

Surestop stopcock: Occupational Therapy Blog

Protection from accidental household flooding.

In recent months I have been receiving an increased number of referrals for bathing assessments for people with cognitive impairment in my caseload. Several of these referrals highlight the need to manage the risk of flooding whilst also maximising occupational performance. For clients with neurological diseases, Dementia or conditions that affect executive functioning, the person may not have the ability they previously had to determine safe water use at home.

Flooding always worries me as it has the potential to create a hazardous environment, leading to unsafe bathing and an increased risk of falls. The risk is further heightened by mobility issues and disorientation, unintentionally causing a slip on a wet floor or bathroom fixture. Flooding also has the potential to cause serious damage to the home, aside from the immediate loss of personal property to water damage, there is secondary damage to consider. Previous referrals to houses that have been flooded have shown me that mould is a huge problem after a flood, especially for people with respiratory illnesses. Although an area I have some experience with, this prompted me to use a bit of my CPD time to investigate any new developments, useful equipment, or clinical guidelines that I should be incorporating into my daily practice.

This led to my discovery of the Surestop stopcock, a device that can be installed easily and at a very low cost. Surestop offer a unique range of mechanical stopcocks, with no electrical components, enabling safe management of water use in the home. I was impressed to learn that with the simple flick of the switch, the Surestop stopcock instantly turns off the water to the bathroom, kitchen or whole property dependent upon the installation site. The Surestop stopcock can also be used for hot and cold-water pipes, making it ideal to also reduce the risk of scalds and burns. There seemed to be many advantages over traditional anti-scald devices, especially as I usually end up fitting one to each tap or showerhead. This discreet device can also be fitted with a remote switch and so does not compromise the overall look of a bathroom or kitchen, which is a big help as many of my clients are concerned about the appearance of modifications and equipment. The ability to turn the water off to a single device or a whole room enables other users in the household to access the facilities as normal when needed and can be used to increase safety for a client when around water unsupervised.



Having now arranged for several of these to be fitted I am confident they are a great success and will remain a staple part of my regular toolkit, especially when planning bathroom or kitchen adaptations for people with limited capacity or cognitive impairment.