



# HOME EMERGENCY QUICK GUIDE

## WHAT TO DO FIRST WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

| STAY CALM | TAKE SAFE ACTION | KNOW WHEN TO CALL FOR HELP |
|-----------|------------------|----------------------------|
|-----------|------------------|----------------------------|

Use this guide for the first few minutes of a household problem. It focuses on limiting damage without encouraging unsafe electrical, gas, structural, roofing, or specialized work. **If there is immediate danger to people, leave the area and contact emergency services from a safe location.**

|                              |                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Burst or Leaking Pipe     | 2. Overflowing Toilet                   |
| 3. Water Through the Ceiling | 4. Electrical Burning Smell or Sparking |
| 5. Breaker Keeps Tripping    | 6. Suspected Gas Leak                   |
| 7. Water Heater Leaking      | 8. HVAC Stops Working                   |
| 9. Roof Leak During a Storm  | 10. Sewer or Drain Backup               |
| 11. No Water in the House    | 12. Frozen Pipe                         |
| 13. Storm or Power Outage    | 14. Smoke or CO Alarm Sounding          |

**Your Home. Your Plans. Our Purpose.**

# 1

## BURST OR LEAKING PIPE

Stop the water to limit damage.

- 1 Shut off the nearest fixture valve if the leak is isolated; otherwise use the main water shutoff.
- 2 Open a low faucet if appropriate to relieve pressure.
- 3 Move valuables and contain water only if the area is safe.
- 4 Photograph damage after the immediate hazard is controlled.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Get help if the shutoff will not operate, the leak continues, piping is concealed, or water is near electricity.

# 2

## OVERFLOWING TOILET

Stop incoming water before addressing the clog.

- 1 Lift the tank flapper/float if that immediately stops filling.
- 2 Close the toilet shutoff valve.
- 3 Do not keep flushing.
- 4 After water is controlled, determine whether it is a simple local clog.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call a plumber for repeated overflow, multiple backed-up fixtures, sewage, or a failed shutoff valve.

# 3

## WATER THROUGH THE CEILING

Wet ceilings can collapse.

- 1 Keep people away from sagging or bulging drywall.
- 2 Avoid wet lights, switches, and electrical components.
- 3 Catch drips only if the area is safe.
- 4 Shut off an obvious upstairs plumbing source if safely accessible.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Get prompt help for sagging ceilings, unknown sources, roof leaks, concealed plumbing, or water near electricity.

## 4

### ELECTRICAL BURNING SMELL OR SPARKING

Treat heat, smoke, sparks, and burning odors seriously.

- 1 Do not touch hot, sparking, wet, or damaged electrical equipment.
- 2 Unplug a device only if clearly safe.
- 3 If safely accessible and known, turn off the affected breaker.
- 4 Keep people away from the area.

**CALL FOR HELP:** For fire or active smoke, evacuate and call emergency services. Otherwise contact a qualified electrician.

## 5

### BREAKER KEEPS TRIPPING

A breaker is a safety device.

- 1 Turn off or unplug devices on the affected circuit.
- 2 Reset the breaker once: fully OFF, then ON.
- 3 Reconnect devices one at a time only if it stays set.
- 4 If it trips again, leave it off.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call an electrician if it repeatedly trips, feels hot, will not reset, smells burned, or the cause is unclear.

## 6

### SUSPECTED GAS LEAK

Leave first. Investigate later.

- 1 Leave the building immediately if you smell gas or suspect a significant leak.
- 2 Do not operate switches, phones, appliances, garage doors, or anything that could spark while inside.
- 3 Do not use a flame to search for a leak.
- 4 From a safe location, contact the gas utility or emergency services.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Treat a suspected gas leak as an emergency and do not re-enter until authorities say it is safe.

