

# VINCENT'S NEWS

## The 'Van-Go' Gallery



### OWNER'S CORNER

**61 Years of Excellence!**

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## Did you know...

...you can increase air flow and thereby improve your HVAC system performance by replacing old, painted wall registers and grilles? The same is true for decorative wood registers – they may look great, but they really decrease air flow. See the nearby article for more information.

## THROUGH MY EYES

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” So wrote Charles Dickens at the beginning of “A Tale of Two Cities”. And while this is familiar and widely quoted, his first sentence of opposing ideas is long enough to be a paragraph. It’s worth reading:

*“It was the best of times, it was the worst*



Here is a recent photo of our technical team.

*of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of*

*Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all*

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## 4 Things You Can Do to Maximize Your Comfort in Summer Heat –Pt 2

Maximizing your comfort in summer heat requires maintaining good system air flow. There are a lot of factors that go into this, but the thing in your immediate control is the furnace filter. So, here is number two on the list of four things you can do in our **“Filter Do’s & Don’ts”** list:

**DO: make certain your filter isn’t dirty.** You would be surprised at the number of ‘no cool’ and ‘no heat’ service calls that we respond to and

discover a plugged furnace filter as the reason for the call. Change your furnace filter frequently, but...

**DON’T: use a filter that restricts air flow.** Some well know brand filters that are sold are bad for your system and shouldn’t be used. They can be as bad as a dirty filter in how they restrict air flow.

***Insider Tip: The purpose of a furnace filter is to protect the furnace blower. Period. When a furnace filter is used to improve home’s indoor air quality it is***

***being hijacked from the furnace manufacturer’s original purpose. (Further down I will share how to improve IAQ without restricting air flow.)***

Furnace filter manufacturers have adopted a rating system called ‘MERV’: Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value. Simply put, the MERV rating tells you how effective the filter is at trapping particles in the air. But what the MERV rating doesn’t

**Continued Page 2**

## 4 Things You Can Do... (Continued from Pg.1)

tell you is how much air flow is restricted by the filter.

**Here is a rule of thumb: the higher the MERV rating of a filter, the worse it is for system air flow.** Here's why: Particles in the air that need to be filtered come in all sizes, from those that you can easily see down to those that are smaller than a human hair and are invisible without a microscope. In order to catch smaller particles filters are made with denser material – think of how much denser a fish net is for a goldfish versus a net needed to land a walleye. And of course, the denser it is, the more restrictive it is to air flow.

There are a lot of good reasons for wanting to capture these small, and even ultrafine particles like viruses - especially since the age of COVID. Further, some particles are so small they can pass from your lungs into your bloodstream. Long-term exposure to such ultrafine particles have been linked to serious health problems. But it's a big mistake to sacrifice equipment performance for cleaner air. Restricting air flow

not only sabotages system performance, it will also result in higher electric bills, cause your equipment to breakdown, cause system components to overheat and wear out, and even shorten equipment life.

### So How Can I Capture These Harmful Particles Without Restricting Air Flow?

The two solutions to this problem are a polarized media air cleaner (PMAC) and/or a bypass HEPA filter system. The media in a polarized media air cleaner doesn't have to restrict air flow to trap small particles. Instead, it is charged by electricity – polarized – to magnetically attract particles. It does a fantastic job of capturing particles while allowing your system to breathe. On the other hand, a bypass HEPA filter uses very restrictive media. But because the air is 'bypassed' or shunted outside the normal air flow using its own blower, system performance is not affected. Both methods are effective and can be used alone or in tandem if needed.

Because a polarized media air cleaner can use a traditional 1" furnace filter slot, it's a great starting point to improve your indoor air quality. See the accompanying insert for more information.

### A Simple Test Tells The Story

Another thing that can restrict air flow and affect performance is how your system was designed and installed. By correcting ductwork problems you can improve air flow and provide better system performance. If you are interested in learning how you can improve your system air flow, we can perform a 'static pressure test'. This is equivalent to having your blood pressure checked. It can even show you the impact your furnace filter has on air flow. This is a test that can be done on a system maintenance visit.

Ask for a static pressure test when you schedule to have your furnace or air conditioner maintenance performed and we will include for no additional cost.

- Daniel Squires

## What Our Clients Are Saying...

"As a woman widowed recently I am thankful for my VHP Club yearly check of my furnace and air conditioner. The service and office personnel go out of their way to be helpful and informative. I am so very grateful for the peace of mind."

- Victoria Weidel, Saint Clair

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

*going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way – in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”*

While I can't tell you exactly why most of this description of the troubled time Dickens described resonates with how I feel about our present situation as we are coming out of COVID, for many reasons it just does. The only thing I would add to update it to today is that it is a tricky time to be in business.

