

# Troubleshoot and Repair a Leaking Water Pipe

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**A** leaking water line can cause big problems. From encouraging the growth of mold and mildew to rotting floor joists and ruined drywall, even a small leak in a water pipe can cause an enormous repair bill. At the first sign of a leak action should be taken to save a lot of time and money in the long run.

**W**hen a wet pipe is found the first thing to do is to determine the nature and location of the leak. Shut off the water to the area to stop the leak. Then, dry the pipe with an old towel or rag. Next, you should put something under the area to watch for drips such as a piece of cardboard. Turn the water back on and watch for the leak to appear. Once you have found the location of the leak you will have to decide how to deal with it.

**I**f the leak is very small you can turn off the water, dry the pipe, and tightly wrap with black electrical tape. This is a temporary fix for a day or so only so that the pipe can be used until it can be replaced. A better temporary fix is a piece of rubber laid over the leak secured with a hose clamp. A longer lasting repair is to use a pipe clamp purchased from a [hardware](#) store. The pipe clamp will consist of a rubber patch to place on the pipe and a clamp to secure the rubber patch to the pipe. This is a fairly long lasting repair, but if you have developed a leak in a water pipe, more will follow. You will need to replace this section of pipe.

**A** warning about the above mentioned repairs. These are temporary repairs designed to allow the use of the pipe until it can be replaced. However if the water line runs near or above any electric devices, it will need to be professionally repaired (and possibly moved). Don't take a chance on a temporary water line repair in the vicinity of electric.

**T**his is also true of repairs in areas that are hard to see and monitor.

**I**f you have found a leak in a fitting the solution is plumber's epoxy. Go to a hardware store and pick up some. Follow the directions on the package.