Gerloff Company Inc
CATASTROPHE MANAGEMENT

GCI REMEDIATION LTD.

pearls
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Water Damage Categories

Water damage is a common cause of property damage for homeowners and commercial building owners alike. In fact, the annual cost to insurance companies from water damage is around $2.5 billion dollars every year. Also, according to industry estimates, 14,000 people in the United States experience a water damage emergency at home or work each day.

When thinking about water damage one of the first things that comes to mind is heavy rain and rising water pouring into a home or commercial building. However, water damage can originate from a wide variety of sources, such as a clogged toilet, a dishwasher or washing machine overflow, a toilet supply line rupture, a roof leak, a septic system back-up, or even a broken coffee machine supply line. The source of the water is an important piece of information when it comes to mitigating the damage.

The source of the water will determine which category the water will fall under. The IICRC (Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification) categorizes water into three categories, simply enough: Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3. The categories refer to the range of contamination in the water, considering both its originating source and its quality after it contacts materials present on the job site. Below is an overview of the different categories and examples of each. The information is taken directly from the IICRC S500.

Category 1 – Category 1 water originates from a sanitary water source and does not pose substantial risk from dermal, ingestion, or inhalation exposure. Examples of Category 1 water sources can include, but are not limited to: broken water supply lines, tub or sink overflows with no contaminants, appliance malfunctions involving water supply lines, melting ice or snow, falling rainwater, broken toilet tanks, and toilet bowls that do not contain contaminants or additives. However, once clean water leaves the exit point, it might not remain clean once it contacts other surfaces or materials. The cleanliness of Category 1 water may deteriorate to Category 2 or 3 for many reasons, including but not limited to: contact with building materials, systems and contents; mixing with soils and other contaminants. Some factors that influence the potential organic and inorganic load in a structure include the age and history of the structure, previous water losses, general housekeeping, and the type of use of the structure (e.g. nursing home, hospital, day care, warehouse, veterinary clinic) and, elapsed time or elevated temperature.

Category 2 – Category 2 water contains significant contamination and has the potential to cause discomfort or sickness if contacted or consumed by humans. Category 2 water can contain potentially unsafe levels of microorganisms or nutrients for microorganisms, as well as other organic or inorganic matter (chemical or biological). Examples of Category 2 water can include, but are not limited to: discharge from dishwashers or washing machines; overflows from washing machines; overflows from toilet bowls, on the room side of the trap with some urine but no feces; seepage due to hydrostatic pressure; broken aquariums and punctured water beds. The cleanliness of Category 2 water can deteriorate for many reasons, including but not limited to: contact with building materials, systems and contents; mixing with soils and other contaminants.

Category 3 – Category 3 water is grossly contaminated and can contain pathogenic, toxigenic or other harmful agents. Examples of Category 3 water can include, but are not limited to: sewage; toilet backflows that originate from beyond the toilet trap regardless of visible content or color; all forms of flooding from seawater; ground surface water and rising water from rivers or streams, and other contaminated water entering or affecting the indoor environment, such as wind-driven rain from hurricanes, tropical storms, or other weather-related events. Such water sources can carry silt, organic matter, pesticides, heavy metals, regulated materials, or toxic organic substances."

I**t is important that the source of water is conveyed to the restoration contractor. The source of the water will determine how the water damage is mitigated and the type of equipment needed to properly dry out the structure. Until next time my friends, be prepared and stay safe.**

Reference: IICRC S500 and disastersafety.org

September 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Labor Day Office Closed	3	4 IFMA Luncheon	5 ACA Luncheon	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 SAAA Trade Show	13	14
15	16	17	18 AAFAME Vendor Expo	19 ----------TASA-TASB Conference Dallas---------- SAABE Luncheon	20 IREM Bowling Tourn	21
22	23	24	25	26 IFMA Golf IWSA Luncheon	27	28
29	30					

Events

September 2: Labor Day Office Closed
September 4: IFMA Luncheon
September 5: ACA Luncheon
September 12: SAAA Trade Show
September 18: AAFAME Vendor Expo
September 19: SAABE Luncheon
September 19-21: TASA-TASB Conference
September 20: IREM Bowling Tourn
September 26: IFMA Golf
September 26: IWSA Luncheon

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