

# VINCENT'S NEWS

## The 'Van-Go' Gallery



*OWNER'S CORNER*

**61 Years of Excellence!**

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## Did you know...

...that long before COVID, EPA warned that every home has indoor air pollution issues that can negatively affect your health?

You can learn more about this in my free Special Report - "Protecting Yourself from Airborne Risks in Your Home".

For a free copy visit [VHPinc.com](http://VHPinc.com) or give us a call.

## THROUGH MY EYES

My son, Bryan, who lives with his wife in Royal Oak, phoned me in early January to ask my advice concerning his sewer. Since buying the house a few years ago, they have had ongoing issues with roots clogging their main sewer line – a problem common

to a lot of people.

Bryan had hired a local sewer cleaner to clear a backed-up sewer line just two months previously and there was evidence of roots when the sewer snake was removed. Now, they were again beginning to hear tell-

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



Here is Rob with our sewer cleaning system that works with our sewer video camera to pinpoint problem areas and destroy roots with the carbide-tipped chain-cutter (pictured).

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## Potential Sources of Lead Contamination In Your Drinking Water

In the fall of 2020, 'Water Customers' of the City of Port Huron received notices telling them that the composition of the water service piping from the city water main to their house is unknown. The Port Huron DPW is working to identify these materials, and, when finished, they intend to have an inventory of the composition of every water service pipe in the city.

The concern, of

course, has to do with the risk of lead in our drinking water, which can cause serious health and developmental problems. (Everyone remembers the Flint Water Crisis.) If the water service lines are made of lead or galvanized iron piping that has been connected to lead at some point it could increase the levels of lead in your drinking water. With the passage of the **Safe**

**Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1986**, the installation of lead water pipes was prohibited nationwide after June 1986.

While the concern about the water service lines mainly applies to older homes there are other points of risk from contamination from lead in your plumbing that can apply to newer homes as well. This can include

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## Sources of Lead (Continued from Pg.1)

valves, soldered joints, and faucets.

In 2011 the **Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act (RLDWA)** substantially reduced the allowable lead content in plumbing products made in America, such as pipes & pipe fittings (copper), plumbing fittings (such as the supply tubes and emergency shutoffs), and fixtures (such as kitchen & bath faucets). Therefore, there is potential risk of lead in your drinking water even if your incoming water service line is not lead: from the copper pipes, plumbing fittings and fixtures manufactured in the US before 2012.

There is also another important thing to consider. The **2011 RLDWA** applied to plumbing products made in America – it did not apply for imported products. Where this becomes critical is with **plumbing products purchased online**. A significant amount of the products sold online are imported from countries that

do not abide by our safety standards and you may end up with a plumbing product that has much higher lead content than an American made one. Plus, even if you think you would be safe by purchasing a brand name faucet from an online vendor, it may be a *'knock-off'*. If you are not aware, counterfeit products are a huge problem online, with over \$300 billion of damage to the global economy annually. There may be a risky trade-off for a cheap online price. *Let the buyer beware.*

Regarding imported foreign plumbing products, in September 2020, EPA issued a final regulation in the **RLDWA**. This requires that by September 2024 all manufacturers and importers must certify that their products meet these "Lead Free" plumbing requirements. Personally, I don't know how much confidence I would place in

online retailers considering themselves as 'importers' and thereby subjecting the plumbing products they sell to these rigorous standards. I have seen too many non-code compliant plumbing products sold in 'big box' stores to put a lot of faith in online retailers.

Should you be concerned about the lead content in your water you can find more information online at [Michigan.gov/MILeadSafe](http://Michigan.gov/MILeadSafe). There is even information on how to send water samples to test for lead to the Michigan EGLE testing lab. If you received the "NOTIFICATION THAT YOUR SERVICE LINE MATERIAL IS UNKNOWN" letter from Port Huron, as a courtesy to our customers, upon your request, our techs will identify what your service line material is on any service or maintenance call. If you have any other questions, give me a call.

- Daniel Squires

## What Our Clients Are Saying...

"When my furnace began malfunctioning on a cold day, I called Vincent's hoping they could help in a hurry. They had a service tech at my site within a few hours, and he did a full maintenance on the furnace, restoring it to working order. The tech was quick, friendly, and efficient, explaining all the options to me and giving me advice on how to better preserve my furnace. Another great job by Vincent's!"

Roger Thomas, Fort Gratiot

## Through My Eyes (Continued from Pg.1)

tale gurgling sounds when the water was draining – a sure sign that another sewer backup was in the making.

The problem with using a snake to clear a sewer is that it is done without seeing what caused the problem, other than what may be pulled back by the snake. Often this procedure just punches a hole through a mass of roots that is big enough to allow the sewer to drain without eliminating all the roots. And before long, this small opening can clog again. This was the scenario that Bryan faced.

The company that had been out told him that the root problem might be so severe that his sewer line might need to be 'jetted'. Jetting is a very thorough drain and sewer cleaning procedure using water under high pressure that will clear everything in a sewer or drain but is expensive – Bryan was given an approximate estimate of close to \$1,700. Thus, his call for my advice.

What Bryan didn't know is that we had just invested in a second sewer camera video inspection system that lets us see the actual problems in

sewers. I told him that I would bring the new sewer camera down so we could see exactly what was going on.

Sure enough, they still had roots. His sewer line is vitrified clay pipe - also called 'sewer crock' - which is quite common to find in older houses. Typically, sewer crock is in 2-foot sections that are joined together, and, unless it cracks or breaks, it is typically at these joints where roots intrude. At around 20 feet in, we began to see large masses of roots at every joint. It looked like the illustrations of how arteries start to clog from the outside in, with a constricted passage for the sewer waste to exit that can easily become blocked. Just using a traditional sewer snake would not solve his problem – it would only punch another hole through it.

The other thing that I had brought was a new type of sewer cleaning system that works in conjunction with the sewer camera. In fact, it can be used while the sewer camera is in the sewer. Instead of blindly trying to clear a problem, with this new system the problem areas can be pinpointed, and the

intruding root masses can be eliminated one joint at a time. This is high tech, as the procedure is like arthroscopic surgery where a surgeon operates using a tiny video camera, so they don't have to make a large incision.

I told Bryan that for his situation, using this system could achieve results similar to jetting. Sometimes jetting is needed, but I was confident that we would be successful and avoid it.

And this is what we did. Methodically we moved down the line to each successive problem area and we destroyed the roots with the 'chain cutters' used with this new system. Imagine a chain with carbide blades at the end of a rapidly spinning cable tearing apart the roots right to the pipe surface – that is what you would have seen. Before long, the offending roots were gone. Bryan was thrilled.

If you suspect you have a root problem, or have recently had your sewer snaked, you should consider having a video inspection of your sewer line. Let us know if we can help.

– Daniel Squires

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## Something to Chew On

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### 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 son calls his out-of-town elderly mother.

"How are you doing, mom?" he asks.

"Not so good" she replies in a weak voice.

"No? What's going on?" he asks with concern.

She tells him, "I haven't eaten in 38 days..."

Now alarmed, the son exclaims, "38 days! Mom, why haven't you eaten in 38 days?"

"I was waiting for you to call, and I didn't want to have food in my mouth!"