

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."

OWNER'S CORNER

THROUGH MY EYES

60 Years of Excellence!

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For the first time in our 60 years of business, Vincent's Heating & Plumbing is participating in a nationwide Consumer Marketing Survey. If you have provided us with your email address, in early March you should have received an invitation by email to participate in this Internet-based survey that is now complete.

The goal of the survey was to learn where we can improve in order to serve you better through your survey answers. Further, because it is a nationwide survey conducted for companies and customers across the United States, we'll be able to see how we stack up against other companies.



Here is Marvin performing a water heater inspection, shown here with his video inspection camera looking inside the water heater.

Thank you if you responded and took the survey. If you missed the

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Did you know...

...that setting a water heater temperature down while you are away may save energy - the 'Vacation setting' - but could also put you at risk? See Part 3 of Water Heater Safety and Maintenance nearby for details.

Water Heater Safety & Maintenance - Part 3 of 4

In this installment, I discuss important health and safety reasons for flushing scale and sediment from your water heater and the risks involved with the temperature your water heater is set at.

In every water heater owner's manual are the instructions to periodically flush the sediment out of the water heater with a hose through the drain at

the bottom. The sediment is calcium carbonate, a mineral present in water that when heated will separate from water. Eventually it settles and builds up on the inner surfaces of the tank including the bottom, the components like heater element, thermostat, and even relief valve. Overtime this sediment will harden and form a layer of insulation. This is a

problem because this slows heat transfer and overheats the tank bottom while keeping the water in the tank cooler than it should be. Not only will the water not be as hot as it should, but eventually this will weaken the steel and damage the glass lining and accelerate the timetable for the tank to fail. It can also create a habitat for bacteria, which

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Water Heater Safety (Continued from Page 1)

may be even worse.

One of the biggest differences in plumbing practices between his native Germany and the United States that our plumber Marvin Schmitz noted after joining the Vincent's team was the lack of concern regarding *Legionella* bacteria in water systems and specifically in water heaters. He is in a good position to know, being a licensed journeyman plumber in both Germany and Michigan.

Legionella bacteria is the cause of Legionnaires' Disease – a severe form of pneumonia – and Pontiac Fever – a type of flu. While Pontiac Fever usually clears on its own, untreated Legionnaires' Disease can be fatal. According to CDC, "health departments reported almost 7,500 cases of Legionnaires' disease in the United States in 2017. However, because Legionnaires' Disease is likely underdiagnosed, this number may underestimate the true incidence." ¹ Some authorities estimate the true number to be over 100,000 cases annually as it can be misdiagnosed as pneumonia or the flu unless it is specifically tested for.

The U.S Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) identifies water heaters and specifically the temperature of the water as a primary cause of

Legionnaires' Disease: "Domestic hot water systems are frequently identified as the source of Legionella during Legionellosis outbreaks...Water heaters maintained below 60°C (140°F) and that contain scale and sediment may foster Legionella growth." ²

While it is not the first time that government agencies contradict each other, ironically, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends reducing the temperature of water heaters from 140°F down to 120°F to save energy and to reduce the danger of scalding. While it is important to prevent injuries from scalding, this has still led to criticism that EPA is more concerned about reducing energy consumption than the health of U.S. citizens. ³

Setting aside the goal to save energy, there are two main and opposing risks regarding the temperature a water heater is set to:

- **Too high**, and users risk being injured by scalding.
- **Too low**, and users risk exposure to pathogens, and in particular Legionella.

Canada solved this problem by requiring that water heater temperatures be set at 140°F to

kill *Legionella* bacteria in the tank, and then reducing the water temperature to 120°F at the tank outlet to prevent scalding. This is accomplished by tempering the exiting hot water with cold water using a thermostatic mixing valve. This solves both risks and can be added to existing water heaters or installed with new ones. As a bonus, by setting up a water heater this way, a 40-gallon water heater provides the hot water of a 60-gallon heater.

According to Marvin, Germany solved this problem years ago by requiring tankless water heaters that instantly kill all pathogens as it heats the water – and saves energy.

For more information about Legionella and water heater safety, see the enclosed insert.

Flushing scale and sediment from your tank is important for your health and safety and is another reason why periodic water heater maintenance is needed. Do you know what temperature your water heater is set at? More next month.

– Daniel Squires

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/qa-media.html>

² https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/legionnairesdisease/control_prevention.html#hotwater

³ <https://www.treehugger.com/green-food/is-it-safe-to-turn-down-your-water-heater-temperature.html>

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

Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

missed the invitation in your email - or if you don't use email - we still want your feedback. Just call us or drop us an email. This is why for over 20 years we have listed a phone number on our service invoices for you to call and leave your feedback on a recorded line any hour of the day or night, seven days a week.

The bottom line is that we want to provide you the best service that we can and for you to be satisfied. While we like to hear the things that we are doing right, we need to know where we are missing the mark so we can improve. In fact, your satisfaction is so important to us that we provide a written satisfaction guarantee on everything that we do.

The way that we stand behind what we do is a core pillar of who we are and what Vincent's Heating & Plumbing is as a company. This goes way back to principles that my father, Ray Squires, established decades ago, shortly after he took over the company in 1971. As a Christian, he took seriously Jesus command to 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'. As he applied the Golden Rule to business, this meant that he needed to do everything in his power to satisfy a customer.

At first, this was just the way that he operated the business.

Then one day he had a flash of insight: why not put this operating principle in writing and let people know about it? This was the birth of our written Satisfaction Guarantee for replacement equipment that we call our 'one-year test drive' that has since become an industry best practice. "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."

And it was really this commitment to customer satisfaction that became the catalyst for our growth from the small company that my father took over to becoming one of the largest contracting companies in the Blue Water area. Not only did putting this guarantee in writing provide a level of confidence for our customers, but it also had a dramatic effect on every person in the company because it 'raised the bar' for everything we do. No one in the company wants to be the reason why or to

have caused a customer to be so unhappy that they have to exercise their satisfaction guarantee. With the guarantee in writing, we always have to be on our 'A-game'.

One customer assumed that every company operates this way and thought it would be easy to prove. She reported back to us that out of seven more local companies that gave her a furnace replacement quote that not a single one would match our satisfaction guarantee. As I see it, if a company isn't willing to make a commitment to satisfy you, they must either expect you to be unhappy at some point - or at best have doubts about their ability to keep their promises or live up to your expectations.

Essentially, they want you to assume the risk for things you don't control. How is that fair? On the other hand, with Vincent's Heating & Plumbing the opposite is true - we have all the risk and you have all the control with our Satisfaction Guarantee.

This is another reason why it is so important that we provide a written satisfaction guarantee and encourage you to share your concerns if we have let you down. We want to do everything possible to make certain you're satisfied and that you can be heard.

- Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

I have been a customer of Vincent's for over 20 years, and have never had a complaint. Always great friendly service. Prices are reasonable.

- *Beth - Port Huron*

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Word Search: Zoo Lover's Day (April 8th)

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

Tiger

Giraffe

Bear

Elephant

Zebra

Gorilla

Penguin

Kangaroo

Chimpanzee

Rhinoceros

Flamingo

Crocodile

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Humor Section



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Your Best Choice*

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UNSUBSCRIBE

If you would like your name to be removed from our newsletter mailing list please email "stop" to news@vhpinc.com or give us a call.

What happened when the lion ate the comedian? He felt funny!

What's the difference between a Southern zoo and a Northern zoo? A Southern zoo has a description of the animal on the front of the cage, along with a recipe.

What do you get when two giraffes collide? A giraffic jam.

source: <http://www.jokes4us.com/animaljokes/zoojokes.html>