

# Learn More About Pinhole Leaks

## Fact Sheet

### Overview:

Pinhole leaks affect residential plumbing systems in homes around the country and are not unique to Plainview. In fact, customers of water districts throughout Long Island experience occasional issues with pinhole leaks, but there is a disproportionate occurrence of Plainview Water District customers experiencing these leaks. Noticing an increasing trend, the Plainview Water District has taken a proactive approach and aggressively working to investigate cases throughout the district to limit future instances.

### Likely Contributing Factors Being Investigated:

- Low alkalinity in the water
- Stray electrical current (grounding of electrical systems)
- Aging hot water heaters and/or sacrificial anode erosion
- Dissimilar metals in plumbing materials causing galvanic corrosion

### Our Response:

- Currently working with third party material corrosion and water treatment expert, Dr. Marc Edwards from Virginia Tech University, to advise on the District's investigation.
- Implemented changes to water treatment options to increase water alkalinity after receiving the necessary approvals from the Nassau County Health Department.
- Conducted over 175 home inspections in an effort to find similarities in pinhole incidences and analyzing data with our engineers.
- Disseminated a pinhole leak survey to all customers and have since collected more than 1,600 responses, in an effort to better understand the scope of the problem.

### Survey Data Has Indicated:

- More than 80 percent of reported pinhole leaks have occurred on hot water piping.
- Stray electrical current from the homeowners' electrical service has been found at approximately 65 percent of the homes inspected.
- The most typical location for pinhole leaks to appear is within the first 10 feet of pipe coming from the hot water heater.

To receive updates from the district, email  
[info@plainviewwater.org](mailto:info@plainviewwater.org)

Take our Survey: [www.plainviewwater.org/pinhole\\_survey.html](http://www.plainviewwater.org/pinhole_survey.html)

### Plainview Water District Board of Commissioners:

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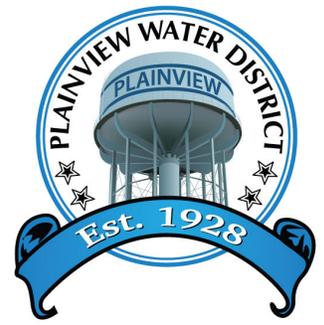
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## Frequently Asked Questions



### What is the District doing to help prevent future pinhole leaks?

Although the District does not have jurisdiction over a homeowners' plumbing system, we have taken an aggressive approach to turn the tide on pinhole leaks. As part of our efforts, we have been collecting surveys from our customers, conducting home inspections, mapping areas where pinholes are occurring and analyzing data with our engineers in an attempt to find similarities between cases.

To further combat this issue and get a fresh perspective, the District has hired the services of a third-party consultant, world renowned metal corrosion and water treatment expert Dr. Marc Edwards from Virginia Tech University, to assist the District with their path forward. Dr. Edwards has been analyzing various water and copper pipe samples from throughout the District.

In addition, we have worked with the Nassau County Health Department to adjust treatment protocols enabling us to raise water alkalinity, which is naturally low in our groundwater. There are currently no standards for alkalinity in water and low water alkalinity, we believe could prove to be a key factor in the prevalence of pinhole leaks.

### What should a homeowner do if they get a pinhole leak?

The best course of action is to hire a licensed plumber to make the necessary repair and examine other visible pipe sections for other noticeable damaged areas that are showing signs of failure. We also encourage all of our customers, whether they have experienced a leak or not, to fill out a pinhole leak survey. In addition, if you have already submitted a survey but have since experienced an additional leak, we encourage you to submit another survey. The information being collected is invaluable to the District as it helps support our investigation and remediation efforts. Surveys are available on our website, [www.plainviewwater.org](http://www.plainviewwater.org), or hard copies can be picked up at our District office.

### How many homes are being affected with Pinholes?

To date we have over 1,600 homes that have reported a pinhole leak to the District. This year we have conducted over 175 home inspections of affected customers and we are working extremely hard to collect as much data as possible to implement cost-effective measures to reduce pinhole leak occurrences.

### Is water quality to blame for the pinholes?

There are many potential factors being evaluated during this process and having a high quality water supply is one of them. High quality ground water often lacks the presence of organic compounds, Which – when present in a sufficient amount – may build a protective barrier on pipe walls. Organic compounds are a natural inhibitor of pinhole leaks.

The water that enters our customers' homes is strictly and meticulously regulated by federal, state and local authorities. For questions about your water quality, please visit <http://www.plainviewwater.org/>.

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