

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."

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OWNER'S CORNER

THROUGH MY EYES

How do you know when it is time to move? When we moved into our current house it was because our last one became too small for our family after our third child was born. That was 22 years ago.

Back then, a two-story colonial with four bedrooms for our growing family with

two sons and a baby daughter was perfect. Now with our sons married and flown the nest and our daughter testing her wings our

needs are different. It's been a great home to raise a family in and



Here I am posing with the For Sale sign in front of my now market ready home.

its very comfortable. To that add that I'm very much a creature

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HOW A HEAT EXCHANGER GOES BAD AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT - Part 4 (Boiler Issue)

For the past 3 issues we have looked at why furnace heat exchangers fail and what you can do to extend heat exchanger life. (You can view previous issues on our website in the Van Go Gallery at www.vhpinco.com) The focus has been on heat exchangers in forced air furnaces. This month we will look at heat exchangers in boilers.

The obvious difference between how a heat

exchanger functions in a boiler compared to a forced air furnace is the medium of exchange: a furnace heats air; a boiler heats water. Because a boiler circulates water to heat a house instead of air, the risk from carbon monoxide is different than with a furnace.

With a boiler we don't worry about carbon monoxide getting into the water when the heat exchanger fails the way we do when it gets into

the house air with a furnace. Unlike a furnace, a similar heat exchanger failure in a boiler is easily detected because it results in an obvious leak that may even shut off the boiler if the leak is serious enough and the low water cutoff safety is triggered. While this kind of failure does happen, the carbon monoxide danger from a heat exchanger failure in a boiler is different.

Continued Page 2

Heat Exchangers (Continued from Page 1)

“...There are many causes of poor air flow. The good news is that poor air flow is fixable. While some causes require our help to correct, there are some causes directly in your control....”

A cast iron boiler typically is made in sections that are joined together and sealed. Over time these joints and seals can fail and will allow carbon monoxide to escape into the air surrounding the boiler. While a forced air furnace heat exchanger is unrepairable a hot water boiler heat exchanger may be able to be repaired if the leak is at a joint or seal.

Except for a water or seal/joint leak, cast iron boilers are built like a tank and seemingly can last forever. And so people may think that they can keep a boiler until it leaks. However, there are other important aspects to consider.

Over time a boiler will scale up inside with no visible sign. This is caused by the combination of the inner metal surface of the boiler being exposed to water - and any minerals or contaminants in the water. The resulting chemical and electrolytic reaction creates a scale

buildup on the inside surface of the heat exchanger. While the boiler may not leak due to these factors, boiler performance and thereby efficiency can be dramatically affected.

When scale forms on the inside surface of a boiler it acts like insulation. This prevents the heat from transferring from the hot flue gasses. Instead the hot exhaust gasses pass through the heat exchanger with very little heat being transferred. This dramatically reduces the boiler's heating performance and wastes energy. The boiler has to use more gas to do its job to satisfy the thermostat.

If the inner surface of the boiler heat exchanger has scaled up, it may be possible to flush out any loose scale. However, the scale can form a sludge that is not easily flushed out. There are some solutions to this problem in which chemicals or electronic de-scaling methods are used.

However, there is no guarantee that this will solve the problem in whole or in part. The ultimate solution is to replace the boiler. If the boiler is old it may be a better investment to just replace the boiler rather than incurring the cost of efforts to flush it.

Checking for reduced performance is one of the things that our Carbon Monoxide and Combustion Analysts are trained to look for and we include doing this as part of our Combustion Optimization & Safety Inspection (COSI) for boilers. This is another reason why an annual maintenance visit is important. In turn, being a VHP Club member is also a good idea since a COSI is one of many Club benefits and the price of a membership is 25% less than the regular price of a COSI.

Daniel Squires

Letter From a Customer

Dear sirs,

The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention the excellent job that two of your employees did at our house today installing our furnace... They arrived on time, worked very efficiently and professionally, and left the house spotless. They were courteous and quiet. I just thought that I should let you know so that you can commend them.

Sincerely,

S.B, Croswell

Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

of habit, and so I don't know that living in too large of house was enough motivation to move.

However, as one phase of life ends another one begins: In our current house all the bedrooms and the bathrooms upstairs. We decided that it would be wise to move to a house where all the bedrooms and bathrooms are on the main floor. Our thought is that down the road we will be happier in a house without all the stairs. And so, now with adequate motivation, my wife Karen and I made the decision to sell our house and move.

With this new mission came the realization that moving is quite a process. 22 years is a long time to accumulate a lot of 'stuff'. There is no way we want to bring all our stuff with us and so the new watchwords became 'purge' and 'declutter'. We boxed up all the kids school papers and memorabilia and let them decide what they wanted to keep. What was I thinking when I bought all

those VHS movies? But now that they are making a comeback, I have mixed feelings as to what to do with all my old vinyl LP record albums...except for the disco records - did I really listen to that?

The other thing I realized is how many household maintenance projects I had let slip over the years. I think I must have lived with a doorbell that didn't work for a decade but it's fixed now! Plus I learned how the pull down ladder to the garage attic got so rickety when I replaced for a new model with a weight limit that for the first time is greater than what I weigh - no wonder I got nervous every time I went up and down on it! With all of these things taken care of, it made me think twice about moving.

Finally, we checked off everything on our 'to-do' list and put the house on the market. Speaking of household maintenance, if you have some projects that need to be done, start making a list of the

things that we can help you with in our rapidly approaching Plumbing & Home Safety Inspection season that only runs from February through May. This is our annual maintenance visit that provides 1-1/2 hours of professional help to take care of any plumbing, home safety and household maintenance items. There is no travel or service charge and you get to choose what you want to have done whether it is all plumbing or you mix and match it with other tasks. For more information give us a call or look for details in the February Vincent's News.

- Daniel Squires

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Moving Word Search

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

Appliance
Fragile
Lifting Straps
Packing Tape
Box
Helper
Moving Van
Dolly
Housewarming
Packing

Humor Section



Q: What do you call a kid who doesn't believe in Santa? A: A rebel without a Claus.

Q: Why does Santa Claus go down the chimney on Christmas Eve? A: Because it soots him

Q: Why was Santa's little helper depressed? A: Because he had low elf esteem.

Q: How many reindeer does it take to change a light bulb? A: Eight! One to screw in the light bulb and seven to hold Rudolph down!

source: <http://www.jokes4us.com/holidayjokes/christmasjokes/christmasjokes.html>