

VINCENT'S NEWS

The 'Van-Go' Gallery



OWNER'S CORNER

61 Years of Excellence!

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Did you know...

...starting this month VHP's Plumbing & Home Safety Service has a new name:

Plumbing & Water Heater Service.

In addition, the February to May limitation has been lifted and the **PWHS** is now available year-round.

THROUGH MY EYES

Over the past year, there has been increased interest in how we can protect ourselves in our homes from airborne health risks. However, airborne risks in our homes have been a problem long before COVID-19.

In November 1988, the Environmental Protection Agency



Here is our entire crew of installers and service techs in a training session.

(EPA) issued a report that exposed the problem of indoor air pollution. Here is how Eileen Claussen, then acting deputy assistant EPA administrator for

air and radiation - a top EPA air pollution regulator - summarized the report in a United Press International story: "Air inside buildings

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

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4 Things You Can Do to Maximize Your Comfort in Summer Heat -Pt 1

The two ways your air conditioner works to keep you comfortable is to cool your house and dry the air. This series focuses on four things you can do to make certain it is able to provide maximum comfort.

The first thing you can do to maximize your comfort is simple: don't keep opening up your house once you decide it's time to turn on your air conditioner. Instead, close your windows and leave them closed until you are done for the season.

Here's why: an air conditioner needs several days to lower the humidity level in your home to make it comfortable. If you are constantly opening your windows every time there is a cool night or if the temperature drops, all the humidity your AC worked for days to get rid of will come right back with the air you let in and you will be back to square one.

Plus, lowering the humidity level in your house requires extended 'run time' that you may not get in milder weather. Run time is totally based

on temperature - not the humidity level. Once your thermostat achieves the temperature it is set for it will turn off your AC, and the process of drying out the air in your house is halted. As a result, opening your windows to bring in a little fresh air can lead to days of being uncomfortable from cool but still humid air.

In this case, people respond to this discomfort by setting their thermostat lower, thinking that their discomfort is related to

Continued Page 2

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

the heat and not the humidity. Yes, this does provide some additional 'run time' to help dehumidify the air, but it doesn't necessarily mean your house will be more comfortable. (A better solution to drying out your home in cooler temperatures is a whole-home dehumidifier, which will be discussed in a future installment of this series.)

This brings us to the reason you feel the need to open your windows and bring in fresh air: the air in your home feels 'stuffy' and you need relief.

If you feel like the air in your home is stuffy, you may be right. As discussed in this month's Through My Eyes article, indoor air pollution in our homes is a real problem. In addition to VOCs and other health-harming chemicals, another pollutant to consider is **excess carbon dioxide (CO₂)**. While not as dangerous as carbon monoxide (CO) – after all, we exhale it with every breath – excessive carbon dioxide levels are not healthy and can mean lower oxygen levels. High levels of carbon dioxide can make us feel lethargic and there are even scientific studies that have linked excess CO₂ in homes to diminished mental performance.

So, your need for fresh air is probably your body telling you that you need more oxygen – just like thirst tells you to take a drink.

Your house probably needs ventilation. But rather than opening a window, you can achieve it in a controlled way that will minimize the amount of humidity that is added. To do this, you will need an HRV (heat recovery ventilate) or an ERV (energy recovery ventilate).

These are devices that exchange stale inside air with fresh outside air. Both devices are added to your home's HVAC system.

What makes an HRV or ERV preferable over opening windows for ventilation is that these devices have a heat exchanger. In the summer months the heat exchanger 'captures' the energy that was used to cool the inside air by pre-cooling the incoming air, so your AC doesn't have to work so hard. In winter months, the process is reversed, and the incoming (cold) air is pre-heated by the air that is being exhausted. In both situations you save energy and improve comfort. Plus, anything

brought in with the outside air is trapped in your furnace filter.

How can I know if I have a problem of excess carbon dioxide in my house?

