

Preventing Water Damage During COVID-19

Loss Control, Water Damage Prevention, 3

During these unprecedented times, church maintenance is a critical step in protecting your ministry from being further disrupted. As many churches remain closed, it is essential to check buildings regularly to help prevent and mitigate the effects of significant water damage. Insurance Board offers these options for consideration.

- If your church remains closed, make sure your water supply is turned off. Continue to regularly monitor buildings and temperatures (50°F minimum).
- When you reopen, ensure there are no leaks when you turn on your water supply. Check pipes/valves everywhere especially in concealed spaces for leakage/seepage.
- Check/test and have your automatic sprinkler system, alarms, fire extinguishers and ANSUL fire suppression systems serviced
- Make sure all ceilings are free of sagging/bowing/separation. Ensure walls and ceilings are free of crumbling plaster, stains or flaking/peeling paint.
- Have the HVAC system professionally inspected/cleaned.
- Basement walls should be dry and free of mold/mildew.
- Check your sump pump; if it does not have a battery back up, install one now.
- If you emptied the baptistery, check water lines for cracks and confirm that the drain is closed before you refill. Refill slowly checking for leaks as you go.
- Check sink, shower and floor drains to make sure they are clean. Pour water down every floor drain to confirm they are not clogged.
- Continue to keep an eye on common sources of water leaks like roofs, HVAC units, water heaters, boilers, sprinkler systems, and pressure regulators.
- Consider installing a water sensor system to help alert you of potential concerns. Early detection is key to minimizing damage. Insurance Board has partnered with Hartford Steam and Boiler to provide discounted systems to Insurance Board participants. More information can be found [here](#).
- Plan ahead to make winter preparations on your property; frozen pipes can cause extensive damage in your church.

A water crisis requires a quick response. Knowing what to do can help to minimize damage. Maintain a list of emergency contacts: plumber, roofer, water remediation company, your insurance agent. Take steps to protect your building from further damage; contact the appropriate contractor to address the issue and contact Insurance Board.

As your house of worship decides to gather again, make sure to conduct a complete facility check [prior to reopening](#).

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