

# VINCENT'S NEWS

## The 'Van-Go' Gallery



*OWNER'S CORNER*

**61 Years of Excellence!**

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## Did you know...

...Vincent's Heating & Plumbing conducts daily health screenings (including a temperature reading) of all of our employees? This is part of our efforts to make certain that our customers and employees are safe and not exposed to COVID. Learn more in "Through My Eyes."

## THROUGH MY EYES

I almost didn't use the photo of our installers on this page. It's for the same reason that I discontinued using our billboard picturing our service tech Michael getting out of his van wearing a face covering and nitrile gloves: face coverings - masks - have become divisive.

I thought it was a helpful and simple

message for the COVID era: we're still available to serve you and you can be confident of your safety when you allow us in your home.

And since we have been strictly following the CDC/OSHA guidelines from the beginning of this crisis it was true.

Thankfully, not a single one of our

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



Our install crews before heading out for their jobs. From left to right, Sean, 'T3', Jeyson, Tom (behind), Brandon, and Nathan.

people have been infected with COVID-19.

**Continued Page 3**

## The 3 Indoor Air Contaminants That Can Affect Your Health

### Part 3: Health Risks from the Chemicals, Gases, and Odors in Our Homes

There are three main areas of concern of the common indoor air contaminants that can affect your health:

1. **Particles & Allergens** *(See July 2020)*
2. **Germs & Infectious Agents** *(See August 2020)*
3. **Chemicals, gases, and odors**

This month we'll examine how the health risks posed by gases, chemicals, and odors in our homes were brought to the public's attention.

Next month we'll explore your options to protect yourself from these indoor pollutants.

The first official study from the EPA concerning indoor air pollution was released on November 10, 1988. The 874-page 'National Air Quality and Emissions Trends Report' was the first major U.S. assessment of indoor air pollution in public buildings and homes.

The report revealed that more than 500 chemicals were detected

in the 10 buildings sampled in the five-year study. Among other chemicals, the study found elevated concentrations of benzene, a known cancer-causing agent in humans, and chloroform, trichloroethylene, carbon tetrachloride and p-dichlorobenzene -- all carcinogenic in animals. These were traced to common furnishings, building materials,

**Continued Page 2**

## Indoor Air Contaminants (Continued from Pg.1)

cleaning agents and even bug sprays. Almost every contaminant found inside exceeded concentrations outside the building.

The report focused on a class of chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in search of the cause of 'sick building syndrome' in which people reported symptoms of headaches, eye and nose irritation, fatigue, nausea and other ailments.

The study found VOCs are emitted as gases by a wide range of materials commonly used or found in buildings, including solvents and cleaners, latex caulk, carpets, carpet glue, linoleum tile, vinyl and rubber moldings, toilet air fresheners, particle-board partitions and telephone cable.

The chemicals in these products release gases in a process called 'outgassing'. The immediate effect can be seen on HVAC equipment in the form of corrosion and can cause furnace parts such as flame sensors to fail. What is largely unknown are

the long-term effects that continued exposure over time has on our bodies and on our immune systems. From EPA:

"Other health effects may show up either years after exposure has occurred or only after long or repeated periods of exposure. These effects, which include some respiratory diseases, heart disease and cancer, can be severely debilitating or fatal. It is prudent to try to improve the indoor air quality in your home even if symptoms are not noticeable." <sup>1</sup>

### EPA's 1988 Report Summary

Eileen Claussen, then acting deputy assistant EPA administrator for air and radiation, summed up the report: "Air inside buildings is typically more polluted than outdoor air. Sometimes twice as polluted, sometimes five times more polluted, sometimes 100 times more polluted. We believe indoor air pollution is a serious problem."

Claussen also commented on how widespread the problem is, "Every home and every

building are at least slightly polluted."

### The Impact of the Report

At the time, people assumed that the report would raise concern about the discovered unregulated form of pollution common to the places where Americans spend 90 percent of their time—indoors. Flash forward 32 years to 2020 and it is still unregulated. Here is what EPA says about Indoor Air Quality on its website:

"EPA does not regulate indoor air, but we do offer assistance in protecting your indoor air quality." <sup>2</sup>

Ironically, since the 1988 report, the problem worsened as a direct result of our national energy policy with the efforts to 'seal up' the air leaks in our homes. The unintended consequence of trapping pollution in our homes has compounded the problem.

