

# Loss Prevention Safety Tip



Loss Prevention  
Program

By Red River Mutual

## WASHING MACHINE HOSES

A leading cause of water damage in homes is failure of the flexible rubber hoses that connect the washing machine to the hot and cold water supply lines. If a washing machine is unattended and valves cannot be closed when a hose fails, the discharge of water can be devastating. It can collapse floors and flood areas below and adjacent to the laundry room. Implementing the suggestions below can help protect your home from the threat of water damage.

### Causes of Hose Failure

The hoses that come with new washing machines are typically of low quality, usually lasting no more than four or five years, and can fail without warning. Washing machine hoses usually fail where the metal coupling crimps the hose end. Over time, flowing water sharpens the metal edges which can cut the inside of the hose, leading to rupture. Keeping the washer valves open when the washer is not in use is also a cause of hose and valve failure, as constant high water pressure is applied to these components.

### Inspect Hoses Monthly

- Check that hoses are tightly connected to the water supply valves.
- Look for signs of unusual wear like dryness, cracking or swollen points, and replace immediately if cut, frayed or damaged.
- There may be signs of rust, corrosion or leaking around the hose ends before they burst.
- Make sure your washing machine is at least 4" from the wall to prevent the hoses from bending and kinking. This can restrict water flow and increase the pressure on the hose.
- Also examine the drain hose at the back of the washer which is inserted into the main drain line. Make sure the hose is secured and won't dislodge as the washer agitates or drains.

### Upgrade Your Hoses

Replace both the hot and cold washer hoses every five to seven years, even if they appear to be in good condition. To prevent leaks or rupture, consider upgrading washing machine hoses to stainless steel braided hoses. To further prevent problems, practice turning off your hose valves when the washing machine is not in use. Never leave your washer on when you're sleeping or heading out of the house. If your home will be unoccupied for more than a few days, take the time to shut off the main water valve. For longer periods, ask a friend, relative or neighbor to check your home on a regular basis.



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