



PLUMBING, HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING, INC.

News Leaks

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COMFORTABLE, ENERGY-WISE HOME NEWS FROM JOHNS PLUMBING, HEATING, & AIR CONDITIONING

Why bad floods happen to good people

Your plumbing system is like an invisible network of rivers coursing through your home, carrying hundreds of gallons of water to all kinds of fixtures and appliances, each with parts that can fail with use and age. Like most people, you probably don't pay a whole lot of attention to your plumbing when it seems to be working. That's why a brewing problem tends to go unnoticed until the day that the water heater fails, or your washing machine hose bursts, and you have a fountain in your home soaking everything around it at the rate of 500 gallons of water an hour.

Even a relatively small household flood is a lot of work to clean up and it can even be dangerous if electrical appliances are involved. If there is a lot of damage, you may also have to deal with the trouble of submitting and collecting on insurance claims. The average household has a dishwasher, clothes washer, water heater, at

least a couple of toilets, and several faucets. That works out to a lot of parts that may fail and cause

flooding if they are not regularly checked and upgraded as needed.

For example, most washing machines are hooked up to the water supply with a regular rubber hose. You are supposed to turn off the water supply to the washing machine after every use, to save wear on the hose, but most people never do this. However, rubber hoses are notorious for failing after continuous use under pressure, so it is a good idea to have yours regularly checked for bulges and pinhole leaks, and then replaced about every 5 years or so. Even better, have the rubber hose changed to one that is steel-reinforced.

Another common cause of household flooding is a failed water heater. Like furnaces and air conditioners, your water heater is a major appliance that should be serviced every year to spot

and to keep it running as long and efficiently as possible.

At Johns Plumbing, Heating, and Air Conditioning, we have helped many people cope with the mess and trouble of a flood. We believe the best way to avoid flooding due to a plumbing failure is to catch small problems while they are still manageable. Start with regular service for your water heater. If you have a regular rubber washing machine hose, have it checked or replaced with a stronger one. Have all floor drains or sump pumps checked. And if you notice drips or leaks anywhere, call us to have them serviced right away.



Five sure-fire ways to save energy and water this summer

When it gets hot outside, we use a lot more water and electricity to keep ourselves cool and comfortable and our yards and gardens looking fresh. This puts a huge burden on these utilities, especially as summer peaks. The cost also adds up pretty quickly. The answer? Five easy and effective ways to save energy, water, and money in the months ahead.

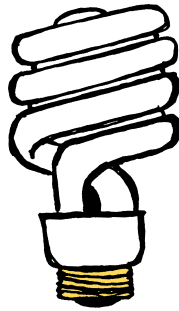
1 Have your air conditioning and plumbing systems serviced annually, so these important systems function cost effectively and any potential problems are caught early before they become big, expensive repairs.

2 To keep your home cool and dry, tighten up the envelope of your home by caulking exterior leaks and replacing weather stripping around doors and windows. Don't forget possible air leaks around electrical wires and pipes that penetrate exterior walls.

3 Have your duct work professionally inspected and sealed by a qualified HVAC technician

4 Place a rain barrel at far corners of your yard for handy watering.

5 Have your regular toilets, faucets, and showers replaced with low-flow fixtures.



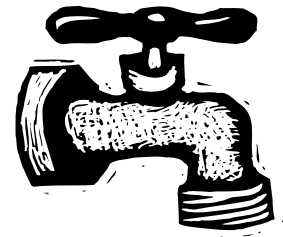
A Bright Idea

According to the Department of Energy, if just one room in every U.S. home used compact fluorescent lighting, the change would keep 1 trillion pounds of greenhouse gases out of our environment.

Did you know?

The primary source of greenhouse gases is electricity generation, not cars. Every step that you take to save electricity will help the environment as well as your wallet.

Are sneaky leaks draining your wallet?



If you live in a typical household, at least 14% of the water that comes into your home is lost through plumbing leaks. To put this in perspective, almost the same amount of water—about 17% is used for showers. Small leaks usually become big leaks, so it is worth it to find them and repair them. The signs of a plumbing leak include a toilet that runs when it's not in use, higher than normal water bills, sounds of running water in the plumbing pipes when water isn't being used, musty odors or mold growth, and stains on drywall or ceilings.

