of materials in the space when care is not taken.

Water Heater Failure

Typically a water heater's life expectancy ranges from 10-15 years for an electric water heater and less than 10 years for a gas water heater**.** As they approach the end of their life cycles, rusting and corrosion start to take their toll on the inside of the unit and begin to create holes and leaks. Leaks can also be caused by sediment build up in the water heater**,** pipes and pipe fittings causing corrosion.

Plumbing Fixture or Supply Line Failure

Leaks from various plumbing fixtures and building pipes often come without warning – especially when it comes to older fixtures, installations or buildings. However, small leaks can often be detected and dealt with early if regular inspections are scheduled. Some failures can be caused by:

Deterioration

As the fixture and pipes get older they naturally begin to deteriorate particularly at connection points, seals and joints within the fixture and supporting supplies. The joints, seals and gaskets in the plumbing system can loosen and sometimes even completely separate causing water leakage.

Temperature Change

A pipe can contract during cold weather and then expand again when the line warms back up weakening joints. Freezing pipes often lead to major cracks or full blown ruptures.

Running Fixtures

Some fixtures – especially those assisted with high pressure valves and supplies - can fail to shut themselves off correctly. Most fixtures cannot drain fast enough to handle the continuous high volume of water and they will overflow into the building.

Clogs

Any number of things can cause drainage clogs such as trying to flush objects meant for the trash, high volume usage, food, toilet paper etc. More serious clogs can be caused by line deterioration, line collapse, tree roots, large or other foreign debris in the main building sewer line.

Other Forms of Water Emergencies

Roof leaks, fire line leaks and water coming into the building around doors and windows can also cause significant damage and are addressed as water emergencies.

Steps for Addressing Interior Water Emergencies

Every minute counts when dealing with interior water emergencies due to the high volume of damage that water can do to equipment, inventory and the building itself. ONE-CALL's first response is to get on location as quickly as possible knowing that the longer the water flows uncontrolled the greater the long term damage could be.

Discovery and Evaluation Phase

Arrive on site quickly and evaluate the location, source and impact of the leak.

1) Place the affected area under control in as much as is possible.
    a. Turn off, stop or cap the water supply or source of water
    b. Begin to capture, contain and redirect water flow in order to stop further damage using extracting equipment and containment devises based on the size, type and volume of the water infiltration.
    c. Gather thorough photo documentation
2) Submit an initial report from the field to the ONE-CALL office and property management to determine if remediation and repairs will be made by ONE-CALL or another remediation and/or plumbing vendor.

Remediation and Drying Out Phase

1) The ONE-CALL remediation process will most often start immediately following water control and containment can be assured and once given appropriate approval to do so. It can be as simple as mopping/vacuuming up the water and installing fans in the affected area. However, when needed, a more extensive process of remediation will be followed that can include: Removing materials and furniture / opening up walls, ceilings and cabinets / removing saturated flooring and more.
2) After extraction and the removal of all wet materials the drying out process begins. Commercial grade equipment is used in this process which can include air movers, dehumidifiers, wood floor drying systems, and heaters to generate dry air and increase air circulation and evaporation. Moisture control is absolutely crucial in preventing mold growth. Normal drying time is usually 2 to 4 days depending on the scenario and materials impacted.
3) Gather information from the tenant as to how the damage will impact them and help them create a game plan for reconstruction and repair.
    a. Provide the tenant with a clear explanation of what has happened, what the potential next steps may be, a realistic understanding of how it may impact their work space and for how long it will do so.
    b. Gather needed contact information, hours of operation, employee counts and other details from each tenant so that a repair plan can be created considering the information gathered.
4) Provide a second report from the field to the ONE-CALL office and property management company outlining a potential timeline for reconstruction and repair.

Ramp-Up To Repair Phase

1) A quote for the total remediation and reconstruction will be provided during the first few days that the space is drying out. This quote will include all time and services offered up to that point as well as the full scope of work that remains. Only after receiving a signed quote from the responsible party who will be paying for the services will the remaining reconstruction and repair process begin. The time table for repair can also be affected by:
    a. Severity and scope of the damage
    b. Insurance's companies role in the remediation process.
    c. Customer's operation hours, work zones affected, number of employees and any other factors that might dictate the schedule including the need for portable work spaces.
    d. Determination if repairs can be made during the work week or only over a weekend or nighttime hours.
    e. Availability of materials, required trades and equipment. (for example – most carpets take anywhere between 5 and 21 days to arrive after being ordered)
2) During the this phase clear communication will be critical among all parties so that reasonable expectations can be defined and so that all parties affected by the repair remain informed.

3) Multiple notifications will be sent to all parties leading up to the date scheduled for repairs.

Repair Phase

1) Arrive on site the first day of the reconstruction phase and briefly visit with tenant and review the scope, schedule and potential impact. Answer any questions they may have and confirm contact information.
2) Over see and cooridnate each step of the resoncstruction process - communicating clearly and often - supplying updates on the progect's progress and any unexpected events or scope alterations.
3) Provide a walk through of the entire repair area once the work is completed to assure satisfaction and to answer any questions.