

Luxury Florida Condos Install Leak Defense System, End Losses



LEAK DEFENSE
A WATTS Brand

Customer

Sunset Pointe

Location

St. Petersburg, Florida

Industry

Multi-Family Housing

Category

Leak Detection

Product(s) Installed:

Leak Defense System

Summary

Sunset Pointe near St. Petersburg, Florida, is a luxury condominium complex on a barrier island off the Florida coast. Since 2017, three of four six-story buildings have been built and occupied, with a fourth one now under construction.

All 130 occupied units, each exceeding \$1 million in value, contain a Leak Defense System[®] from Leak Defense, a Watts brand. This was after three incidents in six months during 2018 created more than \$150,000 in damage to individual units, an elevator system, and more. Since the installation, reports Vince Pusateri, board president of the Sunset Pointe Condo Association, “we haven’t had a single loss or had to go back to the insurance companies even one time.”

Three Separate Incidents

Pusateri, an early resident of Building 1, was the building president at the time the incidents occurred. The first was in a laundry room, when a hose connecting to a washer sprung a leak.

The second occurred in the middle of the night; a water softener system in a utility closet sprung a leak, and the condo owners awoke to find themselves standing in six inches of water. The water also spread to the two units next door, into the walls of units below, and into the elevator area.

“In a condo complex where there are common walls and floors, a leak in one unit affects not only the people there, but also the people around them,” said Pusateri. “In addition to structural problems, there can be damage to rugs and furnishings—and black mold if everything isn’t taken care of properly.”

Installing Leak Defense

Following a third incident when a hot water tank line sprung a leak in a pantry, the building maintenance engineer suggested several leak detection solutions to the Building Governance Committee. Among the suggestions was The Leak Defense System, which the committee, chaired by Pusateri, ended up choosing.

The system contains several components. The first is a Leak Defense System Valve, which is installed on the incoming waterline to each condo unit. Once installed, the automatic water shut-off control valve monitors water flow 24/7/365.

The second is a wireless touchscreen Control Panel in each unit, which allows residents to set the system to fit their family's lifestyle needs. For example, if high-volume overnight water usage would be unusual, the Control Panel can send an audible alert if significant water is flowing in the middle of the night, and it can shut off the water intake. The Control Panel can also be connected to a third-party monitoring company to make sure an alert gets attention, even if the condo owners are away.

Point of Leak Detectors

(also referred to as “black boxes”) can be placed at any potential trouble spots to detect leaks, such as in the laundry room or under a bathroom or kitchen sink. And a Mobile App allows for remote monitoring of the system.

Some Superior Advantages

“We liked the sturdy unit [Control Panel] and the company's good track record,” Pusateri said. He also pointed to other features, such as being able to set the system for how long the water could run before the system sets up an audible alarm, and the ease of operation.

The condo owners in Building 1 agreed to the installations, as did those later in Buildings 2 and 3. Installation involves having a plumber install a Leak Defense System Valve on the water intake line in each condo, as well as install the Control Panel and the “black box” remote sensors.

Pusateri said that most condo owners have 6-10 sensors in their home, and the location is up to each owner. He said that if a black box remote sensor detects water on the floor, it will send a signal to the Control Panel, which will then send an alarm. “What I also liked is that the sensor can detect water flow and leaks, even behind a wall,” he said. “One of the leaks was behind a wall, and no one knew until they noticed a damp wall.”

He added that for reliability in a storm, the system is backed up with a CyberPower Surge UPS, which plugs into a wall. “In Florida, we have a lot of lightning strikes and power surges,” Pusateri noted, “but with the battery backup, we're covered.”

When Building 4 is completed in 2023, the Leak Defense System will be installed —protecting those units in the condo complex, as well. “We're happy with the system,” Pusateri said. “It has the best track record; it's rugged, and we don't want any further damage.”