You can monitor your home for plumbing leaks by periodically turning off all appliances that use water and then reading your water meter. Wait at least 15 minutes and read the meter again. If the reading has changed, you probably have a leak. The most likely culprit is a leaky toilet tank. To check for a tank leak, mix a few drops of dark food coloring into the tank water and wait half an

hour without flushing. If there is colored water in the bowl, you've got a leak.

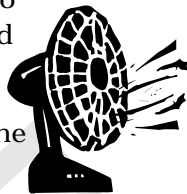
If you can't find the leak, call a professional plumber. They can locate underground or otherwise hidden leaks using special audio-visual equipment, and when they do find a leak, they have the right tools and equipment to make a lasting repair.



How to manage water damage

Water damage to your home can happen for all kinds of unexpected reasons: a burst water heater, a major plumbing leak, or a storm. Water is most damaging to the materials found in treasured household items such as photographs, linens, furniture, and books. To save these items you will need to act fast.

Before you enter the area of the flood, ensure there are no hazards, such as sewage or wet electrical appliances. Remove



any items that are about to become wet before you tackle soaked items.

Quickly create a dry, cool environment with good air circulation, because mold and mildew will start to grow within 48 hours. Use fans for air circulation and dehumidifiers to reduce the relative humidity level below 40%.

Rescue the items that are most important to you, starting with those that are driest and least damaged.

If photographs have become stuck together or have been dirtied, rinse them in clean, cold water and then dry them on paper towels. Do not blot or wipe them.

Electronic equipment that has been soaked may be unsafe to turn on. You may need to have a professional check it first, depending on the kind of equipment it is.

For damaged books, put paper towels between the pages, especially if they are glossy. If you cannot get to small items within 48 hours, freeze them until you have time to dry them properly.

The rules of COOL



How to stay safe and comfortable when the hot weather hits

- Use major heat-producing appliances (e.g., dishwashers, clothes washers, dryers, and stoves) during the cooler parts of the day or at night.
- Ditto for activities that produce humidity, including hot showers, baths, and cooking. Use local exhaust fans to vent hot, humid air in the kitchen or bathroom for a few minutes.
- Don't place heat sources—such as lamps or TV sets—near the thermostat. The thermostat will sense the heat and call for more cooling than is needed.
- Drink fluids throughout the day (water is best), but avoid caffeine-based drinks or alcohol.
- Eat several small meals throughout the day and avoid large amounts of protein.
- Keep curtains or blinds drawn during the hottest part of the day and turn off incandescent lights when not in use.

Household floods are often caused by plumbing problems, such as a failing hot water heater, a burst washing machine hose, a clogged toilet, or over-sudsing in the dishwasher or clothes washer (usually because too much soap was added). If any of these things happen, the first thing to do is turn off the water to the fixture using the fixture's shut-off valve. If you don't know where the fixture's shut-off valve is, then turn off the main water shut-off valve for the house and call a professional plumber for help.

Commode confidential Dual-flush, soft-close, two-piece, anyone?

Sooner or later, most people end up replacing at least one toilet in the house, either because their cupcake blue bathroom fixtures seem a little dated, or because they've noticed that guests leave before having to deal with a toilet that requires a "knack" to operate it. If you find yourself shopping for a new toilet, there are many options to consider.

First, there are many low-flow toilets on the market, but they are not created equal. Some models do a great job of

flushing, whereas others require a second, "courtesy" flush, which defeats the low-flow purpose of the toilet. Relatively new on the market is the dual-flush toilet, which has one flush volume for liquid waste, and another for more heavy-duty jobs.

Second, toilets come in a variety of styles, shapes, and sizes. For example, toilets can come in one piece or two. A two-piece toilet has a separate bowl and tank. One-piece toilets are easier to clean because you don't have the

crevice between the tank and the bowl to worry about. The bowl part of the toilet can come in round or elongated shapes. Seat choices for toilets include a variety of soft to hard materials, and you can get a soft-close seat that won't snap down on small fingers. Seat choices for toilets include a variety of soft to hard materials, and you can get a soft-close seat that won't snap down on small fingers.

If you're shopping for a new toilet, call us. We can help you choose a toilet that you and your guests will love.



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