Measuring the amount of carbon dioxide in your home is one of the six indoor air pollutants our Air Advice monitors will test for. It will generate a report so you can see for yourself what is in your air.

As related in this month's Through My Eyes article, an initial Air Advice air analysis is \$99, but is currently included at no charge with any furnace or air conditioner maintenance visit. If you are a VHP Club member, you can request an Air Advice analysis with your regular maintenance visit anytime of the year at no additional cost. This is an added VHP Club member benefit. See the nearby coupon sheet for more information. If you have any questions about any of the solutions mentioned in this article – a whole home dehumidifier, adding ventilation (HRV or ERV), or having an Air Advice analysis give us a call.

– Daniel Squires

What Our Clients Are Saying...

Amazing service! Every time we have called, you guys have come out ASAP and fixed the problem or quoted us and always provide wonderful customer service!

Heaven Sullivan – Fort Gratiot

Through My Eyes (Continued from Pg.1)

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," she said. "Every home and every building are at least slightly polluted," said Claussen. "It's a serious and ubiquitous (*found everywhere*) problem."

The study was conducted to discover the cause of 'sick building syndrome' – from widespread reports of headaches, eye and nose irritation, fatigue, nausea and other maladies in certain buildings. The focus was on a class of chemicals known as volatile organic compounds that accumulate and pollute the air in a home. VOC's are emitted by a wide range of materials commonly used or found in buildings, including industrial solvents and cleaners, carpet glue, linoleum tile, vinyl and rubber moldings, toilet air fresheners, particle-board partitions, bug sprays, and cleaning agents. The Washington Post also reported on the study:

"The report, the first to quantify levels of indoor pollutants, identified more than 500 noxious substances in a survey of 10 public buildings and traced them to common furnishings, bug sprays, cleaning

agents and building materials. Almost every contaminant found inside exceeded concentrations outside the building.

Essentially, the accumulation of chemicals in man-made building products can build up in poorly ventilated structures and subject occupants to unknown, long-term risk and cause allergy-like ills. Even such seemingly innocuous objects as latex caulk, carpets, and linoleum tile release toxic and carcinogenic compounds into the indoor air where they accumulate. The problem is especially acute the more energy-efficient the building or home is.

Were you even aware of the alarming conclusions of the EPA's report?

The 874-page report identified much higher levels of toxic substances than expected. After the release of this bombshell report it was assumed that it was 'certain to intensify concern about the little-known and unregulated form of pollution common to homes and buildings where Americans spend 90 percent of their time' as cited by the Washington Post. Instead, here is what EPA currently says about these indoor air concerns on its website:

"EPA does not regulate indoor air, but we do offer assistance in protecting your indoor air quality."

Translation: you're on your own.

The good news is that there are ways that we can help you with any indoor air pollution problems – such as solving the issue of harmful VOC's cited in the EPA's 1988 report in the air you breath. The first step is to identify whether you have a problem. Recently, Vincent's Heating & Plumbing has invested in air testing equipment that can test the air in your home for a variety of harmful agents - including VOCs – volatile organic compounds.

Our technician will place an Air Advice analyzer in your home to test your home's air for six variables: VOC's, particles, carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), humidity, and temperature. The initial test generates a 2-page report that will reveal any areas of concern that need further investigation.

The cost of this test and analysis is \$99 by itself, however, we are currently including for no extra charge when bundled with a heating or cooling maintenance visit. VHP Club members can get an Air Advice analysis at no added cost on a regular maintenance visit as a member benefit. (Must be requested in advance).

See the nearby coupon sheet for more information.

– Daniel Squires

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Forest Animals

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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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Humor Section

One Liners:

What do you call a pencil with 2 erasers? Pointless

Did you hear the one about the roof? Never mind, it's over your head.

I hated facial hair but then it grew on me.

If a child refuses to take a nap, are they resisting a rest?

Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? Great food, no atmosphere.

I ordered a chicken and an egg online. I'll let you know.

