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8 Tips to Stop Plumbing Leaks

Plumbing leaks can be prevented with a few simple measures. Plus, learn what to do when leaks occur.



You can buy flow sensors that shut off the water automatically if a leak is detected.

Plumbing leaks and the resulting water damage repairs or mold cleanup can be costly. Avoid the inconvenience with some good habits and modest investments in time and money.

1. Locate your home's main water shut-off valve. If there's ever a plumbing leak, you can go straight there and quickly turn off the water to the entire house.

2. Install shut-off valves at individual appliances and fixtures. That allows you to keep water flowing in other areas of the house while making site-specific repairs. Expect to pay \$4 to \$10 for each valve; expect to pay \$50 to \$75/hour for professional installation.

3. Install a flow sensor that detects plumbing leaks and automatically shuts off water to the entire house or a specific appliance. You'll pay approximately \$75 for this device, plus installation charges of around \$150.

4. Remove hoses from outdoor taps in winter to prevent frozen water from cracking the pipes and causing plumbing leaks, or worse, a flood. Install frost-free hose bibs at exterior taps if you live in these areas.

5. Add pipe insulation to the plumbing in cold parts of your house—such as garages, basements, and crawl spaces—to avoid frozen pipes (and to shorten the wait time for hot water). Pipe insulation tubes cost as little as \$1.00 per metre.

6. Don't use exposed pipes as hanger rods for laundry or to store clothes. Doing so can loosen joints and fasteners and lead to plumbing leaks.

7. Don't overload vanities and sink cabinets. When you crowd stuff into your cabinets, you can jostle water supply pipes and drains, loosening connections and causing plumbing leaks. If drips occur, they're tough to spot amid piles of cleaners, shampoo, conditioners and spare packets of tooth paste.

8. Fix problems quickly. Even small leaks can make pipes corrode more quickly, and cause significant water damage or mold. Take the time to periodically inspect your home for signs of leaks and drips.

To find out more and get your home inspected call your local independent property inspector on **1800 17 88 22** or email info@ipi.net.au