

Preventing Water Damage

Water, whether from burst pipes or leaky roofs, is the leading cause of property damage to CIRMA members. In 2008-09 alone, water damage caused over \$13 million in property damage. Several of these claims forced a temporary closure of the building.

Water leaks are a serious threat to personal safety too. Leaks have caused electrical short-circuits that have set off major building fires. Asthma, allergies, and other health problems can be triggered by mold and mildew growth from water damage. And puddles and slick wet floors can cause slips and falls.

Most instances of water leakage can be prevented by creating and then following a building maintenance plan. Remember, too that no plan is complete if it doesn't say what to do in an emergency. When water is pouring from a broken pipe you only have time to react. Responding quickly and correctly can only happen when everyone is prepared:

Guide for Discussion

General Building Maintenance Plan

- Review the building maintenance plan. Is it current?
- How are maintenance and repair work documented?
- What is the reporting procedure to ensure follow-up repair work is completed?

Storage of items

- Make sure all items of value—especially computers, monitors, printers, copiers, books, machinery are stored off the floor and/or away from water sources.

Response Plan for Water Incidents

- Review location of shutdown of water supply, including who is authorized to access supply. make sure it is properly marked by a sign. Ensure that water supply can be shut down quickly.
- Review shutdown procedures for electrical, oil, and gas supply.
- Review damage mitigation and recovery plan, including location, easy access, and proper use of sump pumps, buckets, mops, wet vacs, etc.
- Post Emergency numbers, including Fire, Police, EMS, Plumbing and HVAC services, and CIRMA (800-526-1647 during business hours, and 203-710-4479 after hours.)

Additional Discussion Notes: Report all incidences to CIRMA as soon as possible, even if you are not sure they are covered. The sooner the claim is filed and the restoration experts can begin work, the better. Mold can begin to grow within 24 hours after an area is wet, causing further damage and creating a potential health hazard.

Remember

Attendees _____