

Washing Machine Hoses

Introduction

Short of fire, nothing causes more damage to the inside of a property than leaking water. It is estimated that 65% of property damage to community associations is caused by water leaking from failing pipes, hoses, plumbing fixtures and appliances.

This guide addresses washing machine hoses, a leading cause of residential water damage. Our research shows that there are simple and inexpensive steps associations can take to prevent most of this damage.



What CAU Recommends:

- > Encourage and remind residents to turn off the water when not using their washers.
- > Establish and enforce a Washing Machine Hose Replacement Resolution.
- > Require residents to equip washers with high-quality washer hoses.
- > Equip feeder pipes with easy-to-close or automatic shut-off valves.
- > Provide water catch pans beneath washers.
- > Remind all residents to know the location of their water main shut-off and how to use it.

Need More Information

Associations can obtain a sample washing machine hose resolution and sample resident notification letters by contacting CAU's Loss Control Department. These documents are intended to guide Board members in drafting their own, similar resolution, introduce the program to all residents and follow-up with residents who have not complied as of the compliance date.

Your legal advisor should review any resolution before it is proposed.

Washing Machine Hoses

The leading cause of water damage in most residences is failure of the flexible rubber hoses that connect the washing machine to the hot and cold water feed pipes.

The hoses that come with new washing machines and their equivalent replacement hoses are of low quality, usually lasting no more than four or five years.

These hoses usually fail at a specific place – the coupling. Standard hose couplings are rolled and stamped from thin sheets of copper, inserted into the hose ends and then crimped. Over time, flowing water polishes the metal coupling edges to a razor sharp edge. Those edges then cut the hose inside and outside where it bends at either end.

Many so-called experts and consumer groups tout braided stainless steel washer hoses as “burst-proof.” However, these hoses are essentially the same consumer-grade rubber hoses with a wire mesh jacket on the outside. When the coupling and hose are crimped together, the mesh jacket can be crushed into the hose and provide another sharp edge to cut the unreinforced rubber hose.



Other aggravating factors in hose failures include not closing the washer valves when the washer is not in use and valve failures. The subject of water valves is covered in a separate Risk Management Guide.

If the faucets cannot be closed or the washer is unattended when a washer hose fails, the discharge can be devastating. It can collapse floors and flood areas below and adjacent to the laundry room. Even regular inspections cannot detect signs of wear in washer hoses. These hoses fail suddenly and without warning.

Washing Machine Hose Upgrade

For under \$40, a resident can buy a pair of

high-quality washing machine hoses. Several manufacturers offer good hoses and at least one manufacturer, FloodChek™, guarantees its hoses against leaking or bursting for up to 20 years. FloodChek™ hoses are only available through authorized distributors. Associations insured through CAU can purchase these hoses at a discounted price through Creative Laundry Systems, Inc. Simply call (800) 369-4771 or go online at www.creativelaundry.com and indicate that you are insured through CAU.

Washing Machine Hose Replacement Resolution

The most effective step an association can take to get the right kind of hose on every washer is to adopt a washing machine hose replacement resolution. The resolution should require that the association install, within a reasonably short period, high-quality hoses comparable to those described in this guide.

Associations that do not install special hoses will need to require hose replacement at least every four or five years. However, the resolution we recommend is far simpler, and with hoses good for 20 years, it is easier and less intrusive to monitor and enforce.

The specific hose and hose supplier referred to in this publication are among several available. Check with your plumber or plumbing supply company for material and recommendations on other comparable products.

Conclusion

Water is the most insidious and relentless of property destroyers. It ruins more property than fire. The only solution is prevention. Implementing the suggestions in this guide can minimize this threat and add years of useful life, safety and value to your property.

Associations that take prompt, effective action to prevent water damage do more than preserve their property. They relieve some of the financial pressure on their maintenance budgets and reserve replacement funds. Moreover, they avoid large, special assessments for the unanticipated, early replacement of major building elements.