

VINCENT'S NEWS

The 'Van-Go' Gallery



OWNER'S CORNER

61 Years of Excellence!

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Did you know...

...that annually 1 of 50 homeowners file water damage or freezing insurance claims, which accounts for 24% of all homeowner's insurance claims* and that the average cost of a claim is \$10,900? In 2017 insurance companies paid out \$13 Billion for water damage claims - and that doesn't include non-covered water damage costs!

* Source: the Insurance Information Institute.

THROUGH MY EYES

It's been over a year since the beginning of the 'COVID' crisis and what an education it has been. Strip away the politics and a lot of the conflicting information - and misinformation - and at a basic level I think that everyone at the very least has a heightened awareness

of infectious diseases and how to protect themselves. (*Moms: you were on to something when you told us to always wash our hands!*)

Many illnesses caused by viruses and bacteria display similar symptoms to COVID as we have learned over

Continued Page 3

"Wherever you see a 'Vincent's Van Go' you know the job will be a work of art."



Here is Cory, holding a gate valve (left) and a ball valve (photo right). The lever handle of the ball valve is easier to use & faster.

Do You Have a Plan for a Water Line Break in Your House?

A plan seems obvious - turn the water off. But every year we get people that call us in a panic in these situations who have no idea of what to do. And with the amount of damage that leaking water can do to your home, every second counts.

I'm sure part of the reason is because they aren't thinking clearly in their panicked state. But the bigger reason is because they didn't have a plan of what to do in an emergency.

Planning for an

emergency, whether it be mapping an escape route out of your house in case of fire or what to do in a plumbing emergency is important. This month I'd like to help you with a plan for a water emergency.

Step 1: Create your plan.

Do you know where your main water shut-off valve for your whole house is? If not, you must locate it. In case of a water emergency this is the valve you want to shut off as quickly as possible.

There may be other shutoffs that can isolate

the leak, but in a water emergency you don't want to have to think about it. Shut off the main to stop the water and control the immediate crisis. Then when you are not under pressure you can think about alternative valves that allow you to restore water to some fixtures.

If you are on a municipal water system, the main water shut-off is by your water meter. If you have a basement, and your ceiling is exposed, try to identify the water pipes in the

Continued Page 2

Emergency Plan (Continued from Pg.1)

overhead floor joists and follow the pipe until you identify where it comes into the house. If you have a crawlspace, you may have to get into it and crawl around until you find your shut off using the same methodology as above. More on this further down.

Step 2: Make sure your plan will work. Once you know where your main water shut-off is, make certain you always have a clear pathway to get to it. Don't allow boxes or other items to block easy access to it. Next, test the valve to make certain that you can turn it and that it actually works to shut the water off. Don't assume either.

You would be surprised at the number of shut off valves that have stopped working due to non-use. They may not be able to be turned because of corrosion. Also, turning the valve may require hand-strength that you do not have. The type of valve can play a factor as well: a ball valve with a lever handle only requires one-quarter turn to open or close the valve while either a gate valve or stop valve that screws down requires many

rotations to close. Ball valves are much quicker and more reliable. If you have an older, screw-down type – or if you discover that you don't have the hand-strength to turn it – or if it doesn't work to shut off the water – consider upgrading your main water shut off to a new, fast-closing ball valve. (See photo on page 1.)

Here's another alternative if your main shut-off is hard to get to – like in a crawlspace – or if you don't have the hand-strength to shut it off:

- Consider upgrading to an electronic valve that can shut off with a conveniently located switch. A simple flip of a switch or press of a button and your water is off! There are even some models that let you turn the water on and off with a smart-phone app – and some that will shut off automatically when there is a leak.

Step 3: Make certain everyone in your household is familiar with the plan. In many households there may be one person in charge of all household maintenance related issues, who would be

expected to shut off the water in an emergency. That's fine – until they aren't home.

Also, make certain older children know the plan. Once my wife and I left our teenage daughter alone for a few days while we were out of town. She experienced an odd plumbing emergency where there was a vibration noise in the water lines that was so loud it scared her. Because she did not know where to shut off the water, I needed several minutes to talk her through what to do over the phone. Fortunately, there was no water leak, but I learned this valuable lesson that I am sharing with you now.

Our Plumbing & Home Safety Service maintenance visit can help you with this. In addition to providing water heater maintenance, our tech will help you locate the main shut-off valve and make certain it works. In fact, we'll check all your emergency water shut offs to make certain they work. Let us know if we can help with anything discussed here.

- Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

Great service! I woke up to a broken furnace with sub-zero temps outside and 54° inside. Nancy, in the office, was professional and sympathetic. She had a serviceman at our house within an hour. Greg diagnosed and fixed the problem right away! I highly recommend Vincent's Heating & Plumbing!

Rick Ayers, Marysville

Through My Eyes (Continued from Pg. 1)

the past year. Pneumonia, colds, or even seasonal flus must be suspected to be COVID until it is ruled out by a COVID test. And none have diminished because COVID is here. There are still a lot of other viruses and bacteria to be cautious of.

This has also been a problem for other diseases that present themselves as these more familiar sicknesses. And while now, due to COVID, we may get tested, before COVID most people would just tough it out until they were better.

According to health officials, the lack of testing when these symptoms are displayed - or even knowing to test for it - is the reason there aren't more reported cases of America's deadliest waterborne disease: legionellosis ('Legionnaires' disease') or its milder cousin, 'Pontiac Fever'. And even though it is waterborne, both are caused by inhaling water droplets contaminated with the legionellae bacteria. (You can drink it, and nothing will happen - it's only a risk when inhaled.)

As recently as 2018, health departments reported nearly 10,00 cases of Legionnaires' disease - the most ever recorded in a single year since the disease was first identified

in 1976 and the numbers have been rising steadily since 2000.

But this is just the actual reported cases. Allowing for our awareness of COVID, if you were displaying these symptoms would you go to the doctor and ask for a test for legionellae - or any test for that matter: **cough, shortness of breath, fever, muscle aches, and headaches?** Apparently, very few other people do either as there are an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 unreported Legionnaires' disease cases every year.

So, what does this have to do with you? - especially if you have city water that is treated with chlorine? I used to be skeptical and think that way - until I did a little research.

What I discovered is that water systems are treated with chlorine at levels to eliminate coliform bacteria (E-Coli). Legionellae bacteria are chlorine resistant.

The amount of chlorine necessary to kill legionellae is impractical for residential systems. The chlorine level needed to do so can damage plumbing systems and make the water undrinkable.

Legionellae is in water everywhere. Place where it can be found include spray nozzles,

spas, hot tubs and whirlpool baths.

But the biggest risk to us is our water heater - unless we have a tankless water heater. This is because bacteria flourish and multiply in warm water - just like yeast when bread is made. Only water temperatures 140°F or higher will even begin to kill these bacteria. The EPA recommended water heater temp setting of 120°F may save energy and prevent scalding, but it does nothing to protect us from legionnaires' disease.

I have prepared a special report, '**PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM WATER HEATER RISKS IN YOUR HOME**' that goes into more detail about this - including the information that I cited, and the source - and the other risks from water heaters.

It also goes beyond the risks and helps you understand what maintenance your water heater needs to help keep it delivering hot water for years to come. (We actually have a water heater maintenance service called our '**Plumbing & Home Safety Service**'.)

To get your **FREE** copy of my special report call us and ask for it or visit www.VHPinc.com and request a copy.

- Daniel Squires

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Vincent's Heating & Plumbing is proud to install Amana equipment, made in the USA.

What We Want From April Showers

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Vincent's News is published 11-months per year.

ATTENTION VHP CLUB MEMBERS:

If your annual Club visit schedule has been affected by COVID I want to thank you for your patience and understanding!

- Daniel Squires

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Humor Section

A man goes to his doctor and tells him he hasn't been feeling good for days.

After examining him, the doctor gives him several bottles of pills and instructs him:

- "Take the green pill with two big glasses of water when you get up."
- "An hour later, take the white pill with another glass of water."
- "Take the blue pill with a big glass of water after lunch."
- "Mid-afternoon, take the orange pill with plenty of water, and repeat that at dinner."
- "Then, just before going to bed, take the red pill with several big glasses of water."

The man says, "Wow, Doc. That's a lot. What's wrong with me?"

Doctor replies, "You're dehydrated."



What is the Best Automatic Water Shut-off System For My Home?

The average water damage insurance claim from a broken water line is over \$10,000 - and that doesn't include the cost of your lost time and damage to your personal property! Investing in an automatic water shut-off system helps you avoid such a heartbreaking crisis. All things considered - especially your lost time and potentially damaged unreplaceable personal items - it may be some of the best 'insurance' you buy. There may even be an annual homeowner's insurance premium credit available to you for having an automatic water shut off in your home - check with your agent.

