

Corrosion On Pipes by Finn Home Inspectors

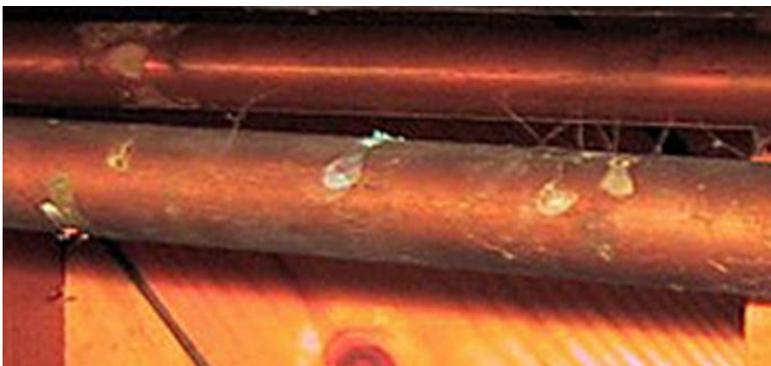
Corrosion on pipes often is a sign of failure, but some corrosion is just oxidation of the exterior surface of the pipe.

Generally, if the corrosion is not uniform over the surface of the pipe then it is likely from pin hole leaks in the pipes. Whether it is a drain pipe or a water pipe, pin holes are holes that develop by corrosion inside the pipe that breaks through the wall of the pipe. The pipe may not actually be leaking, often we find that the corrosion on the outside has sealed the leak temporarily.

The thin walled drain pipes seen below a sink, often in the trap, may have a more uniform corrosion pattern, see photos below. These typically are made of thin brass pipe with a chrome coating on the outside. The brass pipe corrodes through and the chrome may be "holding the pipe together". Thus, be careful not to squeeze the pipe with your hand it may just fall apart.

On drain pipes, often these corrosion "zits" are seen on the bottom of the pipe, where over the years the water has thinned the wall of the pipe. The thinner wall area of the pipe means it takes less corrosion in a spot to corrode through.

When the inspector identifies these pipes, they should be replaced.



Corrosion on copper pipe due to pinhole leaks, note the randomness of locations. If all along say the bottom then it is likely surface corrosion due to condensation on the pipe.

Corrosion with water dripping.



Sink drain trap corrosion caused by pinhole leakage

Pinhole leaks along bottom of drain pipe.

Advanced pinhole leakage with water dripping



Drain pipe pinhole leaks. Pipes in wall leaking too??

Leak where two pipes cross, have rubbed and created leakage

Temporary patch on water pipe, rubber under clamp

Inside drain pipe, note bottom pipe has thinned, likely area for pinholes