



Homeowners Should Make Accidental Flood Prevention a Priority

Following Simple Tips can Prevent Catastrophe

For Immediate Release

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(May 2, 2011 - Cincinnati, OH) – Most household floods are caused by plumbing or appliance failure and can easily cost the average homeowner more than \$5000 in damage costs. Surprisingly, only 8% of residential flood claims are the result of weather, 30% are caused by appliance failure and 62% by plumbing failure, according to a leading insurance company.

Fortunately, there are some easy steps homeowners can take to protect themselves. Roto-Rooter, North America's largest provider of plumbing and drain cleaning services, says most accidental flooding is caused by worn washing machine hoses, ice maker lines, dish washers, toilets, sump pumps and water heaters. If one of these appliances experiences a failure when nobody is home, or worse, when the occupants are on vacation, the results can be catastrophic.

Roto-Rooter's expert plumbers offer the following tips for protecting your home from accidental floods caused by appliance failure.

- **Inspect basement sump pump once a month.** Ensure it is discharging water properly and is not clogged with debris. Do this by pouring a few buckets of water into your sump pit. In a matter of seconds, the pump should discharge the water and shut off by itself.
- If your sump pump operates frequently, **consider installing a battery back-up sump pump**, which will operate in the event of a power failure.
- **Inspect washing machine hoses often.** If they're original equipment and more than five years old, replace them. Replace rubber hoses with stronger steel braided hoses, which last twice as long. Most people leave washing machine water supply lines turned on so when a hose bursts, water can discharge at up to 500 gallons per hour causing major damage in a short period of time.
- **Ice maker water lines** usually fail because the refrigerator was moved and the line was pinched. Vibration can also damage a water line over time. Inspect lines annually and consider replacing plastic or copper lines with a braided stainless steel hose, which costs around ten dollars.
- **A dishwasher's water supply line** usually leads from your kitchen sink's supply faucets beneath the sink. The dishwasher drain hose also runs between the appliance and the sink or disposal. Inspect the lines twice a year for signs of wear and tear or evidence of a leak.
- **Water heaters can fail slowly or suddenly.** They have been known to rupture and flood homes. Inspect the tank and all plumbing fittings twice a year keeping in mind that life expectancy averages 11 years. Check on your water heater more often if it is more than eight years old. It's better to replace an older water heater on your terms than risk a flood.
- Place inexpensive **battery-operated flood alarms on the floor** near each of these appliances. If water is present, the alarm will sound allowing you time to act sooner. Simple flood alarms cost less than \$15 but they can save homeowners thousands of dollars.
- **Automatic shut-off valves** with their own audible alarms can cost around \$100 each but they can save thousands of dollars if they detect just one leak and prevent a household flood. Manufacturers make models to fit each of the aforementioned appliances and they can be installed by a plumber or competent handyman.

Roto-Rooter was established in 1935 and today is the largest provider of plumbing and drain cleaning services in the United States and Canada. Roto-Rooter operates businesses in more than 115 company-owned territories and approximately 500 franchise territories, serving 90 percent of the U.S. population and 41% of the Canadian population. For more information about Roto-Rooter please visit www.rotorooter.com.

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