

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

Did you know that in Michigan it is illegal to install a water heater without multiple licenses? In fact, with very few exceptions – such as homeowners doing work in their own home - it is illegal to do any plumbing, heating or cooling work in Michigan without an appropriate license.

By law two licenses are required to install a gas water heater: a plumbing

license to connect the water lines and a mechanical license to connect the gas piping and the exhaust vent.

So, unless you have a company that has both licenses (like

Vincent's Heating and Plumbing) you would legally need to have two different contractors out to your home to install a water heater!



Past VHP President - and my father - Ray Squires celebrating his 82nd Birthday with a cake from my wife Karen. – Daniel Squires

If you think it is a bit odd that legally a plumber or mechanical alone cannot install a water heater,

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Did You Know...

...that emergency shut-off valves under your kitchen sink, bath sinks and toilets will stick open from non-use?

Test them to make sure they will work to shut off the water when you need them. Fixing shut-offs that are stuck is a task for a Plumbing & Home Safety Visit.

The PHS-Files Episode 2: The Deadly Squirrels

The March issue featured the premiere of the “PHS-Files” – my pop-culture ‘tip-of-the-hat’ to the 6-episode return of the X-Files to TV.

So what is a PHS-File? PHS is the acronym for our Plumbing & Home Safety inspection again featured alongside this month's Vincent's News. A PHS-File is a case study that illustrates how the services available in a

Plumbing & Home Safety inspection provide an essential benefit.

Last month, the PHS-Files described how ‘monster’ hairballs clogging your drain and dangerous ‘fire causing’ & ‘energy wasting’ dryer lint can be overcome on a Plumbing & Home Safety visit. As promised, this month tells the story of “The Deadly Squirrels”.

Near the end of February,

we were contacted to replace a water heater for a Port Huron customer. While there we discovered that all of the water heater and furnace exhaust was dumping into the basement out of the water heater draft being diverter instead of vented outside through the chimney.

The draft diverter is the **Continued Page 2**

The PHS Files (Continued from Page 1)

mushroom-shaped part on the top of a gas water heater with an open bottom. Its purpose is to prevent a strong wind from sucking the water heater pilot light out. In this case there was no draft to pull the flue gasses out. Instead it was all dumping into the basement. Fortunately the amount of carbon monoxide was below dangerous levels, however that could have changed very quickly.

When we investigated we pulled apart the vent and discovered that the aluminum chimney liner was solidly packed with all kinds of nesting material. We couldn't clear it out and so we needed to replace the chimney liner. This proved to be a very hard job as the chimney was just packed with debris.

Finally, we were able to remove the old liner and replace it with a new one. And we discovered the culprit: squirrels. A loose brick at the top of the

chimney had allowed squirrels to climb down the chimney to where they had clawed two entrance holes into the aluminum chimney liner allowing them to build a nest inside the chimney. The homeowner related that he had discovered a squirrel in his basement, but had not known how it had gotten in. In this case, they were fortunate because the situation was discovered before they were harmed.

A home safety inspection that includes checking the water heater vent is exactly why I created the Plumbing & Home Safety Inspection. Even if you don't have squirrels, water heater vents are notorious for backdraft conditions which cause deadly exhaust to dump into a house.

Backdrafts are common when your house has negative air pressure – the pressure inside the house is less than the pressure outside. This can be a

dangerous situation as the water heater exhaust vent will start functioning in reverse, where air enters the house to equalize pressure thereby preventing the water heater or furnace from exhausting.

One of the symptoms of negative pressure is excessive dust in your home. Flu-like symptoms and chronic tiredness in some instances are related to low-level exposure to carbon monoxide from furnace exhaust. One of the home safety tests that we can perform for you on a Plumbing & Home Safety visit is to test for negative air pressure.

Be sure to consider the limited time offer included with this issue to have your home checked for safety concerns and to address your other plumbing & home safety projects – your PHS-Files.

- Daniel Squires

"...Flu-like symptoms and chronic tiredness in some instances are related to low-level exposure to carbon monoxide from furnace exhaust..."

Read What Our Clients Are Saying...

Thank you for calling us back last Saturday/Sunday morning at 3:30 a.m. You are awesome. I have been telling everyone about what you did. I know it's your job but you're still great!

Anna—Fort Gratiot

Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

you are not alone. And history is on your side as well. Until recently wiser heads at the Michigan Bureau of Construction Codes had issued common sense corrective rules that allowed either a plumbing or mechanical license holder to legally install a gas water heater.

For many years plumbing contractors and mechanical contractors separately installed water heaters with no resulting harm to the citizens of Michigan. More importantly, it helped keep costs down for Michigan consumers. However, with new leadership at the Bureau, those common sense rules were abandoned, and the old “two license” requirement was restored.

The problem with the return of the old requirement is that it can make installing a water heater more expensive. This is bad for consumers on two levels. First because of the added expense. Second because some people might choose unlicensed people to replace the water heater to avoid higher costs. How ironic that the code and licensing rules that were established to protect the public could push a consumer down the less safe path of using unlicensed people that have not been trained properly or proven their

competency!

I belong to an organization, the Michigan Air Conditioning Contractors Association that seeks to restore the common sense rules and make them permanent. And for that reason I went to Lansing in March to testify about who can legally install gas water heaters.

Now - for Vincent’s Heating & Plumbing – we have both plumbing and mechanical licenses and so we have ‘both ends’ covered. We are ‘legal’ for both the plumbing and mechanical parts of a water heater installation. So you may be wondering why I would I want to lessen the rules when we currently meet both requirements?

First of all, because of principle. Since Michigan operated safely for years allowing either licensed plumbers or licensed mechanical contractors to install a water heater, how can requiring two licenses be justified? This causes more harm than good because I believe it will raise costs for people looking to install a new water heater.

Second, these rules and regulations also increase my costs as a licensed contractor. Because I play by the rules, I am making myself uncompetitive

against a non-licensed competitor who doesn’t play by the rules and does not have my additional costs. Rather than trying to fight a losing battle to police these people and punish them, I say eliminate unjustified rules and avoid the burdensome costs of regulations and rules that make the industry uncompetitive.

Finally, I don’t believe in rules and regulations as a ‘marketing plan’. I want people to choose to do business with Vincent’s Heating & Plumbing not because they are forced to by law. I want them to choose us because we have the best technicians and office staff, because we are so committed to standing behind our work that we back it up with written satisfaction guarantees, and because we provide professional service with excellence – all the things that we work very hard to deliver. These are the things that set us apart from other people in the same business – that Vincent’s Plumbing & Heating has ‘The Most Reasons to be Your Best Choice’. And that ‘Wherever You See A Vincent Van Go You Know the Job Will Be A Work of Art’. We definitely have the best slogan!

- Daniel Squires

“...I want people to choose to do business with Vincent’s Heating & Plumbing not because they are forced to by law.”

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Word Search: Old TV Mysteries

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

XFiles
Banacek
Columbo
Twin Peaks
Twilight Zone
Dark Shadows
McCloud
Rockford Files
Murder She Wrote
Night Gallery

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Squirrel Humor



Psychologist: What brings you here today?

Squirrel: I realized I am what I eat..... Nuts.

What do you get if you cross a squirrel with an elephant?

I don't know but it remembers where it hid its nuts.

I just saw a squirrel bury a nut in my back yard.

I'm going to dig it up and replace it with a chocolate bar.

That'll blow its mind.