

Plumbing (including Showerhead)



Equipment Description

The plumbing system in your home is made up of the supply water piping system, and the drain, waste and vent (DWV) system. The supply water system brings fresh water into the home and distributes it to sinks, toilets, showers, refrigerators and dishwashers. The DWV system transports waste water out of the house to a septic system on the property or into a sewer system in the street. There are many variations and configurations of these systems, each of which have their own preventative maintenance actions and schedules. The tips listed below apply to all of these systems.

Loss Scenario

Supply Piping: Water damage from toilets typically costs \$2,000 to \$10,000 per incident, 78 percent of which were apparently caused by faulty supply lines, toilet flanges, fill valve assemblies or back-ups and overflows.

Drain, Waste and Vent (DWV) Piping: Drain piping can become clogged and can overflow. Waste water backup can

damage contents in your home, and if not cleaned up properly, may become a health hazard. Drain piping external to the house can also be damaged to the point that excavation is required to repair serious leaks which may damage landscaping.

Energy Impact

Water is a limited resource in many areas of the United States. Reducing water use is also beneficial to the environment. Installing a low-flow shower head in your home shower is one of the most effective ways to reduce water use and utility bills. Low-flow shower heads can decrease consumption of water by 50 percent, and significantly reduce water heating energy costs. Modern low-flow toilets are also a method of reducing water use.

Maintenance Tips

- **Supply Piping:**
 - Replace filters and have water treatment systems serviced regularly, if applicable.
 - Inspect exposed piping, valves and water supply lines every six months. Look for signs of leaks and/or corrosion. Have any problems repaired promptly.
 - Clean aerators on sinks and shower heads regularly to keep them flowing properly. Soaking a shower head in a solution of warm vinegar and water will remove calcium buildup if present.
 - Promptly repair any toilets that constantly run or run repeatedly

without being flushed. A faulty toilet can waste hundreds or even thousands of gallons of water per month.

- **Drain, Waste and Vent (DWV) Piping:**
 - Do not pour waste cooking grease or oils down the drain. These can build up in the piping and result in restricted flow. In addition, excess grease and/or oil disposal through the DWV system can seriously damage septic systems requiring thousands of dollars of repairs.
 - Use a drain guard to catch items that may clog the drain such as hair in showers or food in kitchen sinks.

Loss Prevention Tips

- **Supply Piping:**
 - Know where shutoff valves to various fixtures are located. Ensure that they are in proper working order.
 - Make sure the main water supply shutoff is easily accessible and in good working condition.
- **Drain, Waste and Vent (DWV) Piping:**
 - Limit the use of drain openers to fix clogged or slow drains. Long term use of these chemicals can damage pipes resulting in costly repairs.
 - Slow drains may be an indication of an obstruction in the pipe or vent line and should be addressed promptly.