

High-Rise Condominium Building Successfully Navigates Water Leak Repairs During Covid-19

A 19-story, 120-unit condominium building in uptown Charlotte, NC, experienced a water leak that affected 20 units across 10 floors of the building during the Covid pandemic. CAMS worked alongside the board to quickly begin remediating damages, coordinating service providers and insurance professionals, as well as keeping owners updated on the situation through virtual meetings, ensuring everyone's safety.

SITUATION

A high-rise condominium building in Charlotte, NC, experienced a broken water heater in a 14th floor unit that subsequently leaked down 10 floors damaging 20 units. This leak occurred in the middle of the night and caused varying degrees of damage to the units including damages to walls and flooring and, in some units, damage to personal property.

- An emergency call came in at approximately 2:00 am reporting a severe water leak.
- The source of the leak had to first be determined before it could be stopped.
- Since this occurred at the beginning of the Covid pandemic, owners were extremely hesitant to allow anyone into their homes to inspect damages or make repairs.
- This building was one of the first in Charlotte to have a known Covid case, making residents that much more nervous about allowing unknown persons in their homes.

SOLUTIONS

Though the water leak itself was a major issue that had to be immediately addressed and properly handled by professionals, it was also a sensitive issue due to fears surrounding Covid. CAMS, the board, service providers, and insurance professionals worked together to come up with creative solutions to keep affected parties up to date on the issue as well as make them feel comfortable with repairs being done in their units.

- Once the source of the leak was identified, a general contractor was immediately brought in to setup drying equipment in all accessible areas.

SOLUTIONS (CONT.)

- CAMS' managers and on-site maintenance staff, as well as board members, visited units and made phone calls to personally notify owners they had been unable to reach the previous night.
- As more owner notifications were made, damage assessments began when unit access was granted.
- Even those residents that were not affected were also notified to keep them apprised of the situation.
- A full damage assessment was made so that service providers could be properly directed to make repairs.
- The following day, the insurance company was notified of the damage and informed that a claim was going to be filed. The agent and adjuster immediately became involved.
- Remediation and repair work began as quickly as possible as timing was affected by supply chain issues caused by Covid.
- Weekly Zoom calls were setup between CAMS, the board, service providers, insurance professionals, and affected unit owners. These calls allowed for everyone involved to receive updates as well as ask questions and express any concerns from the safety of their own homes, reducing potential Covid exposure.

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Covid forced our community to get creative. We are grateful that CAMS and ERX were able to support our communication need by meeting with the affected owners through a virtual platform. It made all our efforts to resolve this water loss far easier to manage over an interesting time.”

- Ron, Board Member

OUTCOME

- Due to the quick actions of CAMS and the board, there were no mold issues created by this leak as drying equipment was immediately installed and wet flooring was removed.
- The restoration company, the board, and CAMS coordinated with owners to remove personal items from units and put them in temporary storage so flooring could be removed and replaced.
- Weekly virtual meetings coordinated by CAMS were greatly successful in alleviating many owner concerns and were an invaluable communication tool. Prior to Covid, this may not have been a typical occurrence, but it turned out to be highly effective in navigating this situation.
- All units minor and major repairs have been completed as quickly as possible in spite of pandemic and other challenges.
- Owners expressed satisfaction with the handling of this situation by various professionals, their board and CAMS, and showed appreciation for not only the quick remediation actions but also the weekly virtual meetings. Though the supply chain issues caused repairs to take a bit longer than they normally would, being able to keep owners informed on a weekly basis was extremely helpful to all parties and allowed the repair process to be completed smoothly.

While water leaks in condominiums may seem to be a common occurrence, we take each situation very seriously. At CAMS, we pride ourselves in using our experience, knowledge, and proven processes to work closely with boards and other community volunteers to find quick solutions and provide trusted guidance to reach the best possible outcomes for the owners we serve.

Does your community have the guidance it needs? Call for details.