

Emergency Water Damage Checklist

What to do in the first 24 hours after a water loss in the Phoenix metro. Work top to bottom — the order matters more than the speed of any single step.

Call first if there is standing water, ceiling water, sewage, or water near electrical.

24/7 emergency dispatch: **(602) 755-0251**

First 5 minutes — make it safe

- ☐ Shut off the water at the fixture valve; if it fails, use the main shutoff (usually near the front hose bib or in the garage).
- ☐ Kill power to affected rooms at the breaker if water is near outlets, cords, or ceiling fixtures. Never step into standing water to reach the breaker.
- ☐ Move people and pets out of any room with sagging drywall or ceiling water.
- ☐ Do not enter water that may be sewage or flood water from outside.

First hour — call and document

- ☐ Call an IICRC-certified restorer. Every hour of delay increases the risk of secondary damage.
- ☐ Photograph and video everything before moving anything: wide shots of each room, the water line, the source, and damaged contents.
- ☐ Move rugs, small furniture, and boxes off the floor. Put foil under furniture legs on wet carpet to prevent staining.
- ☐ Write down the time the loss was discovered and the suspected source.

Hours 1-6 — mitigation begins

- ☐ Restorer tests the water category and sets up extraction and containment if needed.
- ☐ Moisture readings taken and logged in a daily drying report.
- ☐ Standing water extracted; wet contents catalogued for pack-out or on-site drying.
- ☐ Air movers and dehumidifiers placed — the drying chamber starts.

Hours 6-24 — keep the drying on track

- ☐ Leave equipment running continuously. Turning it off restarts the drying clock.

- ☐ Controlled demolition of any Category 2 or 3 material that cannot be dried in place.
- ☐ Documentation compiled: photos, moisture readings, and a written scope of work.
- ☐ Daily moisture readings continue until the structure hits the drying goal.

Do not do these

- ☐ Do not throw anything away before it is photographed and inventoried.
- ☐ Do not use household fans — they push moist air into wall cavities and speed mold growth.
- ☐ Do not attempt DIY demo; cuts must be measured to the IICRC S500 standard to dry correctly.
- ☐ Do not sign a broad work authorization without reading it.
- ☐ Do not wait. Category 1 water can degrade to Category 2 within 48 hours in Phoenix conditions.

This checklist is general guidance, not a substitute for an on-site inspection by a certified restorer. Call (602) 755-0251 for a free inspection anywhere in the Phoenix metro.