

Embargoed until 29 April 2025

Ticking time bomb under the sink

The inexpensive “flexi-hose” causing major water damage in Australian homes

- The average cost of a burst flexi-hose insurance claim is over \$27,500
- New Suncorp Insurance study found on average approximately 30 per cent of flexi-hoses inspected needed replacing, meaning around two in every home.

A new study has revealed a leading cause of major water damage in Australian homes is a simple plumbing fixture common in bathrooms and kitchens – a flexi-hose.

To better understand the extent of flexi-hose related issues in Australian homes, insurer Suncorp spent six-months inspecting customers’ flexi-hoses and the results were shocking.

“We inspected thousands of flexi-hoses and found 30 per cent were at risk of bursting and needed to be replaced – an average of two flexi-hoses in every home,” Suncorp Insurance Head of Assessing and Supply Chain, Steven Hussey said.

“When a flexi-hose bursts it causes a lot of damage. Shockingly, on average a flexi-hose claim costs over \$27,500 and can take months to repair.

“In open-plan designed homes the water can easily spread to different areas, meaning repair times and costs surge.

“Most flexi-hoses burst due to the breakdown of the external braiding material due to rust and corrosion, or the effects of twisting, kinking or stretching. These can all be prevented by simply conducting regular checks.”

According to over 22,000 Suncorp Insurance home claims from 2024*, one in ten home water damage claims were caused by burst flexi-hoses. While they can burst at any time, the data highlights the level of damage, and cost of these claims, increases exponentially during holiday periods when homeowners are often away.**

Licensed plumber and Suncorp Assessing Specialist Rebecca Senyard, who is also known as blogger ‘The Plumbette’, said flexi-hose claims generally involve a large amount of water escaping quickly.

“A burst flexi-hose left undiscovered for 24 hours can release enough water to fill a household swimming pool,” Mrs Senyard said

“The damage they cause inside your home, to furniture and belongings, is mind blowing.

“As with everything, there are cheaper versions for flexi-hoses available, but you pay for quality. Some flexi-hoses can work without an issue for 20 years, while others corrode, rust and fail faster. It really is a matter of staying on top of your home maintenance.”

All it takes is 10 minutes every six months

Mr Hussey said flexi-hoses are generally in those high-usage areas such as kitchens, laundries, and bathrooms, and need to be checked regularly.

“All it takes is 10 minutes every six months to pop your head under the sink and check to see if you can spot any fraying, rust, corrosion, kinking or twisting with your flexi-hoses. If you do, call a licensed plumber immediately to get them checked and replaced,” Mr Hussey said.

“If you are heading off on holidays, please remember to turn your water off at the mains to save yourself from potentially returning to a flooded home.”

[ENDS]

Notes to Editor

**Suncorp claims data from 1 January-31 December 2024 analysed more than 22,000 home claims involving water damage.*

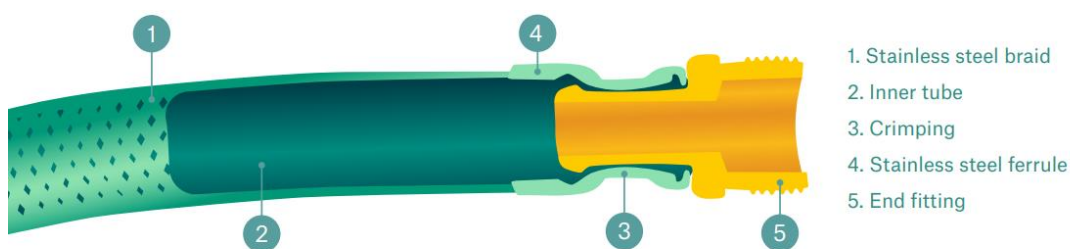
***Based on 22,000 Suncorp Insurance home claims involving water damage from 1 January – 31 December 2024 (holiday period defined as November to April, aligning with peak travel times such as Christmas/New year, and Easter holiday)*

‘FLUSHING THE FACTS’ ON FLEXI-HOSES

What are Flexi-hoses?

Flexi-hoses – also known as flexible braided hoses or flexible plumbing hoses – are a common style of plumbing fitting. They are a rubber hose reinforced externally with stainless steel webbing, fitted with clamped stainless-steel fittings on either end. Used to connect water to taps and fixtures, they are especially common in bathrooms and kitchens – where their flexibility, low cost and ease of installation make them a popular choice for plumbers.

If you’ve had some plumbing work done to your home in the past 20 years – it is highly likely you have a flexi-hose under your sink.



Flexi-hoses are used to connect water to taps and fixtures – where their flexibility, low cost and ease of installation make them a popular choice for plumbers. They are especially common in:

Kitchen	Bathrooms/Toilets	Laundry
Under the sink	Vanity	Laundry tub/trough
Dishwasher	Inside the cistern	Washing machine
Refrigerator	Basin	
Water filter		



How do they burst?

In most cases, a burst flexi-hose is due to the breakdown of the external braiding material due to rust and corrosion or the effects of twisting, kinking or stretching.

Some flexi-hoses can work without an issue for 20 years, while others corrode, rust and fail faster.

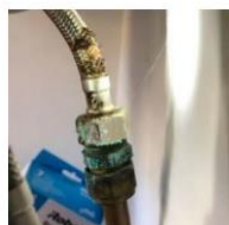
Damage to a flexi-hose can come in many forms, including:



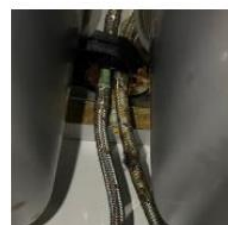
Example of failed flexi-hose due to rust and corrosion.



Broken fibres visible



Calcification (green or white staining) evident on the fitting or the hose itself.



Calcification noted to fitting and rust noted to braiding.