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National News

Travelers Finds Water Damage Ten Times More Likely Than Fire

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While fire may be a common worry among homeowners, claims data from Travelers suggests their homes could be as much as 10 times more likely to be damaged by water than by fire.

Fortunately, much of this water-related damage can be prevented, and taking a few simple home maintenance steps can help increase the chances of keeping a property safe.

Travelers recently analyzed its homeowners insurance claims in North Carolina, excluding claims related to catastrophes, and found that damage caused by water accounted for 28 percent of its property claims in the state, compared to three percent for fire. Furthermore, of those water damage claims, weather accounted for only five percent, meaning that proper maintenance within the home may help homeowners avoid some of these problems.

"When considering annual household cleaning projects, it's a great time to inspect and perform maintenance on household systems and appliances," said Ron Stephens, Regional Vice President for Travelers. "Checking washing machine hoses, ice maker connections and the plumbing around water heaters are a few simple actions you can take to prevent both damages and a lot of headaches."

After examining the most common causes of water damage for Travelers customers in North Carolina, claim and risk management professionals from Travelers have developed a number of easy steps homeowners can take to help avoid many of these non-weather-related water problems. The following list provides preventive measures to help avoid the top four common causes of non-weather related water damage:

Leaks from washing machine hoses: Washing machine hoses should be inspected annually and replaced every five years – or immediately, if there are any signs of cracking or bulging.

Leaky plumbing around water heaters: Plumbing should be inspected annually and repaired if there are any signs of leaks or corrosion. When possible, water heaters should be installed in an area with floor drains to minimize damage if leaks should occur.

Leaks from refrigerator ice machines: Ice maker connections, usually located behind the refrigerator, should be inspected annually and hoses replaced if they appear cracked or corroded.

Clogged drain lines on air conditioning units: Air conditioning drain lines should be checked yearly.

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