

VINCENT'S NEWS

The 'Van-Go' Gallery



OWNER'S CORNER

61 Years of Excellence!

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Did you know...

...that you are not limited to having an inspection performed for a house you are buying from a Home Inspection service?

You can get a more in depth and expert opinion on the safety and reliability of the plumbing, heating and cooling system when you have us inspect it.

THROUGH MY EYES

The new year season is a time of reflection. As I write this it's still early January and I am a little nostalgic about this past 60th anniversary year for Vincent's Heating & Plumbing. And I count myself very blessed.

I am blessed by you and all of our other friends and clients.

You may even be one of our longtime clients that counts our relationship in decades rather than years – some even two, three or four decades!

Thank you for your friendship and loyalty.

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



Here is Nancy hard at work with me standing over her shoulder.

Although I haven't been here for all 60 of those

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New Homeowners Sickened by the Faulty Water Heater System in the Home They Just Bought

You might expect that a professional home inspection of a house you are buying would expose any safety concerns.

Our tech, Michael, recently encountered an unsafe natural gas water heater with five obvious safety concerns that the Home Inspector saw nothing wrong with. Sadly, the unsuspecting family – father, mother

and baby – had been sick for over a month since moving in.

A photo on page 2 shows the water heater as Michael found it.

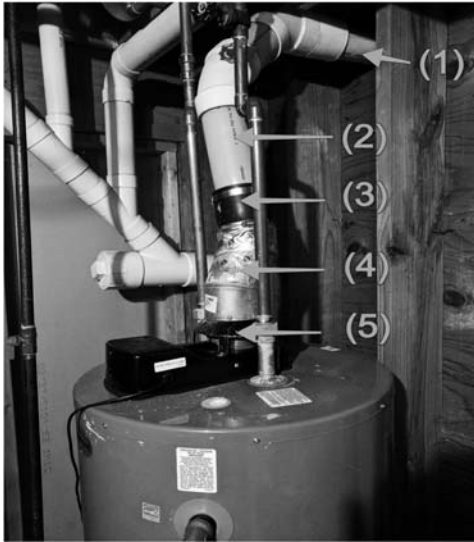
From what Michael was able to deduce, the original water heater had been a power vent model. This type of water heater does not require a standard chimney or exhaust vent through the roof of the house.

Instead, it has an exhaust fan on top that allows it to vent outside through the sidewall of the house.

It is important to understand that the exhaust fan serves two purposes: first it replaces the function of the chimney draft to pull the exhaust gases through the water heater and, second, it cools the temperature

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Faulty Water Heater ... (Continued from Page 1)



Here is the unsafe water heater described in the article below.

of the exhaust gases. Without this feature the exhaust gases exiting through the side of the house would be hot enough to burn someone. Therefore, when a power vent water heater fails it must be replaced with another power vent model or a chimney needs to be installed to handle the higher temperatures of a natural draft water heater.

In this situation the previous homeowner - or unlicensed 'handyman' masquerading as a plumber - had replaced the original power vent water heater with the natural draft model but did not install a new chimney exhaust vent. Instead, they created an unsafe situation by using the original power vent exhaust. **(1) in the photo points to the original power vent exhaust that exits through the sidewall of the house.**

What you can't make out in the photo is that the overheated PVC pipe of the power vent exhaust had changed from its original white color to pink - a sign that the pipe was breaking down. PVC pipe is rated for 140° F which is suitable for use with the original power vent model, but not for the typical 360° F exhaust temps from a natural draft water heater. People have died from carbon monoxide poisoning when PVC pipes that should not have been used have melted. **(2) in the photo points to the PVC that had become pink with discoloration.**

(3) in the photo points to a rubber plumbing fitting (Fernco coupling) that was used to connect the original PVC vent piping to the **(4) sheet metal fitting**. Fernco couplings are also rated for 140° F and it was only a matter of time until it melted - possibly causing a fire.

(5) Perhaps you have been wondering whether the black item on the top of the water heater is a power vent fan. It is not - it is an inoperable vent damper.