If you would like to explore protecting yourself with an automatic water shut-off system here are a some considerations:

- Do you want a **smart device** that you control with a smartphone app and can integrate with smart home controllers such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home or Ring?
- Do you want a **non-smart device** that does not have to rely on Wi Fi to operate and does not require a smartphone, and operates on either 120V or battery backup?
- In order to shut off automatically when there is a leak, there needs to be a sensor that detects water at the leak. How many sensors do you require for your peace of mind? (This affects the overall package price.)

If we can help you with any of these options, give us call.

You Can Also Get Automatic Water Shut-offs for Individual Fixtures - Like Water Heaters

If you're not as concerned with a whole home system you can get automatic water shut-offs for a single component. We have installed many automatic shut-offs for water heaters - typically a non-smart device with a sensor located next to it that when water is detected shuts off the water to the tank.

Recently we have added another option for water heaters: a completely mechanical device— **no Wi Fi and no power required!** - to shut off the water. Essentially, it's an '**airbag**' for your water heater - it instantly shuts the water off to your water heater when there is a leak. In fact, if you have a gas water heater, there is even a version of this mechanical-only water heater valve that will shut the gas off at the same time!

Now, I am the type of person that likes all the bells and whistles - I think smart devices are cool and I have a lot of them - like my Wi Fi thermostat and my smart whole house water shut off. I

like the idea of being able to control them with a smartphone app and get the alerts if the temperature in my house drops or if there is a suspected leak. But here's the downside: what if my Wi Fi goes out? Or what if my power goes out and I forgot to change the backup batteries - I'm out of luck!

There is something very appealing about the simplicity of a device that works even when everything else goes wrong!

I was very intrigued when I first read about this device and so I called the company to learn more about it. Apparently, the inventor had seen a rescue at sea by the navy on TV that inspired this product. The rescuers in the helicopter were hovering over the people that needed help and tossed out a package that landed on the water. Upon hitting the water, the package instantly inflated into a life raft. And now the same life-saving technology that triggered the raft to inflate is used to save you from the flood damage caused by a water heater. How it works is ingenious:

The 'airbag' valve is located in the water heater drain pan underneath the heater. The cold water supply is diverted and plumbed through the emergency valve before it goes into the water heater. When leaking water contacts the sensor in the valve an 80-LBS spring is released that slams home and shuts off the water. Simple. An airbag for your water heater. Where the powered ones have an advantage over this is that they are re-settable - this is not. Like an airbag it is a one time use. But, again, you don't need Wi Fi or power. It's a tradeoff.

This is perfect for situations where protecting your home from a flood from a water heater is critical - condos, homes with finished basements, homes with the water heater on the main floor - and more. - *Daniel Squires*



Here is Greg holding the water heater 'airbag' valve. The water supply is shut-off by an 80-LBS spring if water is detected.

'APRIL SHOWERS' SPECIAL

Get a Plumbing & Home Safety Service (Includes Water Heater Maintenance) (\$179 Value) Included at No Added Cost with the Installation of an Automatic Water Shut-Off Valve (for Whole Home or Individual Fixture).

CALL 810-985-7103 - ASK FOR THE 'APRIL SHOWERS' SPECIAL.

Expires 5/30/2021 - Not Combinable with Other Offers

VINCENT'S HEATING & PLUMBING, INC. – 2650 OAK ST – PORT HURON – MI 48060
(810) 985-7103 www.VHPinc.com sales@VHPinc.com

ARE YOU SURE YOUR WATER HEATER IS SAFE?

The Top 4 Hidden Water Heater Risks Are:

- Tank ‘Ruptures’ Due to Failed Temperature & Pressure Relief Valves
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Due to Water Heater Venting Problems
- Scalding Due to Water Heater Temperatures That Are Too Hot
- The Potential for Legionella Growth from Temperatures Set Too Low

Next to your home’s heating system, your water heater poses the greatest potential lethal threat to you and your family’s safety in your home - yet it is typically ignored. Watts Regulator Co., a leading manufacturer of T&P Relief valves has been sounding the alarm on the importance of water heater safety for over 70 years. Vincent’s Plumbing & Home Safety Service incorporates Watts’s safety guidelines. Vincent’s Heating & Plumbing has made water heater safety and maintenance the centerpiece of it’s Plumbing & Home Safety Service visit.

Here is a listing of the various safety & maintenance tasks we’ll take care of for you:

ALL WATER HEATERS:

- Per WATTS T & P relief valve inspection guidelines:

- Perform T & P valve annual safety check to prevent explosions.
- Verify T & P valve installed correctly and for safe discharge.
- Verify T & P valve is rated correctly for the tank.
- Remove T & P valve and visually inspect for corrosion and accumulation of sediment deposits to make sure it will work.

