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Planning for a flood saves time and money: You must act quickly for many reasons

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With Thanksgiving behind us, we are reminded that the harsh winter season will soon be here -- and with it the very real potential for property damage due to extreme weather conditions. Dropping temperatures too often translate into bursting water pipes that can cause major water damage. In fact, according to the Insurance Information Institute, water damage and freezing pipes made up more than 21% of ALL insurance claims in 2003.

Imagine entering one of your properties only to find a room flooded with water over a new carpet that you just had installed. What do you do first when an employee or building tenant calls to report that water is dripping from a ceiling light fixture? It's a fact that just one small 1/8-inch crack in a pipe can release more than 250 gallons of water in a single day. And many insurance companies deny claims that are not filed within a timely manner (in most cases, within 24 hours). When faced with a sudden flood or potential water hazard, you must act quickly for many reasons.

Here are just a few steps to take immediately after a flood:

- *Call your local certified water damage restoration contractor first. By getting the professionals on site quickly, you won't give the water time to create extensive damage.
- *Make sure everyone in the property is safe and evacuated if necessary.
- *Shut off the electricity at the breakers for the affected areas if possible.
- *Before entering a water damaged area, check for potential hazards such as slippery floors, soggy carpeting, collapsing ceilings, broken pipes, etc.
- *If possible, determine what caused the leak.
- *Safely move or protect valuable files, furniture, equipment and other property.

There is no better time to plan for the unexpected than now, before the brunt of the coldest months are upon us. For property owners and managers, putting together a contingency plan for any kind of water emergency will save you time and money while ensuring safety for employees and tenants.

Creating a proper plan will help you assess any water damage situation and establish restoration procedures. To access a useful, customizable document that will define the steps you need to take when a water disaster strikes, from both a proactive and reactive position, visit www.puritanflood.com/download-water-damage-protocol.

Here you can download the Water Damage Protocol document. Included you will find response and inspection procedures, evacuation considerations, restoration measures, loss assessment, as well as a contractor resource list that you can customize.

Remember that time is of the essence when a flood disaster strikes. The sooner a professional crew is called to the scene, the sooner the restorative process will take place and save you precious down time and money while keeping everyone safe.

Puritan Flood Restoration, founded in 1982, is the leading water damage restoration drying company in Massachusetts, and a pioneer on the national scene.

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