



## Water Seepage

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Water seepage in Hong Kong's multi-storey buildings is not an uncommon problem. It should be addressed earlier rather than later to avoid aggravation of the matter. What should you do when you suspect there is water seepage?

### Management Office

If there is a management office in your building/estate, you should consider reporting the matter to the management office as soon as practicable, and ensure that they are looking into the matter. The management office can act as an intermediary and for example inform the owner/tenant of the premises concerned, and may also conduct a preliminary inspection and offer views based on their building management experience.

You may consider inviting the owner/tenant of the relevant premises to jointly appoint a building professional to carry out water seepage investigation. Those costs in appointing a building professional are to be agreed between the owners/tenants of the concerned premises, which, in the usual case, would be shared equally between the parties concerned. The building professional would usually prepare a report to identify the source of seepage or make any other findings, so that evidence could be adduced should the matter be brought to the court.

If you have procured home insurance for third party liability, you should report the matter to insurer immediately once you notice water seepage problem.

### Joint Office

A government office has jointly been set up by the Food and Environment Hygiene Department and the Buildings Department (The Joint Office) to provide a "one-stop" service to deal with complaints of water seepage in buildings. Upon receipt of a water seepage complaint, the Joint Office will contact the complainant, inspect the premises and carry out its investigation. If the water seepage has posed a nuisance, and the source of seepage can be identified, then under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, the Joint Office could serve a nuisance notice on the person concerned requiring the abatement of nuisance arising from his/her premises within a specified period of time, failing which that person will be subject to prosecution.

You can find information on the Joint Office from the following webpage: <https://www.waterseepage.gov.hk/>

*The information contained in this leaflet is for reference only.  
It should not be regarded as legal advice for any individual cases. If you have any queries, please consult a professional legal adviser.*

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## Water Seepage

### Legal advice

You may consider engaging lawyers to take legal actions against the owner/tenant of the premises causing the water seepage for damages and/or costs for repair work arising from the water seepage.

You may seek assistance from:

- (a) The Law Society of Hong Kong
  - **"The Law List"** section on the Law Society's website at <https://www.hklawsoc.org.hk/en/Serve-the-Public/The-Law-List>
  - **Free Legal Consultation Service** at [www.choosehklawyer.org](http://www.choosehklawyer.org) – Select a solicitor who will provide up to 45 minutes of free legal advice
- (b) The Duty Lawyer Service

**Free Legal Advice Scheme** at [www.dutylawyer.org.hk](http://www.dutylawyer.org.hk)  
– The Free Legal Advice Scheme provides preliminary one-off legal advice to members of the public as to their legal position in genuine cases free of charge.

### Mediation for disputes arising from water seepage

You may try to use mediation to help resolve the disputes with the owners of the relevant premises.

Mediation is a voluntary process for which the parties will jointly appoint a mediator to assist them to resolve all or any issue of their disputes in a without prejudice, confidential and amicable manner. It focuses on negotiation and formulation of a settlement (e.g. settlement amount) with or without determining other issues in dispute (e.g. causes of water seepage). Resolving disputes by mediation could maintain good relations between the parties.

Solicitor-mediators have rich experience in helping their clients to resolve various matters, including water seepage problems. A list of solicitor-mediators is available on the Law Society's website at [www.hklawsoc.org.hk](http://www.hklawsoc.org.hk).

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