



Water pressure safety: why having the right psi matters

Homebuyers are often concerned about water pressure — and for good reason. Too much pressure could cause leaks ¹, and too little can make for an underwhelming shower experience.

Having adequate water pressure is essential because it allows the use of multiple water sources at the same time without affecting their individual functions. For example, you want to be able to take a shower while your dishwasher and sprinkler system are also running.

On the other hand, having too much water pressure is dangerous — it increases the risk of damage to the pipes, joints, fixtures, seals and appliances in your home's plumbing, and it leads to water waste.

The power of pressure

While too much pressure probably won't cause an immediate leak, it can stress any weak links in your pipes, increasing the chances of leaks or failure. Checking your home's water pressure is a simple way to avoid costly water damage.

Water pressure is measured in psi, or pounds per square inch, and represents the force at which water enters your home from the water main. Normal psi for a home pipe system is between 30 and 80 psi. While you don't want the psi to be too low, it violates code to be above 80.² Instead, you should aim for a psi that's between 60 and 70.

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Warning signs of high pressure:

Several factors affect your water pressure; these can include the type of residential water service offered in your area and the elevation of your home. Knowing the warning signs of high water pressure could save you from having more extreme issues:

- **Repeated leaks in fixtures and appliances**
High water pressure can push seals and washers out of place, allowing water to pass through. If you have the problem repaired and it returns, your pressure is likely too high.
- **Banging or knocking sounds in your plumbing**
Water pressure can cause the “water hammer” effect when you turn off a faucet or flush a toilet. If it’s not fixed, it can create permanent damage to your plumbing.
- **Burst lines and hoses**
Inlet lines, which include the lines going to appliances such as dishwashers and icemakers, are most commonly affected.
- **Appliance failure**
When appliances fail prematurely, the culprit could be high water pressure. Seals and pumps can break when the pressure exceeds what they were designed to handle.³

If you experience any of these problems, check your home’s water pressure immediately.



Fixing the problem

You or a plumber can check your home’s psi using a water pressure gauge. The gauge is screwed onto a spigot in your home to obtain a reading. If your water pressure is more than 80 psi, installing a regulator can help. A regulator adjusts the amount of water reaching your home from the municipal water supply. Many regulator devices can adjust manually or automatically to ensure that your home is receiving exactly the water pressure required.

If you have questions about how you can prevent plumbing damage or losses caused by water pressure, contact your Nationwide Private Client agent to get answers.

If you have any questions, please contact your agent or Nationwide Private Client Risk Solutions professional. For more information on how you can help prevent losses, visit

[Nationwide.com/solutionseries](https://www.nationwide.com/solutionseries).



¹ “Does this house have good water pressure?” Redfin.com/blog/2015/06/does-this-house-have-good-water-pressure.html (June 5, 2015).

² “2018 International Plumbing Code (IPC): Chapter 6 Water Supply and Distribution,” International Code Council®, Codes.iccsafe.org/content/IPC2018/chapter-6-water-supply-and-distribution?site_type=public.

³ High water pressure may void the appliance’s warranty.