Water Leak Prevention for Sinks and Toilets

Water leaks from sinks and toilets can be very expensive. These leaks can cause damage to floors, ceilings, walls, and can harm multiple floors, including the floor below the source of the leak. Not repairing the problem can drain your wallet as the cost of repairing the damage can be in the thousands. Landlords, property managers, and small business owners should consider taking a proactive approach to reduce the potential loss from these types of interior water leaks. With regular scheduled inspections and preventative maintenance, you can prevent leaks before they start.

Consider the following tips to prevent water damage from leaking sinks and toilets:

**Leaking Sink Prevention**

The three most common locations to find water leaks include the rim of sink, water supply line, and the drain.

**Rim of Sink**

Leaks from the rim of the sinks are often caused by either an old or worn out caulking solution or a loose faucet base. To test for this leak take a sponge and soak it with water. Then squeeze out the water from the sponge around the rim of the sink. Then inspect the cabinet under the sink under the rim to see if water is present/leaking (a flashlight might be necessary).

**Water Supply Line**

This type of leak is usually caused by a loose connection or hole in the supply line. To test the supply line for a leak, turn on the water to the sink and let it run for a minute or two. While the water is running, take a dry towel and rub it along and around all connections along the water supply line. Then inspect the towel for dampness/wetness. If the towel is damp/wet, most likely there is a leak in the supply line.

**Drain**

This type of leak is often attributed to a leaky joint, slip nut, or strainer under the sink. To test for a drain leak, fill the sink with water. Then open the drain and allow the water to drain out of the sink. As the water is draining, take a dry towel and flashlight, and wipe all the connections along the drain line. If at any point there is water on the outside of a connection, it is likely the source of a water leak.

**Leaking Toilet Prevention**

The four most common types of toilet leaks are in the flapper, water supply line, overflow tube/water level, and the wax ring under the toilet.

**Leaking Flapper**

To verify that the flapper is not leaking add a few drops of red food coloring in the tank. Leave the food coloring in the tank for approximately one hour. If the water in the tank begins to turn pink, the flapper is leaking and needs to be repaired or replaced.
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Overflow Tube/Water Level
To prevent water from flowing over the top of the overflow valve (inside the tank), the float valve must be inspected to confirm that it shuts off when the water is at least an inch below the top of the overflow tube. The water supply line to the tank is a line/hose that runs through the floor/wall to the bottom of the tank. If leaks are found, the water supply line needs to be repaired or replaced.

Wax Ring Leak
Inspect the floor around the base of the toilet for softening or for discoloring of the flooring. If either or both of these conditions are observed, the wax ring probably is leaking and needs replacing before the condition gets worse.

Leaky Supply Line
Check the area around the supply line for any obvious evidence of water by rubbing a dry towel along the water supply line and the connections. If the towel gets wet, then there is likely a leakage and the line would need replacing.

Reference: http://greenlivingideas.com

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