

Lessons Learned – Water Damage

An NJPHA-JIF member recently sustained a major property loss due to water damage; the cause was a fracture in the supply line of a second-floor toilet. The water ran unchecked for an undetermined period of time; the resident who discovered the running water failed to turn off the valve.

The supply line in question was from a standard order for shop inventory from Home Depot. The line was a 12” flexible line manufactured by Brass Craft, and was installed about one year ago. The fitting that attaches the line to the toilet apparently failed spontaneously around the circumference (Figure 1). The fitting of concern was purchased a year ago and is made of white plastic (Figure 2); it bears the label “Speedi Plumb PLUS”. Those recently acquired under the same model number have a greyish hue, and appear to be made of a slightly more pliable material. The wings used to twist the fitting are longer. The new lines appear deeper in the number of threads that would engage the toilet threads than the previous model (Figure 3).

Figure 1 (“old type”)



Figure 2 (“old type”)



Figure 3 (“



The following steps are recommended for immediate action:

- 1) Immediately survey facilities for existing installations of the older toilet fittings.
- 2) Check parts inventory in your shops for the older version.
- 3) Initiate replacement of these lines with the newer model. Prioritize installation in units above ground level, where a breakage could extend to lower units.
- 4) Coach residents on location of water shut off valves and procedure to be taken if a leak develops (e.g., turn off valve, call number for maintenance. Consider a sign off sheet that documents that this instruction has been provided to a member of the household.

Remember that water damage is our most costly cause of property losses. Please help us prevent these types of incidents.

For more information, contact your risk management consultant, or NJPHA-JIF safety director, Jim Rhoads at 610-937-2694 or Tim Weir at 610-937-2697 or by e-mail at james_rhoads@pmagroup.com, tim_weir@pmagroup.com.

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