



## Preventing Commercial Water Damage

Water damage consistently ranks as one of the most common reasons for insurance claims among businesses. This damage is not just expensive; it can also create potential health risks and bring the productivity of businesses to a halt, costing additional time and money. Fortunately, various low-cost preventive measures can help reduce the threat of water damage. Consider the following tips:

- **Maintain heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.** HVAC systems are necessary for maintaining a comfortable work environment but can cause costly water damage when not maintained. As such, include HVAC systems in building maintenance programs to check that condensation collection pans, drains and condensation pumps are functioning properly.
- **Conduct regular roof inspections.** Roof leaks can lead to rot and mould growth and can damage surfaces inside buildings. Visually inspect roofs to verify draining systems are clear of debris and functioning as expected. Furthermore, arrange assessments with professional roofing maintenance providers to ensure that small deficiencies don't become more serious problems.
- **Prevent freeze-ups.** During severe cold spells, sprinkler systems and water pipes can freeze, burst and cause devastating water damage. Identify all equipment, processes and piping that could be susceptible to freezing and add sufficient insulation. Drain and secure idle equipment, protect remaining equipment with suitable anti-freeze products and consider locating equipment in heated enclosures.
- **Inspect sewage lines.** Excess water created from sewer blockages can force sewage into buildings through floor drains, toilets and sinks. Consider asking a professional to inspect sewage lines regularly to facilitate early detection of blockages.
- **Check water heaters.** When water heaters fail, they release water and can cause significant property damage. Additionally, deposits accumulate on the bottom of water heater tanks and corrode tank liners over time. As such, regularly inspect water heaters for signs of failure and replace units every 10 years. Furthermore, automatic shut-off valves are a great way to limit damage in the event of a leak or unit failure.

Consider implementing a water damage prevention and response plan to prepare for all eventualities and limit potential losses.

Contact us today for further commercial property maintenance tips.

## Benefits of Workplace Risk Assessments

A risk assessment identifies factors, situations and processes that may cause harm. By completing risk assessments, organizations can determine hazards, evaluate risks and put appropriate control measures in place to create a safer and healthier workplace. Far more than just a box-ticking exercise, risk assessments form an integral part of an occupational health and safety management plan and could even save lives. Consider the following benefits of workplace risk assessments:

- **Enhanced knowledge**—In a busy workplace, it can be difficult to identify all possible hazards. Fortunately, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) provides [guidance](#) and a [sample assessment form](#) to be used as a framework when analyzing safety flaws. Once complete, utilize the findings and knowledge gained from risk assessments to remove workplace vulnerabilities and improve current operations.
- **Bolstered company image**—Just one workplace accident can damage a reputation that took years to build. In contrast, performing timely risk assessments and demonstrating a commitment to workplace safety can improve a company's image. Organizations firm in their resolve to enhance employee and visitor safety may be favoured by consumers.
- **Enriched employee training**—While employees should be notified of any in-place risk

assessments before they conduct certain tasks, consider disseminating risk assessment findings to the entire workforce as well. Through improved education, employees may feel more confident reporting safety flaws to management, reducing the likelihood of accidents.

- **Improved employee productivity**—Employees who feel safe in their working environment may be more motivated and productive. Furthermore, workers may stay at organizations longer if they are valued and their health is taken seriously.
- **Increased savings**—Proactively tackling workplace hazards could reduce the likelihood of workplace incidents and any associated employment-related lawsuits.

Risk assessments should always be completed by competent people with a good working knowledge of the hazardous situations being assessed. For more information, visit the [CCOHS website](#).

For more risk-management strategies, contact us today.



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