

First 24 Hours Emergency Leak Response Checklist

Evidence-based structural drying & mold prevention | Non-commercial educational printout

INTENDED AUDIENCE: Homeowners, Renters, and Caregivers responding to an active leak
DOCUMENT STATUS: Printable Draft Edition | Last Reviewed: September 2026
COMPLIANCE NOTE: Non-commercial public health educational publication.

Document Overview & Purpose

Immediate containment steps to halt water intrusion, prevent electrical hazards, begin safe water extraction, and inhibit mold spore germination within the critical 24-to-48-hour window.

Key Inspection Modules Included:

- Immediate electrical safety triage before entering wet rooms
- Main water shutoff execution and source isolation
- Standing water extraction techniques (wet/dry vacuuming vs evaporation)
- Furniture and porous asset elevation to avoid wicking and staining
- Cross-ventilation, dehumidification, and moisture monitoring setup

Checklist Action Items & Inspection Checkpoints:

Minute 0–15: Safety & Source Containment

- ☐ Do not step into standing water if electrical outlets, cords, or appliances are submerged.
- ☐ Shut off the water source immediately: turn fixture angle stop or main supply valve clockwise.
- ☐ If leak is from a ceiling, place a catch bucket underneath and puncture a small drain hole.
- ☐ Wear protective footwear with non-slip rubber soles and heavy rubber gloves.

Minute 15–60: Asset Elevation & Initial Extraction

- ☐ Elevate wood and upholstered furniture by placing aluminum foil squares under legs.
- ☐ Remove wet area rugs, paper documents, and fabrics from wet flooring to a dry area.
- ☐ Extract standing pooled water immediately using a dedicated wet/dry shop vacuum.

Hours 1–24: Air Movement & Dehumidification

- ☐ Place portable dehumidifiers in the affected room; empty collection buckets frequently.
- ☐ Position box fans or air movers to blow across wet flooring and baseboards.
- ☐ Keep indoor relative humidity below 50% to prevent fungal spore germination.
- ☐ Take comprehensive date-stamped photos and video of all damaged materials.

NONPROFIT & POLICY DISCLOSURE

This educational document is provided for public awareness and does not substitute for licensed engineering, plumbing, or mold remediation services. Download updates at <https://motsdouarts.com/water-damage-restoration/downloads/>