We'll pick up here next month and then look at your options to solve these health risks.

- Daniel Squires

1. <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/introduction-indoor-air-quality>

2. <https://www.epa.gov/regulatory-information-topic/regulatory-information-topic-air>

This article drew upon stories and quotations published by the Washington Post and United Press International. For more information:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1988/11/11/dangerous-air-pollutants-found-in-public-buildings/8bb4d862-2086-4641-a703-2d2da15943a0/>

<https://www.upi.com/Archives/1988/11/10/EPA-study-Air-pollution-often-worse-indoors-than-outdoors/6028015559141/>

## What Our Clients Are Saying...

"Fantastic service and price. I'm so glad we used this company. We are new to the area and they will be the only company that services our home for air conditioning or heating."  
*Angie Ebejer —Port Huron*

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

I started seeing and hearing controversy concerning face coverings from many people vigorously opposed to them. Then, Tom, our field supervisor, shared insights with me from two consecutive jobs that he visited the previous day. On the first job, the customer was adamant that he was not to wear a mask in their house because they didn't believe in them. On the very next job, as Tom was walking up to the house with his mask in hand, the homeowner, through the still closed glass screen door, chided him for not having his mask on.

It was then that I decided that I needed a new billboard message. The last thing I want to do is to offend our current or potential customers.

Our techs also related similar stories and sought guidance. I have encouraged them to be sensitive to the customer's desires, but to still follow our guidelines to maintain a safe (social) distance and to wear a mask when it is not possible to be distant in the presence of our customers. When the techs are standing by the equipment – with no one else present – they can take a break from wearing a mask. And along with this, they still have their hand sanitizers and disinfecting wipes that they

are to use.

As a business, we are constrained by several factors:

1. We want to keep you and our other customers safe.
2. We want to keep our techs safe.
3. We want to adhere to Michigan requirements.
4. Congress has not passed any liability relief.

The last one is the '800-pound gorilla'. While it is difficult to know or prove where, when or how someone became infected by COVID, the lack of liability relief opens the door for a customer or an employee to blame a business and to bring a lawsuit against it. And there would be no defense at all if the business were to ignore Michigan guidelines. Therefore, because of the liability, businesses that don't go along with Michigan requirements are exposing themselves to a big risk. A risk I want no part of.

Another COVID related Executive Order that all Michigan businesses and organizations must comply with is to conduct and keep a record of a daily health screening – including taking the temperature - of each employee that is required to leave their home. In addition to Michigan, most states have similar requirements.

Vincent's Heating & Plumbing has been doing this since the very beginning, along with our other measures to keep you and our other customers and our employees safe, but there is another part of this story:

Along with Vincent's Heating & Plumbing, my brother David & I also have another company that shares the same building. Online Access, Inc. provides marketing services and websites - primarily to contracting businesses across the U.S. and Canada - along with other web-based apps and services.

**CertiClear** is one such service. It allows employers to easily and speedily conduct and manage these daily health screenings, while protecting employee privacy and securely storing the data. As more employers discover it, it is rapidly gaining popularity across the U.S. – with interest from as far away as Australia!

As a way to give back to our community and to help our local employers, Vincent's Heating & Plumbing is sponsoring CertiClear to local employers, allowing them to use CertiClear for half the regular price.

For more info about CertiClear, visit [www.CertiClear.net/VHP](http://www.CertiClear.net/VHP) or see the nearby insert.

- Daniel Squires

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# National Coffee Day (September 29th)

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## ATTENTION VHP CLUB MEMBERS:

Are you available on a short notice to have your overdue maintenance visit done? Call and let us know if we can call you when there is a cancellation to help get our 2020 maintenance visit backlog caused by COVID caught up .

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Arabica	Dark Roast	Espresso	Chemex	Mocha
Latte	French Press	Barista	Filter	Cafe
Caffeine	Macchiato	Americano	Cappuccino	

[www.vhpinc.com](http://www.vhpinc.com)

## Humor Section

*The Most Reasons to be Your Best Choice*

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When my kleptomania gets really bad, I take something for it.

I got fired on my very first day at the bank. A customer asked me to check his balance and I pushed him over.

I want to find the person who stole my toilet, but I have nothing to go on.

The best time on a clock is 6:30 – hands down.

A couple of hats are hanging on a hat rack. One says to the other, "You stay here; I'll go on a head."

