

Condensate Drain Lines and Overflow Safety Switches

Please read and keep this notice. Cooling equipment makes water. That water has to leave the house through a drain line. We have no control over how fast that line clogs after the system is running in your home.

What this notice covers

Every air conditioner and heat pump in cooling mode removes moisture from the air. That water collects in a drain pan and leaves through a condensate drain line. Algae, sludge, dust, rust scale, and household debris collect in that line over time. When the line clogs, water can overflow the pan and damage ceilings, floors, furnishings, and the equipment itself.

How quickly a drain clogs depends on many factors: humidity, runtime, dust in the home, biological growth in the line, the condition of any existing piping, and how the system is used. Those conditions are in the home after we leave. **We cannot predict or control how soon a drain will clog**, including within days or weeks of a new install or replacement.

Why a brand-new system can clog a drain shortly after install

- **The new coil makes more water.** A new, colder, higher-efficiency system often produces more condensate than the unit it replaced. An old line that “kept up” with the last system can clog once the new coil starts sending water through it.
- **The old drain line is still in the house.** Replacement jobs usually reuse existing PVC. Biofilm, scale, and sludge stay on the inside wall even after a flush. Fresh condensate knocks that material loose and it stacks at a trap, elbow, or termination.
- **Install dust gets in the pan.** Insulation fibers, drywall dust, attic or crawl dirt, and coil packaging debris can enter the pan or line during change-out. Those contaminants may not show up immediately.
- **Longer, cooler runtime feeds algae.** Variable-speed and high-SEER2 systems often run longer at lower speed. A slow, steady trickle of condensate is ideal for biological growth in a dark, warm drain.
- **The first weeks are a flush cycle.** It is common for a line to run clear at startup and restrict after the first stretch of hot, humid weather when the system finally makes water every day.

Your responsibility — check that it is draining

The homeowner is responsible for the day-to-day check. Look at the drain termination outside (or the condensate pump discharge) during cooling season, especially the first month after install and any time the weather turns hot and humid. You should see water leaving while the system is cooling. If you do not, or you see water at the indoor unit, rust stains, or a musty smell at the air handler, shut the system off and call us. Do not keep running a unit that is not draining. Glance at the outdoor drain the first week of cooling, after muggy weather, and when you change the filter.

Safety switches — installed, not guaranteed

Where the job calls for it, we install overflow / float safety switches to shut the system down if water rises in the pan or auxiliary pan. Those switches are manufactured parts. Although tested upon installation they can fail even when they are installed correctly: the float can stick, the switch can be fouled by sludge, a contact can weld or open, wiring or a control board can fail, or the device can simply stop working. A safety switch is a backup, not a promise that water will never leave the pan.

We are not responsible for manufacturer part failure, including failure of a float switch, condensate pump, pan, or related control, whether that part was supplied by us or by the equipment maker. Warranty on those parts, if any, is the manufacturer’s warranty. We are not responsible for water damage, mold, or other loss that occurs because a drain clogged, a safety switch did not stop the system, or a manufactured part failed.

Important. A working safety switch reduces risk. It does not eliminate it. Regular drain checks by the homeowner, filter changes, and periodic drain maintenance are still required. This notice does not expand any warranty we give in writing on our labor, and it does not waive any warranty the manufacturer owes you on the equipment.

This notice does not replace your contract, invoice terms, or the manufacturer’s written warranty. Please ask us to quote drain treatment, a pump, an auxiliary pan, extra switches, or a maintenance plan if interested.

Acknowledgment

I have read this notice. I understand the new system can produce more water than the old one, that an existing drain can clog soon after install, that I should check that the system is draining, that safety switches can fail even when installed correctly, and that the company is not responsible for manufacturer part failure or for water damage from a clogged drain or a switch that does not shut the system off.

Customer name (print)	Signature	Date
Property address	Job / invoice #	Tech initials