



Pinhole Leaks

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GET THE FACTS

PINHOLE LEAKS AND COPPER PIPING

- Contrary to popular belief, copper water pipes don't last forever.
- Typical useful life for copper pipe is 50 to 70 years.
- Pipe failures, such as pinhole leaks, can occur much earlier due to water chemistry, poor plumbing workmanship, electrolysis and other environmental factors.

WHERE DO PINHOLE LEAKS OCCUR AND WHY?

- Pinhole leaks sporadically occur in the copper piping of homes across Long Island and throughout the country, and some areas are impacted more than others.
- Pinhole leaks are a complex issue with no singular cause or solution.
- There are many factors that can contribute to a pinhole leak occurring, including water alkalinity, water pH, stray electrical current, aging hot water heating systems, dissimilar metals in plumbing materials, improper soldering and inferior/thin-walled copper pipe.
- Pinhole leaks can impact both cold and hot water piping, but studies have shown that leaks are more prominent in hot water piping.

WATER QUALITY AND TREATING FOR PIN HOLE LEAKS

- Since the late 1970's, water suppliers on Long Island have provided water treatment to provide corrosion control by raising the pH and alkalinity of the water. This has greatly reduced the occurrences of pinhole leaks.
- Water providers pride themselves on the quality of their water and their compliance with corrosion control regulations imposed by federal, state and local authorities.
- If you receive your water from a private well, your water is not being treated for corrosion control. The LIWC recommends that you have your water tested annually by a certified testing lab.

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF YOU HAVE A PINHOLE LEAK?

- While pinhole leaks can be difficult to identify before they happen, there are some ways to spot a pipe at risk of a leak. If you identify a copper pipe with a green tarnish, you are encouraged to contact a licensed and insured plumber to perform an inspection.
- If you have any questions about pinhole leaks—or anything pertaining to the quality of water provided to your home—please contact your local water supplier for more information.