Part of the reason this is such a tricky time to be in business is that everything has become so politicized. Expressing an opinion today can get as many 'dislikes' as 'likes'. As a businessperson, I am in the business of serving people, not offending them.

For instance, the topic of masks. Early in the pandemic I put up a billboard picturing our technician Michael getting out of his van with a mask on, with the caption 'Still Ready to Serve'. My intent was to communicate the simple message that we were still open for business and doing everything we could to keep our clients safe. Then came a

turning point in which I realized that a photo of our tech in a mask could turn off as many people as those who appreciate it, and so I ditched that campaign. I would have never guessed that face coverings would become so divisive.

Another aspect of how tricky business is has to do with restoring our economy. On this topic I think I am on solid, common ground to state that it is wrong to pay people not to work. I feel bad for business owners, some of whom have everything on the line financially in their business, who cannot find help because, essentially, they are competing for labor with Uncle Sam due to bonus payments for unemployment. An even more bitter pill to swallow is that these affected business owners – and every other taxpayer – will eventually be the ones paying for this unfair competition in the form of higher taxes and higher prices from wage inflation.

Related to – and probably to an extent caused by – the labor shortage either due to COVID or disincentives to work are material shortages. I am blessed that we are fully staffed with healthy people, but if I don't have product to sell, we would be limited in what we could do to help people. Fortunately, this is not an issue for us. We have plenty of stock. Since the

beginning of the crisis, I have been keeping my warehouse full of product to be able to serve you and our other clients.

Here are some of the affected products and materials in our niche that are hard to get: water heaters (*the steel for the tanks and chemicals that go into making the foam insulation are scarce*), air conditioners (*the inside and outside components and the insulated copper lines that connect the two*), Mapp gas for soldering copper pipes (*again, the steel for the tanks*), PVC pipe (*again, the chemicals to make PVC*) and even shortages of refrigerant (*probably the chemicals again*).

That we have product – so far – is the good news. The bad news is that prices have skyrocketed on just about everything. On the availability of product and the price inflation, there does not yet seem to be an end in sight. The best thing we can do to solve these issues is to get America fully working again.

In spite of all this, I am thankful. I have a great staff – both clerical and technical field staff, I have a good stock of the parts and material we use, and I have great customers like you that have continued to trust us with your service needs during the pandemic. We're still ready to serve you.

– Daniel Squires

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## Seen At The Beach

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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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B	E	S	C	W	T	N	F	L	U	W	R	B	G	E	N	E	Z	A	K	O	G	Frisbees
N	A	T	N	U	S	U	L	E	V	S	Z	A	W	V	B	S	N	S	L	S	P	Hats
I	T	P	D	H	W	M	L	H	G	M	L	M	O	S	I	D	C	L	N	U	S	Lifeguard
A	Q	Z	I	W	S	B	A	S	L	U	I	L	I	B	A	Q	E	R	L	N	E	Picnics
C	F	N	Q	X	K	R	B	A	B	W	A	R	U	L	F	Y	F	Y	E	S	V	Sandals
C	E	P	N	H	Y	E	T	E	S	T	F	R	S	G	B	R	J	B	G	E	J	Sandcastles
L	E	L	O	M	E	L	O	S	C	M	X	P	D	A	A	A	U	N	N	T	N	Seagulls
K	V	F	I	I	L	L	O	W	N	B	Q	I	L	B	U	E	R	S	I	S	W	Seashells
F	G	L	T	E	P	A	F	Y	P	X	O	L	N	X	W	U	S	K	M	M	P	Sunburn
G	O	W	N	L	F	S	I	E	I	G	Z	K	T	I	B	B	O	G	M	R	A	Sunglasses
A	L	Y	S	E	L	T	S	A	C	D	N	A	S	N	K	T	R	A	I	W	G	Sunscreen
X	F	U	H	A	T	S	J	M	N	X	Z	Y	U	O	O	I	S	L	W	S	T	Sunsets
A	O	F	M	A	D	F	T	U	I	J	Z	S	X	P	K	Y	B	P	S	B	A	Sunshine
Z	M	R	G	H	K	K	T	U	C	S	U	N	G	L	A	S	S	E	S	P	I	Suntan
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## Humor Section

My memory is getting so bad. I asked the pharmacist, "Do you have any Acetylsalicylic acid?" "You mean aspirin?" replied the pharmacist. "That's it! I can never remember that word."

\*\*\*

My son Luke loves that we chose Star Wars characters as an inspiration when naming our kids. His sister Chewbacca and brother Boba Fett are less amused.

\*\*\*

I can't believe I forgot to go to the gym today. That's 7 years in a row now.



# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A FURNACE FILTER, A PLEATED MEDIA FILTER, A POLARIZED MEDIA AIR CLEANER, AND A HEPA FILTER?

Your HVAC system needs to be protected from dust and other dirt. According to a Texas A&M study, an 1/8 inch of dust on a furnace blower wheel can reduce airflow by 30%. This will cause your system to work harder, use more energy, and diminish system performance which affects your comfort. This is the real reason why you have a furnace filter – to protect your furnace and the A/C coil attached to it. Then someone got the idea to use the furnace filter to reduce dust in the house and improve indoor air quality to benefit the health of the occupants.



This is perfectly fine, just as long as doing so doesn't restrict airflow and make *...your system work harder, use more energy, and diminish system performance which affects your comfort*. Unfortunately, the more efficient a furnace filter is in capturing dust and dirt, the worse it is for system airflow. Therefore, when you go to the big box store and buy the highest rated filter that you can find to improve your health you are actually making... *your system work harder, causing it to use more energy, and diminishing system performance which affects your comfort*. Here's why:

A furnace filter is like a strainer. It captures the particles in the air that are bigger than the 'strainer' filter media, while letting smaller particles slip right on through. Much like how minnows swim right through a net for bigger fish. And so, to make a filter more efficient and catch smaller particles – like harmful fiberglass insulation particles floating in the air – the 'strainer' needs to be more restrictive. But this also restricts airflow – and the furnace blower needs to work harder to push the air through the 'strainer'. This is bad for airflow – and causes all the 'bad stuff' listed above.



A pleated media filter, like those manufactured by Aprilaire or Amana, provides less restriction to airflow. This is accomplished by increasing the amount of surface area that the air must pass through by using many pleats or folds. When fully stretched out, an Aprilaire 16 x 20 filter has about 19 feet of media as shown in photo to the left.

A polarized media air cleaner – like the PureAirx IAQ 1000 – takes a totally different approach. Instead of functioning as a strainer, the PureAirx IAQ 1000, uses magnetism to attract the dust in the air and bond it to the media surface where it is held until the media is changed. The magnetism is



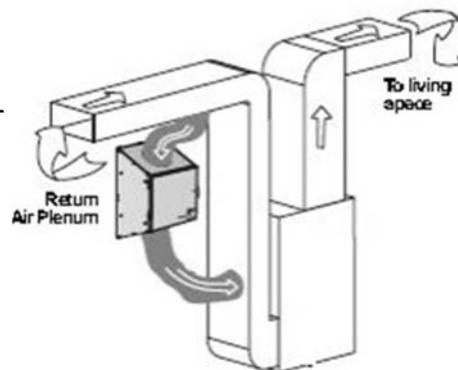
caused by an electro-magnetic charge created by 'polarizing' the media with an electric current. As a result, the PureAirx IAQ 1000 doesn't need to restrict airflow to be more efficient – and it avoids all the 'bad stuff' listed above.

An electrostatic filter – like the popular 3M Filtrete filter – also harnesses an electro-magnetic charge similar to the PureAirx IAQ 1000 – with one big, important difference. An electrostatic filter creates its charge by the friction of the air passing through its restrictive filter material. Think of the charge created by the friction of rubbing a balloon against a sweater, which causes the balloon to stick to the sweater. Unfortunately, harnessing the energy of the air by friction restricts airflow – and you have all the 'bad stuff' listed above. Again, the PureAirx IAQ1000 attracts dust by polarizing the media but sidesteps this issue. I recommend that you avoid restrictive electrostatic filters.



A HEPA filter (*high efficiency particulate air*) - the 'gold standard' in filters - is back to the 'strainer' idea. In order to receive a HEPA filter designation, a filter must collect 99.97% of a specific particulate that measures 0.3 microns in size, in tests established by the Institute of Environmental Sciences. The PureAirx Bypass HEPA system achieves this and removes particles as small as .01 microns. And it doesn't restrict airflow. This is because the PureAirx Bypass HEPA is not in the main air stream – it is in a bypass loop.

The PureAirx Bypass HEPA has its own blower, which pulls air from the main air stream into the bypass loop as it is passing by and forces the air through the HEPA media. Then the now super-cleaned air is returned to the main air stream further down the line – all without affecting airflow. Eventually, all the air in the house bypasses through the HEPA filter, and creates healthier air to breath.



PureAirx HEPA shown cleaning air using a bypass loop. Other, more compact mounts are available where space is limited. Call for details.

While it is important to clean the harmful contaminants that affect your health, it is equally important that you do it without sacrificing the airflow your HVAC system needs. You can have your HVAC system air flow measured by having a **static pressure test** performed. - *Daniel Squires*

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