

SAMPLE REPORT

Water under the kitchen sink

Older home · Galvanized supply and waste · Disposal + dishwasher

READY FOR DISPATCH

WHAT THE CUSTOMER SENT US

In their words	“There’s water in the cabinet under the kitchen sink. I put a bowl under it. It gets worse when the dishwasher runs.”
Photos & video	5 photos, 1 short video — cabinet interior, both shutoffs, the trap, the wall connection, under the disposal
Supply side	Two galvanized male-threaded stub-outs out of the back wall — not copper. Old multi-turn stops, one visibly weeping at the packing nut.
Drain side	1-1/2" chrome tubular trap into a galvanized waste arm . The arm at the wall looks larger than the trap — possibly 2".
Also on the drain	Garbage disposal fitted. The dishwasher hose appears to run into the tailpiece, not the disposal inlet — if so, that’s an improper existing install. No air gap or high loop visible.
Under-sink power	Disposal is hardwired — no visible cord or receptacle.
Cabinet floor	Particle board swollen and stained — this has been leaking for a while.

THE PARTS YOU'D NORMALLY GRAB — AND WHY THEY WON'T FIT

This is a routine under-sink leak. The trap is what’s on the wall behind it. A truck stocked for a standard sink comes up short on five counts here.

NORMALLY YOU'D GRAB	WHAT THIS HOUSE HAS	SO BRING
1/2" × 3/8" compression angle stop	1/2" galvanized stub-out with male pipe threads	1/2" FIP threaded quarter-turn stops, ×2 (hot and cold). A compression ferrule will not seal on pipe thread.
3/8" × 3/8" braided supply riser	Faucet shank type not identifiable from the photos	Both riser types — 3/8" × 3/8" and 3/8" × 1/2" FIP. We are not calling this from a photo; carrying both costs nothing.

1-1/2" PVC trap adapter	Galvanized waste arm at the wall — reads larger than 1-1/2", possibly 2"	Both 1-1/2" and 2" × 1-1/2" adapters, plus a rubber transition coupling. We can't measure from a photo — so carry both.
Straight tailpiece and trap kit	Disposal fitted, but the dishwasher looks tied into the tailpiece instead of the disposal's DW inlet	The DW belongs on the disposal inlet — knock out the plug and re-route. Bring hose, clamps, a plug knock-out punch, and a high-loop or air gap kit per local code. A branch tailpiece is only needed if the disposal comes out.
Nothing extra — you'll shut off under the sink	Both existing stops are old multi-turn valves, one already weeping	Plan on shutting the main. Expect a 70-year-old galvanized nipple to snap when the stop comes off — nipple extractor and a repair plan on the truck.

A tech loaded for a standard sink makes one trip to the van, then one trip to the supply house — and that's if the counter is open. Loaded from this report, the job closes on the first visit.

WHAT COULD BE THE ISSUE

1

Drain-side leak at the trap or waste arm

MOST LIKELY

The customer says it gets worse when the dishwasher runs. That points at the drain side under volume — though note a dishwasher fill also pulls water, so a leak on the hot supply tee can behave the same way. Combined with a corroded galvanized waste arm and slip joints that have been apart before, the drain is where to start.

HOW THE TECH CONFIRMS IT

- Run the dishwasher and watch the trap and slip joints under load.
- Check the waste arm at the wall for pinholes and rust staining.
- Confirm the actual waste arm size before cutting anything.
- **Check for an S-trap and whether the arm is vented** — common in kitchens this age.

2 Weeping angle stop or supply connection

LIKELY TOO

One stop is visibly damp at the packing nut in the photos. Old multi-turn stops seep long before they fail outright. This may be a second leak rather than an alternative to the first — on a cabinet this wet, both are worth assuming.

HOW THE TECH CONFIRMS IT

- Dry everything, then watch each stop and riser with the water on.
- Try each stop — if it won't close, the main gets shut off.
- Expect to replace both stops while the water is off anyway.

3 Disposal body or dishwasher connection

POSSIBLE

A disposal that has rusted through at the seam drips from the bottom of the unit, and a loose dishwasher hose clamp drips only while the appliance drains. Both match the dishwasher clue, so neither is off the list until the trap has been ruled out.

HOW THE TECH CONFIRMS IT

- Feel the underside of the disposal body for wetness after a cycle.
- Check the dishwasher discharge clamp and the hose routing.
- Check the sink flange and putty seal from above.