## 7

**WATER HEATER LEAKING****Control water and energy only when safe.**

- 1 Close the cold-water supply to the heater if safely accessible.
- 2 For electric units, switch off the breaker only if the area and panel are dry.
- 3 For gas units, do not manipulate gas controls if you smell gas.
- 4 Keep people away from hot water and damaged flooring.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call a plumber for a leaking tank, discharging relief valve, failed shutoff, or major corrosion. For gas odor, leave and call the utility.

## 8

**HVAC STOPS WORKING****Start with simple checks.**

- 1 Check thermostat mode, setpoint, and batteries if applicable.
- 2 Inspect/replace a clearly dirty filter using the correct size.
- 3 Reset a tripped HVAC breaker only once.
- 4 Make sure accessible supply and return vents are open and clear.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call HVAC service for repeated breaker trips, water leaks, icing, burning odors, unusual noises, or continued failure.

## 9

**ROOF LEAK DURING A STORM****Never climb onto a wet roof.**

- 1 Keep people away from sagging ceilings and wet electrical fixtures.
- 2 Catch water with containers only if safe.
- 3 Move valuables away.
- 4 Document the leak from inside and wait for safe weather before exterior evaluation.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Arrange professional evaluation for active intrusion, damaged ceilings, displaced roofing, or an uncertain source.

1  
0

## SEWER OR DRAIN BACKUP

Stop adding water to the system.

- 1 Stop using sinks, toilets, showers, washer, and dishwasher.
- 2 One slow fixture may be a local clog.
- 3 Multiple affected fixtures can indicate a larger drain/sewer problem.
- 4 Keep people and pets away from sewage-contaminated water.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call a drain/plumbing professional for multiple backups, sewage, or recurring problems.

1  
1

## NO WATER IN THE HOUSE

Determine whether it is the home or utility.

- 1 Check whether neighbors on the same utility also have no water.
- 2 Confirm the main water valve is open.
- 3 Look for obvious evidence of a major leak or burst pipe.
- 4 For a well, check only simple homeowner-visible items such as a tripped breaker; do not open controls.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Contact the utility for an outage; use a professional for well/pump issues, hidden leaks, frozen service lines, or unknown causes.

1  
2

## FROZEN PIPE

Act before it splits.

- 1 Identify the affected area if possible.
- 2 Keep the faucet slightly open so pressure can escape.
- 3 Warm the room gradually.
- 4 Never use an open flame or torch.
- 5 Be ready to use the main shutoff if the pipe begins leaking.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Call a plumber for a burst pipe, concealed/inaccessible freeze, unsafe thawing conditions, or visible water damage.

1  
3

## STORM OR POWER OUTAGE

Use safe backup practices.

- 1 Use flashlights rather than candles where practical.
- 2 Keep refrigerator/freezer doors closed.
- 3 Stay away from downed utility lines and damaged electrical equipment.
- 4 Never run a portable generator indoors, in a garage, crawlspace, or other enclosed/partially enclosed area.

**CALL FOR HELP:** Contact emergency services or the utility for downed lines, fire, electrical damage, or immediate hazards.

1  
4

## SMOKE OR CO ALARM SOUNDING

Treat an emergency alarm seriously.

- 1 For an emergency smoke or CO alarm, evacuate and follow emergency guidance.
- 2 Do not assume a CO alarm is false because you cannot smell anything.
- 3 A low-battery chirp is different; follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- 4 Replace alarms according to manufacturer service-life guidance.

**CALL FOR HELP:** For emergency alarms, suspected fire, CO symptoms, or unexplained repeated activation, leave and contact emergency services.

## IMPORTANT HOME INFORMATION

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Main water shutoff: _____ | Electrical panel: _____        |
| Gas shutoff: _____        | Gas utility emergency #: _____ |
| Electric utility: _____   | Water/sewer utility: _____     |
| Plumber: _____            | Electrician: _____             |
| HVAC company: _____       | Insurance / policy #: _____    |

**Emergency services: 911 | U.S. Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222**

General homeowner information only. Follow manufacturer instructions and local emergency guidance; never enter an unsafe area or attempt work beyond your training.