

TODAY'S PROMPT PAYMENT,  
BUILDS TOMORROW'S CREDIT!

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## December Newsletter



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### Maintenance Tip of the Month:

Be sure to leave the ceiling fan on (for 10 minutes) in the bathroom after taking a shower. This will prevent mildew and paint peeling

## IMPORTANT, READ FIRST !!!!!!!!!!!!!

1. *Please be sure to clean out your gutters before Winter hits. If your gutters remain clogged with leaves, snow and ice will build up and cause roof leaks, etc.*
2. *Remember to rake the leaves on your lawn before the snow comes. (the City of Champaign will pick up leaves in December)*
3. *Please remember that Christmas lights are **not** allowed to be attached to your roof. Should you have any questions please, give our office a call.*
4. *Disconnect any outside hoses and shut off water leading to any outside spickets to prevent freezing.*
5. *Winter grilling can be just as dangerous as grilling during the summer months. Never operate gas or electric grills in garages, on wooden decks, under or inside patios or within 15 feet of your home! Siding can melt & decks can burn!*

Thank you for your continued cooperation in keeping your home maintained properly.

**MAKING RENTAL PAYMENTS:** We prefer that you mail your rent to our P.O. Box. However, if you bring your rent to our office, please use the **DROP BOX** outside of our building at the S.E. Lobby door. NOTE: Effective 12/1/11, We will no longer be able to accept cash, but **we will accept Money Order, Checks, E-Checks, Master Card, Visa & Discover Card!!!** You will also be able to pay online on our website at [www.hughesre.com](http://www.hughesre.com)!!!

### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Now that the holidays are upon us, We would like to take this moment to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!!!

Just remember, when you're out there celebrating the holidays.....

**PLEASE, DON'T DRINK & DRIVE**

## RENTER'S INSURANCE: A

### couple of days lapse can burn you.

**QUESTION:** My husband relocated recently, and we elected to rent a house for a few months before we settled down with a purchase. That way we could get a good feel for the area.

We were only in our newly rented home for three (3) days (not even unpacked) when the house burned. The fire inspectors determined that there was a short circuit due to aluminum wires and copper fixtures, which the owners know nothing about. We didn't even have time to get renter's insurance.

Now we have lost just about everything we own. Who do we look to for reimbursement? --

**ANSWER :** The deficiency, I'm afraid, was yours. It was incumbent upon you to get a renter's policy for the moment you moved in. I realize

how this can be overlooked - What's a couple of days? But what happened to you demonstrates how important a couple of days can be.

You mentioned the aluminum and copper wiring. It is true that you can't marry aluminum to copper safely, because differences in the metal can cause the connections to loosen, arc and then cause fire.

But you went on to say that the landlord had no knowledge of this. I doubt he can be held negligent if he did not know. But that is a legal question.

I have a strong feeling that you are going to be stuck for the loss. It underscores why it is so necessary to get the appropriate insurance in place immediately. That is so important!!

## IMPORTANT MAINTENANCE NOTE!

IF YOU HAVE A MAINTENANCE ISSUE, DO NOT CALL OUR OFFICE. PLEASE CALL OUR MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR, **John Williford, @ 217-776-2643.** FOR ALL ISSUES RELATING TO YOUR FURNACE OR AIR CONDITIONER, PLEASE CALL **LANZ HEATING AND AIR @ 217-355-5512** (THEY WILL ANSWER 24 HOURS A DAY!).

### Home Winter Weather Tips:

#### THINGS TO DO BEFORE A FREEZE

- Wrap all exposed pipes located outside or in unheated areas of your home.
- Remove garden hoses from outside faucets. Insulate the faucet with Styrofoam cover, rags or paper.
- Cover vents around the foundation of your home.
- Know where your property's water cut-off valve is located and know how to use it.

#### THINGS TO DO IN TIMES OF SUB-FREEZING TEMPERATURES

- Allow water to drip slowly from inside faucets during a freeze.
- Open cabinet doors under sinks to expose pipes running along outside walls.
- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.

#### IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE HOME FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME DURING TIMES OF SUB-FREEZING TEMPERATURES

- Set the temperature of your home heating system no lower than 55 degrees to prevent pipes from bursting.

#### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER A FROZEN PIPE

- Most often, frozen pipes are those running against exterior walls or where the water enters through the foundation.
- Apply heat to the affected area using an electric hair dryer or portable space heater. Other options include wrapping an electric heating pad or towels soaked in hot water around the pipe(s).
- Keep the faucet open, running water through the pipe will help melt the ice.

#### THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER DO IF YOUR PIPES ARE FROZEN.

- **NEVER** use an open flame to thaw your pipes. Open flame torches are the most common cause of pipe thawing related home fires.

#### WHAT TO DO IF A FROZEN PIPE BURSTS

- Locate the house shut-off valve and turn it off. Usually the shut-off valve is located on your water service pipeline immediately after it enters the basement wall. You should then contact a plumber for repairs.



## 'Tis the season to beware of heating hazards.

Portable heaters and other supplemental appliances that are intended to make it cheaper to keep warm can be very dangerous if improperly used or installed, government experts say.

The greatest danger is fire, the Consumer Product Safety Commission says.

"Supplemental home heating appliances are estimated to be associated with 105,800 residential fires, killing an estimated 600 people in 1987," the commission said in a recent statement.

Additionally, thousands of injuries from contact burns and about 100 deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning from home heating appliance emissions occur annually, the commission said.

KEROSENE, GAS AND ELECTRIC heaters accounted for more than half the residential fire deaths due to home heating appliances in 1987.

Low-income families seem to be common

victims of electric heater fires because "they're using them as a basic heating system," said one CPSC staffer.

The next greatest threat is from kerosene heaters "which people turn to if their power is turned off," the staffer said.

Flare-up or uncontrolled flaming, which can happen when improper or contaminated fuels are used, is cited as a prime factor in kerosene-related accidents.

People should never use gasoline or other fuels in kerosene heaters.

Both kerosene and gas heaters emit air pollutants that can build up in enclosed rooms. Areas where they are used should be well ventilated.

INCORRECT SETTING of the wick in kerosene heaters also can contribute to escaping pollutants.

The CPSC says people should follow the manufacturer's suggestion on wick settings.

The agency also says people with older un-

vented gas-fired space heaters should replace them with models manufactured after December 1981.

Those heaters are required to be equipped with sensors that automatically shut off the heaters if oxygen levels in the surrounding area fall too low.

Fireplaces and wood and/or coal burning stoves also are associated with numerous deaths and thousands of home fires which begin in the chimney and are often caused by a buildup of creosote, a tar-like residue.

Regular service from a qualified chimney sweep can prevent the buildup.

Per your rental contract, **ONLY** your furnace can be used to heat your home. **DO NOT USE PORTABLE HEATERS!!**