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Your plumbing system should require little periodic maintenance. If a problem should arise, be sure to attend to it immediately or call a professional in order to prevent more serious problems from occurring.

When you have a plumbing leak, you need to turn off the water supply immediately. Look for the shut-off valve directly beneath the sink or adjacent to the toilet. Turn the valve to shut off the water. This minimizes water flow in the areas where there is a problem.

If you suspect a leak in a supply line, first check your water meter. If the needle or dial is moving and no faucets or appliances are being used, there is a leak somewhere in the line. When you have a problem with a pipe and you cannot locate a nearby shut-off valve, you need to find the main shut-off valve supplying water to the entire house.

The main shut-off valve is the large valve usually located next to or near your water meter. Turn the valve clockwise to shut off the water supply. It is a good idea for all family members to know the location of this valve.

Drains

The most important precaution to take with your drains is to be careful about what you put into them. Keep kitchen sinks free from food and grease. Bathroom sinks should be cleaned regularly to prevent the accumulation of soap and hair.

If your sink has a pop-up type drain, you can remove the stopper by turning it counter clockwise and pulling it out. On some models, you must unscrew a retaining nut below the sink. Clean all debris from the stopper, drain body, and tailpiece.

If the bathtub drains slowly, or if it doesn't hold water, this can usually be rectified by cleaning the drain. To adjust and clean the bathtub drain, remove the stopper through the overflow.

Faucets

Faucets may need repair occasionally. Leaks are common but can usually be stopped by replacing the washers in the faucet nozzle. Some faucets have cartridges which may need occasional replacement. Be sure to replace inexpensive faucet aerators when water pressure seems low or if the spray pattern becomes uneven. Before beginning any type of plumbing repair, turn off the water at the nearest intake valve.

Toilets

If water leaks into the bowl, but not through the overflow pipe, this is due to the flush ball valve. The rods between the ball valve and the flush handle need aligning so that the ball drops straight down when the handle is pushed. If the ball or seat shows rust, it should

be cleaned. If this does not stop the leak, the ball valve may need replacing.

Do not flush paper towels, hair, rubbish, or other debris down the toilet. This can easily stop up the toilet and clog the sanitary sewage lines.

Sump Pumps

If your home is equipped with storm pumps or sump pumps, you should keep them clean at all times. The storm pump has a strainer at the bottom, while the sump pump has a crock. Both should be kept clear in order to keep water from backing up and entering the home.

Since your plumbing system is an important element of your home, keeping it in good working order should be a top priority.

