

**Headline: Helpful Hints: Things You Can Do to Help Prevent Or Minimize An Emergency**

**Publication date:** Winter 2014

**Publication:** CHOA Journal

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**Things you can do to help prevent an insurance claim**

1. Keep gutters and outside drains clear of leaves and debris
2. Replace rubber washer hoses with steel braided ones
3. Never leave your washer or dishwasher running when you leave
4. Vacation? Have someone walk through your home daily
5. Going on vacation? Turn off your water supply
6. Fix leaking and dripping faucets immediately
7. Fix continuously running toilets
8. Shovel your walk ways right after or during a snow fall
9. Keep Christmas trees away from flammables
10. Do not overload circuits
11. Do not leave candles burning unattended
12. Monitor self cleaning ovens
13. Do not leave cooking oil unattended
14. Maintain a safe distance between the BBQ and the building exterior
15. Turn off outside faucets to prevent freezing
16. Do not store oily rags in your building

**In case of a water damage**

4 Immediate steps that must be taken

1. SAFETY FIRST – avoid common dangers such as electrical hazards, slipping on wet floors, bacteria in raw sewage
2. STOP THE SOURCE – locate the source of the water and if possible, stop the flow – if you can not locate the source, call a professional such as a plumber or restoration contractor
3. TIME IS CRITICAL – in order to minimize the damage, professional water extraction should begin as soon as possible
4. REMOVE VALUABLES – furniture and rust can permanently stain carpets – place tin foil or clean plastic under furniture legs

How to help protect your contents

- Valuables stored in the basement should be kept on a shelf, up off the floor. Water will find its way to the lowest point and even a small amount will seep into boxes and fabrics.
- Keep photo albums and heirlooms that are not used everyday in boxes, plastic containers, or storage cabinets. In the event of a fire this will minimize the smoke damage.

### **How to help protect your environment from the mould**

If you suffer a water damage have it immediately dealt with by a water damage professional as mould can begin to grow within 24 – 48 hours

- Have a water damage professional confirm that it is dry
- Maintain your indoor humidity below 60%
- Turn on your bathroom/kitchen exhaust fans or open windows when:
  - Cooking
  - Showering or bathing
  - Using the washing machine or the dryer
  - Mopping floors or cleaning carpets
  - Using the dishwasher
  - If there are multiple occupants
  - When air drying laundry within the apartment (not recommended)
  - If fog forms on window surfaces
- Make sure no water escapes the shower compound
- Be sure the dryer is properly vented and that the duct work is cleaned regularly
- Keep all furniture and stacked clothing away from exterior walls by at least a couple of inches to allow for air circulation
- Maintain an acceptable living temperature within the environment (18 – 22° C) - this will prevent dew points and resulting condensation
- If you have a garage, air it out periodically especially on rainy days after you pull your wet car inside – high humidity can cause mould growth on cold surfaces such as your garage door panels and windows
- Fresh air should circulate regularly if there is an abundance of house plants
- Regularly clean your windows and window tracks to prevent mould growth

### **Kitchen Safety Tips**

1. Have a FIRE EXTINGUISHER handy and learn how to use it
2. Practice FIRE DRILLS with everyone in your home
3. Take a FIRST AID course
4. Pay attention to the stove when cooking – avoid distractions
5. Turn handles in and to the side - away from the heat of adjacent burners
6. Ensure that electrical cords are not hanging where they could be caught on someone or something
7. Do not leave cooking oil unattended
8. Do not overload circuits
9. Store volatiles and flammables in a safe location away from heat or flame
10. Do not leave candles burning unattended
11. Monitor self cleaning ovens
12. When planning a vacation, plan to have someone check your home daily