

VINCENT'S NEWS

The 'Van-Go' Gallery



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

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Did You Know...
...that your HVAC equipment owner's manual recommends annual maintenance to keep your equipment performing well and to make certain it is operating safely?

OWNER'S CORNER
THROUGH MY EYES

What an event-filled summer I have had. Although my wife Karen and I didn't take a vacation, I was able to take some long weekends and do some pretty fun things. In previous issues I have already shared about fishing in northern Ontario with my brother David, and going to see the band Chicago. Here are

the other highlights: **Bike Riding in Mackinaw City and on Mackinac Island** – Karen and I are pretty avid bike riders and so going to Mackinac with our bikes was great. We arrived in Mackinaw City on Friday afternoon and



Here I am at the trestle bridge – the destination of our Labor Day weekend ride on the Wadhams to Avoca trail. - Daniel Squires

spent some time relaxing on the beach. Then in the early evening we pedaled

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"The 4 Most Popular Questions Our Technicians Hear" – Concluded

Question 2 - "Should I cover my air conditioner in the winter?"

It's a good idea to protect your air conditioner condenser from leaves and debris that can get into it, but there are some ways to avoid. Its not a good idea to completely cover the entire unit with a cover. This can trap moisture against the metal surface and cause your air conditioner to rust. I

have seen some covers that are designed to 'breathe' and let moisture escape, but I have no experience to know if they work.

Alternatively, just cover the opening on top of the unit to keep stuff out and leave the sides free. This avoids trapping moisture. Some people do this with a piece of plywood or a trash can lid with a brick on it to hold it down. While this can provide protection – if you

remember to do it - it can be a bit of an eyesore.

A far better solution is a Kool Kap, which provides year-round protection to keep leaves and debris out of the condenser. This is a slick product that actually harnesses the air that is exhausted from the top of the condenser to lift the cover up anytime the unit is running. This means the top is covered the entire year. See the nearby insert for more details.

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4 Most Popular Questions (Cont'd from Page 1)

Question 3 - "Where should I locate my carbon monoxide monitor?"

'By the furnace' is what most people think, but there is a location that provides more protection, especially if you only have one CO alarm. The better answer? In your bedroom, and located on a dresser that is higher than you are when you sleep. Here's why:

If the source of the carbon monoxide is your furnace, the highest concentration of CO is in the middle of the night when it is the coldest time of the day and your furnace or boiler is running the most. This is typically when most people are asleep, so this is why the best location is in your bedroom.

Next, carbon monoxide is lighter than air. So as CO fills up your bedroom it is falling from the ceiling toward the floor. This is why you want your CO alarm to be located above you - so the alarm will sound before you are affected by the poisonous gas. This means

that you don't want a CO alarm that plugs into a wall outlet, because outlets are typically within a foot of the floor.

You're much safer with a battery powered alarm - and even better if it is a low-level CO monitor that sounds the alarm as soon as there is a problem - unlike typical CO alarms. The concern with most CO alarms is that the design standard - UL 2034 - allows an alarm to take up to 4 hours to warn you and at much higher CO levels. I recommend the NSI 3000 low-level monitor. See the insert for details.

Question 4 - How often should I replace my furnace filter?"

The answer to this question depends on a few factors. The general rule of thumb is that if you have a 1" furnace filter that it should be changed every 4 - 6 weeks while a 3-1/2" wide or greater pleated media filter can be changed annually. However, environmental circumstances can affect the frequency of either filter types. In houses with smokers or where there are hobbies that create dust - such

as woodworking - filters may need to be changed more often. In these circumstances the filter should be inspected frequently to gauge whether it should be changed sooner. Tip: have an extra new filter on hand for comparison purposes.

Caution: avoid 1" filters with a very high MERV rating - like electrostatic filters. These filters are more expensive and boast that they provide high efficiency filtration. The problem is that filters with high MERV ratings restrict the airflow your HVAC system needs to perform well and will raise your electric bill and shorten equipment life. The main purpose of a furnace filter is to protect your equipment - indoor air quality is only a secondary side benefit. If you have breathing issues that you are trying to help, consider a bypass filter system with HEPA filtration that cleans household air without restricting airflow and harming your HVAC equipment and system performance. I will address this in a future issue.

- Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

I love Vincent's Heating & Plumbing. They have a friendly, knowledgeable staff and I can count on them to do the job right!

Loretta, Port Huron

Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

through town to Alexander Henry Park under the bridge. We continued past Old Mackinac Lighthouse and Fort Michilimackinac. Then we stayed to the right past the parking lot until we got onto Lakeside Dr. This is a very scenic single lane road with vacation homes that we discovered previously and is nice little bike ride. Then we retraced our route and went to dinner.

The next day we rode our bikes to the ferry and went to the island. This is always a treat, because for once bicyclists don't have to compete with motorized vehicles on the Island. If it weren't for the inconsiderate horse droppings, the Island would be perfect. After heeding the siren call of Starbucks in the morning, we were off to ride around the Island followed by shopping and a relaxing lunch. Then we reversed our morning route, and went around the Island

again, this time counterclockwise. I tell people this is how we unwound, which we continued at the beach after the ferry ride back to mainland.

Canoeing on the Au Sable

River – Another Friday found us camping at Paddle Brave Canoe Livery in Roscommon. I love to canoe and I have fond memories of taking my sons, Brendan and then Bryan, on Boy Scout canoe trips from Roscommon all the way to Oscoda on Lake Huron. That is a 117 mile trip that required about a week and for us to carry our camping gear for nightly stops along the way. Karen and I only did a few hour stint on the Au Sable River, but it is always fun. For our recent trip, all of the cabins were taken. No problem – I convinced Karen that we would have fun using one of the small tents that I still had from the Boy Scout days. She was a good sport

and while a little leery she agreed – for the last time. The nostalgia from my adventures of 15 years ago ran smack into the reality of our increased needs to get up during the night. We were warm enough – and comfortable in our sleeping bags – but this could not offset the hassle of getting up during the night. Now Karen is talking about these 'cute' tear-drop trailers that she found online.

The lesson learned is that things change with the passage of time and not always for the better. And now with fall here and winter soon approaching, the same thing is true with your heating equipment – which is why it is always important to have it checked annually to make certain that it is operating safely and performing well.

– Daniel Squires

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Vincent's Heating & Plumbing

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Word Search: National American Cheese Month

R H G V Y P J R V P J K M R G
Y B L O C Y S D H P S C O E N
R M B P S V V T R Q N I N T I
T Y E S E E H C G N I R T S N
E S E E H C O H C A N B E N N
P E P P E R J A C K L S R E O
R Z H P A Z D N X P R W E U C
P H I L A D E L P H I A Y M N
F Y D F G W A T E E V L E V I
K R A F F T O S P K H U F S P

BRICK
COLBY
KRAFFT
MONTEREY
MUENSTER
NACHO CHEESE
PEPPER JACK
PHILADELPHIA
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Humor Section

*The Most Reasons to be
Your Best Choice*

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Did you hear about the explosion at the cheese factory?

There was de brie everywhere!

What do you call cheese that isn't yours?

Nacho cheese

A kid threw a lump of cheddar at me. I thought 'that's not mature'

Why didn't the cheese want to get sliced? It had grater plans

What group of cheese has been known to fly?... Curds of prey!