

WATER LEAK EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING GUIDE



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Introduction

This guide outlines the steps you should take before, during and after an internal water leak. With proper planning, you can minimize both property damage and any business interruption that may arise as a result of water damage.

As with all emergency response plans, water leak emergency response plans should be reviewed and updated annually to ensure all responding persons are aware of their responsibilities and properly equipped.

A water leak emergency response plan should include, as a minimum, the following:

1. Building details including your organization's name, location name, address and the plan's revision dates.
2. The location of various water piping, including domestic, fire protection, and heating/cooling systems fully documented.
3. Inventory of equipment and tools to address the leak.
4. Contact details for people with the authority to shut off water.
5. Provision for regular training and review of the plan

Please note that this guide is part of a series relating to water damage. You can find the other two – the **Flood Emergency Response Planning Guide** and the **Water Damage Control Planning Guide** – in the [Resources section](#) of the HSC website.

Emergency response team

Since business operations may be temporarily interrupted and access to the building restricted, people with authority to activate the plan should be clearly identified, including alternates. To assist you in identifying staff for your plan, complete section 2.1 of the fillable template.

Please note: Titles in the template may not exactly translate to those used by your organization. Regardless, all persons listed and involved in water leak response should have copies of the plan.

Use the 2.2 of the template to identify key contractors and vendors. They will likely be involved in the immediate emergency response as well as the longer-term cleanup and recovery.

Pre-planning

The following items should be included in a water leak emergency response plan:

1. Single-line schematic (map) or plot/floor plans, of piping systems and the locations of shutoff valves and pumps, with brief instructions on how to respond to a leak. Depending on the complexity of the building, this should be done floor by floor and/or by riser systems. (Checklist Item #1)
2. Map of all domestic water/liquids systems in the building, including domestic, heating and cooling systems, fire protection, sanitary drain, steam, condensate, and internal roof drains. Pipes should be labelled to indicate the direction of flow. (Checklist Item #2)
3. List of people with the authority to shut off water supplies for all shifts (Template Item 2.3).

In addition, organizations can strengthen their emergency response and the value of their maps and the capacity of their people by:

4. Clearly labelling all water shutoff valves and pumps — domestic, fire protection, heating/cooling systems — to minimize the time required to locate valves and shut off water.
5. Exercising all critical shut off valves annually to ensure they operate.

6. Maintaining spill response carts in central locations. Depending on the size of the building, more than one cart may be required. Template Item 3.1 identifies equipment and tools to include in your spill response carts and indicate quantities of the individual items. Fill Template Item 3.2 to ensure that you can easily contact suppliers to replenish your stock of equipment and tools, as required.
7. Training response personnel on all shifts to ensure they are familiar with valve locations. This should include annual water leak scenario drills to ensure that people involved in responding to water leak incidents are aware of their responsibilities.

Mitigation

Upon notification of a water leak, designated personnel should respond to the area to determine its source. The following steps should be followed upon notification of a leak:

Bring spill kits to area and dedicate efforts to diverting and containing water.



Identify source of leak — e.g., toilet, sink, domestic water line, or fire water line — and control valve for water source.



Shut down water flow to the leak source. If water cannot be shut off by staff, contact emergency contractors/contacts to assist.



Focus on preventing spread and dispersing of water. Leaks from the building structure — including roofs, drains and windows -- should be diverted so water flows away from the building. Make temporary repairs as necessary to prevent additional water entry.



Evaluate potential hazards, such as electrical or slip threats and handle in accordance with authorization from those in charge. Undertake actions, where deemed necessary, to reduce exposures, such as shutting down the power to area or placing signage.

Once the leak has been contained, clean-up and restoration efforts should be implemented.

Please note: if the notification originates from a sprinkler waterflow alarm indicating on the fire alarm annunciator, the local fire department should be contacted, and appropriate investigation should commence in case of fire. If there is no fire and the leak involves the fire protection system, personnel should follow impairment handling procedures as outlined in the fire safety plan.

