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Did you know...

...that drain traps in unused bathrooms or floor drains can dry out and lose their seal? This allows unpleasant sewer smells to escape into your home.

The solution is easy: refill the traps with water!

THROUGH MY EYES

One of the highlights of my 2022 was the ability to travel again. This is a sign of a return to what I think of as 'normal' after the last couple of years of prohibited travel under COVID.

In 2019, my wife Karen and I had the opportunity to go on a bicycling adventure along the Danube River in Europe. This was on a trip called a 'bike & barge', where the river cruise ship that we slept and ate on took us along the river to various bike paths. As I shared in this column in November 2019, our trip took us to venues in 4 countries: Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, and Austria.

That Karen and I are avid cyclists is something that I have shared several times in this column over the last decade. This trip just took our cycling 'up a notch'.

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



Here I am in front of one of many old windmills on the way to Amsterdam. One of many beautiful sights seen on my 'bike & barge' trip described in the nearby article. - Daniel Squires

Are You Prepared for a Water Emergency From a Broken Pipe? Part 2

Part 1 (in the Nov-Dec 2022 Holiday issue) discussed how to be prepared for a water emergency from a broken water pipe. You not only need to know where the main water shut off is, you also must be able to shut it off. I also encouraged a 'dress rehearsal' - actually shutting off the water - in which everyone in the house knows where the shut off is and can physically operate it.

This may seem extreme, but there are good reasons to do so. In

an emergency it's easy to panic. Thinking about what to do wastes precious time while water is gushing into your house and causing major damage.

A practice run also reveals any issues to overcome. Like a shut off that doesn't work or is too hard to turn. You may also realize the difficulty of getting to the shut off. A shut off under a house in a crawl space can be a real challenge for many people.

Are you physically able to get

Continued Page 2

Emergency - Part 2... (Continued from Pg.1)

under the house and crawl around – or under or over - the various obstacles that may be in your crawl space to get to your shut off? Do you have a light under the house? Will you be able to find a flashlight in time? And do you know exactly where in the crawlspace your shut off is? Remember, water is gushing out and flooding your home from the broken pipe and causing more damage every second that it continues to run.

The solution is an electric water shut off valve equipped with remote control – especially if it is Wi-Fi equipped smart device with a phone app.

With this option, you can shut off the main water to your house from an app on your phone or with a manual switch located in a convenient place – even if you are out of town when the pipe breaks!

These smart devices will alert you if a water leak or a low temperature situation is detected and allow you shut off your main water valve remotely.

The solution is an electric water shut off valve equipped with remote control

Some devices may automatically close the valve when water is detected – it depends on the type of unit that you select, and the type of sensors attached:

- **Devices with temperature sensors** will send you an alert – you can respond by shutting off the water.
- **Devices with water sensors** will both alert you and shut the water off if a water leak is detected. The sensors are typically placed under your water heater or another fixture that might leak. However, if the pipe break is inside the wall or some other location without a leak detector it won't trigger the valve to close. Which brings us to...

- **Devices with water flow sensors**. Not only can these devices have leak & freeze detectors attached that will trigger the valve to close, but they can also have sensors that monitor water usage. If there is an unexpected flow of water – like for a broken pipe – it will both alert you and can automatically shut the valve. As an added benefit, the flow sensor will also tip you off if you have a hidden water leak in your plumbing.

Having a smart water shut off device is a very practical investment - especially if you have physical limitations that prevent you from being able to shut off your water in an emergency. Even if you don't have a smartphone or Wi-Fi, you can still get a valve that will let you shut off your water with a remote switch. Let us know if we can help you or for call us for more info.

- Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

"I recently had Vincent's Heating & Plumbing do an annual inspection on my furnace. I have also used them several other times over the last two years. Their employees are very friendly and very professional. I have always been completely satisfied and I tend to be a perfectionist. I highly recommend them."

Joseph Hinz, East China

Through My Eyes (Continued from Pg.1)

We had such a fantastic time, that upon our return we booked another trip for the following year. This was for a bike & barge in the south of France for fall of 2020.

Of course, due to COVID this never happened. It was the same story for our rebooked trips in spring and fall of 2021. Undaunted, we kept trying until we succeeded – especially since the tour company still had the sizable deposit we had made for our cancelled 2020 trip!

A big factor for selecting our trip was the war in Ukraine. We wanted to choose a destination nowhere near that conflict. And that is how we ended up booking a tour that took us from Belgium to the Netherlands.

The day after Labor Day we flew from Detroit to Brussels, Belgium to begin our adventure. We spent a couple of days adjusting to the time change and sightseeing – including a bike tour (of course) of the city which took us by the European Union Headquarters. Then we went by train to the quaint, medieval city of Bruges. The next day we dropped our bags in our stateroom on our boat and began our biking tour by cycling out of the town. At long last!

The sightseeing on this trip was very different than our previous excursion along the Danube in southeastern Europe. It was different, but still beautiful. Where on that first trip we had followed a single river along very wooded bike paths, this time we followed connecting canals along the rich, fertile farmlands of Belgium and the Netherlands. Another difference was that we had a guide who took us to many quaint little villages where we would stop at the town square by an old church for cappuccino with pastries and experience the local ambiance. **(see photo)**

We visited the cities of Ghent and Antwerp and finally ended our tour in Amsterdam. All told, over the week we had pedaled just shy of



200 miles – a fair accomplishment!

Now, you may think it weird, but being in a building related trade, I can't help but notice different construction practices. What stood out to me on this trip was the roofing material. I never saw a roof with shingles on it while there. The roofs were either of rounded tile or...thatch! This thatching consists of about a 5-6 inch layer of straw-like reeds that are woven together. I was told that thatching is very expensive and with proper care can last as long as shingled roofs. However, another person said that rodents and other small critters are known to take up residence in the thatch and can be noisy - yikes!

However, with our extreme cold and snow, I can't imagine having a thatched roof. But seeing such interesting things is why I like going on trips to faraway places.

Finally, since I brought up the topic of cold and snow, let me end by reminding you that if you haven't yet had your furnace or boiler tuned-up and checked for safety to give us a call. I want you to stay warm and safe this winter! I wish you a safe and prosperous 2023!

– Daniel Squires

Car Brands 3: Peugeot to Wiesmann

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VHPinc.com/gallery

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I	N	S	U	S	T	O	E	G	U	E	P	B	S	G	X	A	H	H	J	L	G	SsangYong
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M	Z	L	T	H	H	K	W	T	F	C	F	M	O	C	G	W	K	A	A	A	Y	Tesla
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Humor Section



A man is reading his newspaper and says to his wife: "Here's an article that says women use about twice as many words in a day as men do. How about that."

His wife smiles sweetly and responds: "That's because we have to tell you everything twice!"

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