



R E P O R T

Controlling a Water Loss

Don't Wait to Begin Water Damage Mitigation

Excess water in your home or office is never a welcome occurrence. Often when we are faced with this unexpected intrusion of water, the proper course of clean-up can be confusing. Immediate response is the key to preventing the water from causing unnecessary damage to your home or office. In most cases, Water Mitigation is the answer.

What is Water Mitigation? To "mitigate" means "to alleviate or to make less severe." Water Mitigation stops the water from spreading and from causing damage to the structure or contents of a home or office.

What Are the Culprits of Water Damage?

Anything in a home or office that transports or contains water is a potential water damage culprit. Broken pipes are often a wintertime foe, but toilets, sinks, ice makers and washing machines are year round threats. A malfunction in any of these household necessities can result in an unwelcome indoor body of water.



Mother Nature can also lend a hand with water damage. Excessive rain can permeate even the most secure of homes causing leaky roofs or sewer backups. While we cannot control Mother Nature, it is important to make sure all equipment in the home is secure and functioning properly to prevent any potential water damage.

While prevention is the best course of action, inevitably water damage emergencies still occur. When emergencies happen, mitigation is necessary to prevent the damage that can result. Early action can benefit both the property owner and insurance provider.

Benefits of Mitigation

For the insured:

- Prevents the damage from spreading further
- Lower loss costs with insurance
- Less interruption to daily living

For the insurance company:

- Quicker response with improved customer service presentation
- Increased customer retention
- Increased customer referrals
- Improved loss ratio

Results of Waiting to Mitigate

- Carpet delamination
- Secondary damage to furnishings, contents
- Mold contamination
- Extreme damage to hardwood floors
- Foul odors resulting from standing or absorbed water



How Does Mitigation Work?

Mitigation can be performed routinely on carpet and wood floors and sometimes on furnishings, walls, ceilings, and other structural materials. A quality restoration vendor can provide excellent service for all types of building materials.

Carpet mitigation begins with turning off the water. Next a mitigation expert will determine the "true" path the water has traveled. This helps to identify areas that have had contact with water longer. The contents of the affected rooms should be protected either by elevation or by moving them to a different location. After securing the contents, the mitigation expert should remove all surface water from the carpet and check crawl spaces for standing water. Depending on specific circumstances, carpet pad will either be removed or dried in place. A mitigation expert can help to make this decision. Immediate response to a water damage situation is imperative to prevent the growth of mold. Finally, controlling moisture in the surrounding area is paramount. Simply put, the more moisture that remains in the room, the longer it will take to dry the structure and contents.

Damage to wood floors can result in cupping, crowning or joint staining, so action to prevent this damage should also begin immediately. Various procedures for drying the floor include air drying, which could take between 6 to 9 months to complete, tenting the floor, which takes 7-14 days, or allowing a quality restoration specialist to use a negative air pressure system that requires only 3-5 days.

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Dehumidification is Key

Drying requires both air movement and dehumidification. The basic concept of dehumidification can be understood by thinking of the air as a sponge and the dehumidifier as a wringer. Just like a dry sponge can absorb more water than a wet one, dry air can absorb more moisture than humid air. The goal of dehumidification is to continually remove moisture from the air, so the air can continue to absorb moisture from the surrounding structure.

In order to achieve this, high velocity air movers are used to sweep away humid air and replace it with less humid air, creating a series of air exchanges. Dehumidifiers are used to "wring" or remove the moisture from the air and deposit it outdoors or in an appropriate receptacle like a drain or bucket.

There are two types of dehumidifiers available, refrigerant and desiccant. A quality restoration vendor should be able to identify the needs of your customer and help to reduce water problems as quickly as possible. Remember, in water damage mitigation, immediate response is everything!



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