

THE 5-MINUTE SAFETY CHECK: TOP 3 WATER ISSUES

Try this checklist anytime something water-related goes wrong in your home.*

BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING:

- Is anyone in immediate danger?
- Do you smell gas, smoke, or burning?
- Is water spreading rapidly?
- Are there sparks or exposed wires?
- Can you safely access the problem area?

⚠ IF YOU CHECKED ANY BOX ABOVE:

- GET OUT immediately
- Call 911 or your utility company
- Do NOT attempt to fix the problem yourself
- Do NOT re-enter until authorities say it's safe

✓ IF ALL BOXES ARE UNCHECKED:

You can proceed to assess the problem. Continue to the decision flowcharts on the next pages.

DECISION FLOWCHARTS

For the 3 Most Common Water Emergencies....

1. NO HOT WATER

START HERE: Water is cold when it should be hot

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CHECK: Is it ALL faucets or just one?

ONE FAUCET ONLY:

- Likely a faucet issue, not water heater
- Try cleaning aerator
- If no change → Call plumber

ALL FAUCETS COLD:

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CHECK YOUR WATER HEATER:

GAS WATER HEATER:

- Is pilot light on? (Look through viewing window)
- Is gas valve turned to "ON"?

NO PILOT LIGHT → Try relighting (follow instructions on tank)

PILOT WON'T STAY LIT → ⚠ CALL PLUMBER/HVAC

ELECTRIC WATER HEATER:

- Check breaker - is it tripped?
- Try resetting breaker

BREAKER KEEPS TRIPPING → ⚠ CALL ELECTRICIAN/PLUMBER

2. WATER LEAK

START HERE: You see water where it shouldn't be

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IMMEDIATE ACTION: Put bucket/towels to catch water

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ASSESS:

- Can you see where it's coming from?
- Is it a slow drip or fast stream?
- Is it near electrical outlets/wiring?

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IF NEAR ELECTRICAL:

- ⚠ Turn off power to that area at breaker box
- DO NOT touch water
- Call an electrician + plumber

IF NOT NEAR ELECTRICAL:

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CAN YOU LOCATE THE SOURCE?

✓ **YES** → Try these:

- Visible pipe leak? → Turn off water supply valve to that fixture
- Ceiling leak? → Place bucket, check attic/floor above
- Toilet leak? → Turn off valve at base of toilet

IF WATER STOPS → Monitor and call plumber if needed

IF WATER CONTINUES → Turn off main water supply → ⚠ CALL A PLUMBER

x NO → ⚠ CALL A PLUMBER IMMEDIATELY

3. CLOGGED DRAIN/TOILET

START HERE: Water draining slowly or not at all

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ASSESS THE SITUATION:

- Is it one drain or multiple?
- Can you see what's causing it?
- Does it smell like sewage?

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IF SEWAGE SMELL:

→ ⚠ CALL A PLUMBER (possible sewer issue)

IF MULTIPLE DRAINS SLOW:

→ ⚠ CALL A PLUMBER (possible main line clog)

IF ONE DRAIN/TOILET:

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TRY THESE (IN ORDER):

FOR SINKS:

1. Baking soda (½ cup) + vinegar (½ cup)
2. Wait 15 minutes
3. Flush with hot water
4. If still clogged → Try drain snake (\$8 at hardware store)
5. Still clogged? → Call plumber

FOR TOILETS:

1. Use plunger (20 pumps)
2. If not cleared → Wait 10 minutes, try again
3. Still clogged? → Call plumber

⚠ DO NOT USE DRANO IN TOILETS

⚠ If water backs up into other fixtures → CALL PLUMBER