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Steps immediately following a Water Main Break:

The Philadelphia Water Department immediately begins surveying the area following a water main break, and looks for impacted residents and businesses. Unfortunately, we do not always get to meet with everyone in the first day or so, and people have questions about the process.

The most important thing we want to make sure you do is document your losses and damages. It's also important that you take any steps you can to prevent any further damage to your property. This is imperative as a part of the claims process through your own insurance company or if filing through the City of Philadelphia.

Below are some important points to know following a main break:

- First, contact your insurance company to see if you have any coverage. If you do, you would only file a claim with the city for your deductible. If you are not covered, then you would go through the city to file for your losses. You will need a denial letter from your insurance company to make your claim through the City.
- PWD will hire a cleaning company to clean out your basements or damaged businesses. We will work to dry out your property, and do mold prevention if necessary.
- If there are items you wish to save, you must put them aside on your own. Our cleaning companies will not go through and save items, they are there to remove items for trash only.
- PWD will hire plumbers to replace hot water tanks and heaters if they are damaged.
- A PWD Claims Adjuster will work with you on the remainder of the process after the damaged area is cleaned out, and photos, receipts, or other documentation is strongly encouraged to make the process smoother.
- This process to find all of the impacted customers can take several days, and the more properties that received damage, the more we will need to work with everyone to get our cleaning crews to your home. We will have as many companies on site to do the work as possible, and we will also have claims adjusters begin visiting homes to further explain the process for you.
- Once your claim is filed with the city, The Office of Risk Management will begin working on the cases.

This brief overview is by no means everything there is to know, but these are the most important first steps in the process. We will work with all of you in the coming days to make sure we are doing our best to meet your needs. We also know there may be locations we did not get to meet yet, as not everyone was home, or open. If you have any trouble reaching someone by phone, you may email us as well as [waterinfo@phila.gov](mailto:waterinfo@phila.gov) and we will get your information to our Customer Field Service staff.

I am also available should you need to reach me by email, at [John.DiGiulio@phila.gov](mailto:John.DiGiulio@phila.gov). I can help direct your message to the appropriate person or unit should you need further assistance.

Thank you,

John DiGiulio  
Community Relations Manager  
Philadelphia Water Department