The final problem is not visible in the photo. The drain tube for the Temperature & Pressure Relief Valve (T&P Valve) on the side of the water heater was too short by over a foot. Best practices and the MI Plumbing

code require the drain tube to terminate within 6 inches of the floor to prevent scalding should the T&P Valve relieve.

The plumbing inspector was called out and immediately red-tagged the heater and shut it down. But when the Home Inspector was called and confronted about the water heater he argued that nothing was wrong with it. He even had a similar photo of the water heater in his inspection report!

Just last month in this column I cited examples of bad workmanship performed by untrained do-it-yourselfers and handymen that don't realize when a professional is needed. This water heater is another case in point. But my big takeaway this month has to do with Home Inspections.

A typical Home Inspector is a 'generalist' - not a 'specialist': they know a little about a lot of stuff. A competent one will let you know that.

In contrast, we are specialists when it comes to your plumbing, heating and cooling systems. Considering how important these are to your personal safety you would be better served by the expert opinion we can provide.

- Daniel Squires

Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

years, I've been here for many of them. I'm even showing my age by acknowledging that I have been with Vincent's Heating & Plumbing since the early seventies – along with my brother David. That was when my father and mother, Ray and Kay Squires acquired the business from Vincent Unte from whom the business got its name.

I am also blessed because David and I aren't the only ones that have been here a long time. Dave Frazier, who was the first employee my dad hired is also still around, albeit on a part time basis. Next there is Nancy, whose cheerful voice has been answering the phone for 37 years. Then there is a group that has been here 15 years or more: Michael (22), Carol (20), Colleen (18), and Tom (15). Having a solid team that stays around for a long time has a lot to do with customers that allow us to serve them for a long time!

I'm also blessed with the more recent additions to our

team – every one of whom is a great fit on the team and is terrifically suited to help us carry the baton into this seventh decade we're starting.

And this points to my most important job: making sure that every person on the team is of the right temperament and attitude and has the proper training to take care of the needs that you entrust us with. And while I know that sometimes we fall short you can rest assured because we stand behind everything that we do with our satisfaction guarantees – one for our repair and maintenance service jobs and one for our equipment installations – both of which are in writing.

Our repair and maintenance service satisfaction guarantee states:

"We want you to be 100% Satisfied! If at any time during your repair warranty period you are unhappy for any reason please let us know. If it's not

right we'll redo the repair for free! We're not satisfied until you are!"

For equipment replacement our One Year Satisfaction Guarantee states:

"If for any reason during the first year (two years for Silver, Gold or Platinum package) of owning your heating or cooling equipment that we install in your home, you as the homeowner communicate that you are not 100% satisfied with the performance of the equipment, our service, or even our people, if we cannot satisfy you we will remove the system within 30 days of your request and cheerfully refund your money."

We are committed to your satisfaction. We don't take the trust that you place in us lightly. I realize that standing behind these guarantees is the only way we can continue to earn your trust - and continue to be as blessed as we are!

- Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

"As usual, I am so pleased with the work done. The tech arrived at the expected time, left with everything in ship shape the work complete, and was pleasant and informative about the work done. All excellent!"

- Victoria Weidel - St Clair

Wintertime Word Search

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BLIZZARD
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Humor Section



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When time came to start the service, there were only two people in the church - the pastor and a local rancher who had braved two feet of fresh snow to get there.

The pastor asked the rancher, "Since you're the only one here, should we go ahead with the service?"

The rancher looked thoughtful and replied, "Well, if I went out to the barn to feed the livestock and only one cow showed up, I would still feed it."

The pastor responded with enthusiasm, "Well alright! Let's go ahead!"

So the pastor gave the opening prayer, led the song service, passed the offering plate, shared the announcements, delivered his sermon, had an altar call, and finished with the closing prayer. Then he went to the back of the church to greet the congregation which consisted of just one member - the rancher.

As the rancher shook the pastors hand, he said, "You know, earlier I told you that if only one cow showed up that I would feed it, but I'll be darned if I would give it the whole load!"