

Case Study: Kilroy Realty Corporation

Kilroy Realty protects properties, supports sustainability with water leak detection

A security guard reported the emergency: no vandals or burglars – it was water, flooding the basement, flowing from a leak seven floors above.

Bill Wendt, Vice President of Facilities and Engineering at Kilroy Realty Corporation, recalls the incident at one of its properties in Santa Monica with some grief, “There was a lot of damage to that building.” Now, he shares the episode with tenants who are not yet using water leak detection equipment and technology.

“It doesn’t matter the industry—commercial, residential, manufacturing—every building will have a leak,” Wendt says, drawing from 35 years’ experience operating structures for Kilroy Realty, a West Coast firm with commercial properties totaling more than 14 million square feet. “From my experience, you really need a water leak detection system.”

Common water leaks, outdated methods

Early on, water worries for the real estate company focused on roof-top air conditioning systems with leaking valves and overflowing pans. As buildings and plumbing aged, property management teams started finding other leaks underneath sinks, by water dispensers, even from exploded water heaters, the culprit in Santa Monica.

Kilroy Realty tried other leak sensing services, but wired installation and pager notification became outdated. Going on several years now, Wendt and fellow managers at Kilroy Realty

rely on wireless water leak detection, web-based reporting and automatic water shutoff valves from The Detection Group. They continue to implement leak sensors across all properties, often installing companion shutoff valves that turn off the water when a leak is detected.

“With The Detection Group, you’re solving a problem before it happens and mitigating an issue before it becomes large.”

~Bill Wendt, VP, Facilities and Engineering, Kilroy Realty

Flood sensor, the ultimate security guard

Water leak detectors from The Detection Group now serve as the ultimate *security guards* for Kilroy Realty properties—always monitoring, always connected for swift alerts. Surpassing even the fastest response times, units with StopFlow™ automatic shut-off valves stop leaks immediately, shielding sensitive structures from even minimal flooding. “With The Detection Group, you’re solving a problem before it happens, and mitigating an issue before it gets large,” Wendt says.





A Kilroy Realty facilities manager in San Diego reports catching eight actual water leaks in just one year. Wendt reflects on the trouble that could have been avoided if sensors had been installed earlier: "Santa Monica would have solved the problem right off the bat," he said. "Water wouldn't have made it to the basement level." To protect investments and serve tenants, Kilroy Realty leases now require installation of water leak detection equipment and technology, specifically from The Detection Group.

"Leak detection is a key component of ensuring our water use is as low as possible."

~Sara Neff, Senior VP, Sustainability, Kilroy Realty

Efficiencies and sustainability

Many Kilroy Realty tenants and management personnel recognize tangible benefits of wireless water leak detection.

Time-savings

Before installing sensors, response times were longer and damage was more severe, according to Jim Rosales, a Kilroy Realty facilities manager in San Diego. "After Detection, we know which area is affected." Notifications arrive via cell phone and email. "Response time is immediate, thus damage is limited," Rosales relates, noting he looks forward to adding StopFlow valves for added protection.

"There have been very happy tenants," Wendt adds, from businesses in the entertainment industry to digital media and healthcare organizations. "If we can minimize damage to their equipment ... and avoid getting water restoration and contractors in, we are far ahead of the game."

Cost-savings

To keep premiums low, Kilroy Realty opts for higher insurance deductibles. Any flooding in hallways, empty suites or other common areas are the company's responsibility. "That money would be taken out of the budget from other areas," Wendt explains, sometimes at the expense of other projects.

To manage costs, the company prioritizes leak detection: constrained budgets are mined to fund widespread installation of water shutoff valves alongside other urgent needs for renovation and energy efficiency.

Sustainability

As long-term property holders, Kilroy Realty is devoted to maintaining a high level of quality in its buildings and protecting that investment, relates Sara Neff, Senior Vice President, Sustainability at the real estate company. "We have committed to reducing water throughout our portfolio and leak detection is a key component of ensuring our water use is as low as possible," she says.

Immediate action minimizes or eliminates water loss and reduces waste in the landfill from water-logged sheetrock, carpet and fixtures. Proactive detection and management fits in well with Kilroy Realty's sustainability focus and service to tenants.

Partners in protection

Kilroy Realty values its partnership with The Detection Group in protecting its properties, Wendt says. He feels The Detection Group delivers expertise and reliable service.

While the real estate company has not tracked return on investment directly, Wendt appreciates the value of silence. "I don't hear problems that we used to have out there anymore," he says. "Everybody is happy that we catch the leaks first-hand without major damage."