WHAT TO BRING

PARTS	TOOLS	GOOD TO KNOW
◆ 1/2" FIP quarter-turn stops ×2 ◆ 3/8"×3/8" and 3/8"×1/2" FIP risers ◆ 1-1/2" trap kit and tailpieces ◆ 2"×1-1/2" adapter + rubber coupling ◆ DW hose, clamps, knock-out punch ◆ High-loop bracket or air gap kit ◆ Nipples, repair couplings, sink putty	◆ Basin wrench, pipe wrenches ◆ Nipple extractor ◆ Tubing cutter, reciprocating saw ◆ Channel locks, adjustable wrenches ◆ Wet vac, towels, cabinet mat ◆ DW plug knock-out punch, hose clamps ◆ Water pressure gauge (hose bibb)	◆ Galvanized supply and waste ◆ Male-threaded stub-outs, not copper ◆ Waste arm size unconfirmed ◆ Disposal + dishwasher on one drain ◆ DW tied to tailpiece, not disposal ◆ Hardwired disposal — kill breaker ◆ Cabinet base already damaged

HEADS-UP BEFORE YOU GO

The stops may not close

Both are old multi-turn valves and one is already weeping. Locate the main shutoff on arrival before touching either one. Forcing a seized stop on a galvanized nipple is how a drip becomes a flood in a finished kitchen.

Expect the nipple to snap

Galvanized threads this age often shear when the stop comes off. That turns a stop swap into a nipple extraction, and occasionally into opening the wall. Worth flagging to the customer before starting, not after.

The disposal is hardwired — kill the breaker

There is no cord or receptacle visible, so it cannot simply be unplugged. If the disposal comes off, the circuit goes off at the panel first and gets verified dead. Standing water in the cabinet makes this non-negotiable.

There is existing water damage

The cabinet base is swollen and stained, so this has been leaking for weeks. Check the subfloor and photograph the damage before work starts — it protects the invoice and it's a legitimate add-on conversation.

WE ALREADY TOLD THE CUSTOMER TO

- ✓ Stop using the dishwasher until the tech arrives.
- ✓ Clear the cabinet out so the tech isn't unpacking it.
- ✓ Leave the shutoffs alone — they may not hold.

FIRST 15 MINUTES ON SITE

1	Find the main before touching a stop. Both under-sink valves are suspect. Know where the main is and that it works before anything comes apart.
2	Measure the waste arm and look for an S-trap. A tape measure answers what the photo couldn't. And if that's an S-trap on an unvented arm, the scope changes from a trap swap to a drain re-pipe — price it before you start.
3	Run the dishwasher and watch. The customer's best clue was that it gets worse when the dishwasher runs. Reproduce it and the leak shows you where it is.

WHAT WE CAN'T TELL FROM A PHOTO

We won't pretend a photo is a tape measure. These are the open questions — and each one is why the truck carries both options instead of one.

- ? **Exact waste arm size.** It reads larger than 1-1/2" against the trap, but that needs measuring. Both adapters are on the list.
- ? **Faucet shank type.** Not identifiable from these photos at all. Both riser types are on the list rather than a guess.
- ? **Whether it's an S-trap and whether the arm is vented.** If it is, this becomes a drain re-pipe rather than a trap swap — different scope, different price.
- ? **Static water pressure.** Worth a gauge reading on any supply-side leak.
- ? **Whether the stops will close.** Assume they won't and know where the main is.
- ? **Subfloor condition.** The cabinet base is clearly damaged; what's under it isn't visible.

HOW WE GOT THERE

The customer said “there's water under my sink.” Everything above came out of five phone photos and one sentence they didn't know was important.

WHAT WE SPOTTED	WHY IT MATTERS
Threads on the stub-out, not copper	This is the one that costs the trip. Nearly every truck is stocked with compression stops. A compression ferrule will not seal on male pipe thread, so the tech either drives back for threaded stops or bodes it. The photo showed threads.
The waste arm looks bigger than the trap	Older kitchens don't always run 1-1/2". We can't measure from an image, but we can tell the truck to carry both adapters — which costs nothing and saves the second trip.
“Worse when the dishwasher runs”	The customer thought they were describing an inconvenience. They were telling you it's on the drain side under volume, which is why the trap gets looked at before the supply.
Dishwasher hose on the tailpiece, with a disposal fitted	That's not where it belongs — it should tie into the disposal's DW inlet. Spotting it up front turns a leak call into a code correction the tech can quote on the spot, instead of something he notices on his back in the cabinet.
Hardwired disposal, water in the cabinet	Tells the tech the breaker goes off before anything comes apart. Not something a customer would ever think to mention.

Know before you roll.

Built from a two-minute text link before a truck left the yard. Your dispatcher reviews and approves every report before a tech ever sees it.

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