ATMOSPHERIC & POWER VENT GAS WATER HEATERS ONLY:

- Flush sediment from tank to reduce health risks & prolong tank life (*flushed until water is clear.*)
- Perform visual inspection of anode rod, dip tube and tank interior for signs of wear.
- Exhaust vent safety check to prevent CO leaking into house.
- Perform flame safety check to prevent gas explosions.
- Perform combustion testing with cleaning to ensure proper & safe performance.
- Perform safety inspection of all gas fittings to it for leaks.

TANKLESS GAS WATER HEATERS ONLY:

- Perform annual descaling flush.
- Perform safety inspection of all gas fittings to it for leaks.

ELECTRIC WATER HEATER ONLY:

- Flush sediment from tank to reduce health risks & prolong tank life (*flushed until water is clear*)
- Perform visual inspection of elements, anode rod, dip tube and tank interior for signs of wear.
- Remove access panels.
- Visually inspect all electrical connections.
- Visually inspect for signs of copper embrittlement.

PLUMBING INSPECTION

- Check all water line shut offs and emergency stops to verify they will function when needed.
- Identify location of main shutoff and make certain that it works.
- Examine drain lines & water lines for signs of leaking and concerns. (*1-1/2 hours is allotted for visit not including travel time*)

Includes **Annual Descaling Flush** for Tankless Water Heaters
& **Visual Inspection of Tank Interior** For Tank-Type Water Heaters

BONUS OFFER - NO PURCHASE NECESSARY: GET A FREE COPY OF MY SPECIAL REPORT:

“PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM WATER HEATER RISKS IN YOUR HOME”

...and learn more about the above risks and gain an understanding about the inner workings of your water heater and the things that need to be done of to keep your water heater safe, to keep it delivering the hot water you expect, and to make it last a long time. FOR YOUR FREE COPY visit www.VHPinc.com and request a copy or give us a call at (810) 985-7103. - Daniel Squires

...continued on reverse side....

In addition to the extensive water heater safety and maintenance procedures, the plumbing technician will also inspect your home's plumbing system to make certain that all your plumbing fixtures, water lines and drain lines are in good order and that there are no problems developing.

- ***Were you aware that cast iron drains that were installed in homes built before the 70's are wearing out and starting to crack and leak as they reach the end of their useful life?***

This is the sort of potential problem that our plumbing technician can 'head off at the pass' so you can be aware of potential issues that are developing before they become major problems. Then there are the plumbing emergencies that come out of nowhere—would you be ready for one?

- ***Do you know where your main water shut-off is? - and - if you do know where it is - does it work?!?***

In addition to the plumbing inspection, we'll show you where the main water shut-off to your house is AND we'll test it to make certain that it will actually work when you need it. And for good measure we'll test ALL of your water line shut-offs and emergency stops to make certain that they will work.

- ***With a Plumbing & Home Safety Service visit you can KNOW:***

- √ ...that your water heater failsafe (the T&P Valve) that keeps it from becoming a bomb is working.
- √ ...that the gas to your water heater will shut off rather than dump gas in your home if it doesn't work.
- √ ...that your water heater isn't dumping poisonous exhaust gasses into your home.
- √ ...that there are no faulty electrical shorts or signs of burning on your water heater.
- √ ...that your water heater has gotten the required annual maintenance it needs.
- √ ...that your gas lines to the water heater aren't leaking.
- √ ...that a plumbing professional has looked over your home's plumbing.
- √ ...that you will be ready for a plumbing emergency

There are two ways you can have this peace of mind service:

- ***GOOD:*** Invest in a single Plumbing & Home Safety Service visit - only \$179
Your total cost for all the above benefits is only \$60 more than our normal \$119 service charge!
- ***BEST:*** Make a Plumbing & Home Safety Service an annual visit & save 25%!
You can add this to your VHP Club membership and receive an annual Plumbing & Home Safety Service visit annually for only an extra \$11.25 per month - \$135 per year - to your current club membership fees- save 25% starting today!

Call (810) 985-7103 to Schedule a Plumbing & Home Safety Service Visit

- **Monday - Friday 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.**

Vincent's Plumbing & Home Safety Service visits are only available to be performed in the months of February to May.

Vincent's Heating & Plumbing Inc.

2650 Oak St - Port Huron, MI 48060

(810) 985-7103 email: sales@VHPinc.com

"Wherever You See a Vincent Van Go You Know the Job Will Be a Work of Art!"