Clean-up and recovery

To ensure prompt salvage and resumption of operations, the following clean-up and recovery actions should be initiated:

1. Contact contractors and vendors for clean-up and restoration of affected areas (refer to completed Template Item 2.2). Tenants and management should also be contacted to inform them of the incident.
2. Create an inventory of damaged building equipment that requires repair or replacement such as electrical, HVAC, and interior finishing. Use Template Item 4.1 to record this information and completed Template Item 4.2 to obtain any additional supplies.
3. Initiate water removal using pumps, wet vacuums, squeegees, and other equipment.
4. Initiate dehumidification equipment and/or fans to reduce the likelihood of mold growth.
5. Implement contingency plan for extensively damaged areas that may require relocation of operations. Document procedures on how business operations can be made up at other facilities (see [HSC Contingency Plan Guide and Workbook](#)).
6. Remove drywall or provide access panels to encourage air movement within walls.
7. Initiate drying, cleaning, and application of rust-preventative coatings to mechanical and electrical equipment.

8. Relocate salvageable and undamaged contents/stock and supplies to safe areas.
9. If necessary, based on damages, contact insurance company or internal insurance contact to begin claim process.
10. Log the incident for future reference using site incident logging system, if deemed necessary.



**Housing Services Corporation
Insurance & Risk Management Services**

30 Duncan Street, Ste 500
Toronto, Ontario M5V 2C3
1.866.268.4451
insurance@hscorp.ca



WATER LEAK EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN CHECKLIST & FILLABLE TEMPLATE

ORGANIZATION NAME:

LOCATION NAME & ADDRESS:

Date Updated

Updated By

This document is to be reviewed and updated annually, at a minimum.

1. Checklist Of Key Documents

- Single-line schematic (map) or plot/floor plans, of piping systems and the locations of shutoff valves and pumps, with brief instructions on how to respond to a leak
- Map of all domestic water/liquids systems in the building, including domestic, heating and cooling systems, fire protection, sanitary drain, steam, condensate, and internal roof drains. Pipes should be labelled to indicate the direction of flow
- Domestic water pipes maps, including valve list
- Fire protection valve list
- Calendar or master schedule to integrate annual training and review of water leak emergency response plan

2. Emergency Response Team

2.1 - STAFF

TITLE	NAME	OFFICE PHONE	MOBILE PHONE	HOME PHONE
FACILITIES MANAGER				
<i>Alternate:</i>				
ASSISTANT FACILITIES				
<i>Alternate:</i>				
PLANT ENGINEER				
<i>Alternate:</i>				
SUPERINTENDENT				
<i>Alternate:</i>				
SECURITY MANAGER				
<i>Alternate:</i>				
SECURITY SUPERVISOR				
<i>Alternate:</i>				

2.2 - KEY CONTRACTORS/VENDORS

VENDOR TYPE	COMPANY NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
FIRE PROTECTION CONTRACTOR			
PLUMBER			
ELECTRICIAN			
CLEANING COMPANY			
REMEDICATION /RESTORATION			
CLAIMS ADJUSTER			
INSURANCE BROKER			
INSURANCE COMPANY			

2.3 - CONTACTS WITH SHUT-OFF AUTHORITY

NAME	CONTACT DETAILS (E.G., EMAIL, MOBILE PHONE, HOME PHONE)

3. Pre-planning and Mitigation

3.1 - SPILL CART EQUIPMENT & TOOL INVENTORY

QTY	MATERIALS	QTY	MATERIALS
	Plastic tarps		Caution tape
	Wet/dry vacuum		Duct tape
	Portable sump pump		Face mask
	Dehumidifier		Safety glasses
	Fan		Hose clamp
	Pipe leak diverters		5-gallon buckets
	Hoses		Squeegees
	Latex gloves		Sponges
	Diagrams of roof drains and water supply		Two-way radios with fully charged batteries
	Mops		Flashlights

3.2 – EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

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4. Clean Up and Recovery

DAMAGED BUILDING EQUIPMENT	RESTORATION ACTIVITY REQUIRED
