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

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February Newsletter

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Note From The Editor:

*Please be sure to check your furnace filters. Regular filter changes can **save you money** on your heating bill and prolong the life of your furnace.*

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

Take steps to control home's mold growth

Mold can pop up when you least expect it. A musty smelling closet, the bathroom ceiling, behind a dresser—mold is often present in Illinois homes.

I prefer to take steps to prevent mold growth in my home than have to deal with getting rid of it. And, even though wet tend to think about mold during our hot, humid summers, with the weather this year, people are having problems in homes when the humidity inside is high and there is a lack of air flow.

Mold must have moisture to grow. This is why mold

loves bathrooms! Using your bathroom fan to vent moist air outside can help keep a bathroom dry. Also, use an exhaust fan vented to the outside when cooking. Vent the clothes dryer to the outside. Increase ventilation by opening windows if the humidity level outdoors is low.

Raise the temperature of cold surfaces where moisture condenses, such as windows. Storm windows and caulking around windows keep the interior glass warmer and reduce condensation there.

Keep doors open between rooms to increase circulation. Storage closets can be a problem; often closets are colder than rooms and

condensation may occur. Do not overfill closets and keep doors open to increase air movement. Also, move furniture a few inches from outside walls to promote air and heat circulation. A tight, energy-efficient house holds more moisture inside. It's important to find a balance between sealing your home to keep cold air from coming into your home and maintaining air flow. Fans to increase air flow and ventilation can help.

Avoid drain pain—DON'T Flush These Things!

Just because the package says "flushable" doesn't mean it's true. Many items marketed as disposable and/or flushable do not degrade like toilet paper, and they wind up clogging pipes, tangling pumps and causing messy sewer backups in homes. Our sewers are designed to dispose of very specific things. Using your toilet for disposal of many modern products will often result in blockages. The drains that connect your home to the main sewer are only big enough to carry water, toilet paper and human waste - often no wider than 4 inches.

What not to flush:

- * Diapers (cloth, disposable, "flushable")
- * Facial tissues
- * Baby wipes, disinfectant wipes,
- * Moist wipes, etc.
- * Toilet bowl scrub pads
- * Swiffers
- * Napkins (paper or cloth), paper towels
- * Dental floss
- * Egg shells, nutshells, and coffee grounds
- * Fats, oils, and greases
- * Food items containing seeds and peelings
- * Hair
- * Sanitary napkins, tampons & condoms
- * Any non-organic material
- * Vitamins, medicines or
- * Other pharmaceuticals
- * Wash cloths, towels, rags (any cloth item)
- * Clothing
- * Sheet plastic, or plastic of any kind

* Try to limit or eliminate your garbage disposal use. Consider composting your food waste items.

* Also, instead of disposable wipes, try using a sponge or a rag that you can reuse. But for items that must be tossed, please place them in the garbage.

What should be flushed?

**Just toilet paper
and human waste**

Protecting your Floors from Ice Melt Compounds

No matter how hard you try, some of that ice melt compound that's on the bottom of your shoes is going to make it inside. The residue is unsightly on hard surface floors. On carpets, you may not see it, but the damage can be even worse. The most commonly used compound is calcium chloride in small white pellet form. It has two characteristics that are very relevant - it's alkaline and it loves water. Calcium chloride pulls moisture from the air and leaves a moist, oily film on carpets

and hard surface floors. It can also cause the slip resistance of hard surface floors to be compromised.

- Use doormats or runners at all entrance and exit areas to capture as much of the residue as possible.
- Vacuum the mats often and clean using the wet extraction method.
- Keep one or two replacement sets of mats for the winter season.

- Clean carpets by vacuuming at least three times a day.
- Clean carpets by wet extraction after each snowstorm or after each use of ice melt compound.

To clean the oily residue from hard surface floors, use water or FloorStar Light Duty Cleaner at 1/2 ounce per gallon. DO NOT wet mop, as the mop itself can become contaminated with significant amounts of residue and spread to the rest of your floors.

Heater And Air Conditioner Filter Maintenance

Did you know that indoor levels of pollutants may be two to five times higher than outdoor levels? Indoor air quality ranks as one of the top five environmental risks to public health. A heater / air conditioner filter can help clean the air in your home by reducing particles (from the air passing through the filter) that can contribute to poor indoor air quality, and maintain proper air flow.

For cleaner air, the filter should be changed at least every three months. Changing your filter more frequently makes your system run more efficiently. certain conditions in your home will significantly add particles to the air. This will cause the filter to capture more particles than usual, shortening its life to less than three months or reducing the effectiveness of the filter to capture particles. These conditions include:

Also, running your furnace or air conditioning fan continuously will help clean the air in your home but could further shorten the life of the filter.

What Filters Do

Heater and air conditioner filters are effective at attracting and capturing large airborne allergens like pollen, mold spores, and dust mite debris. Electrostatically charged fibers attract and capture microscopic airborne particles like smoke, pet dander, household dust, and smog.

- Dirty Ductwork
- Sanding Projects
- Burning Candles
- Construction Work
- Pets
- Tobacco Smoke
- Fireplace and Wood-Burning Stove Smoke



How Often Should I Change My Filter?

Does Your Family Have a Fire Plan?

Your family needs to be prepared in case of a fire. Children especially need to fully understand what to do and should practice these rules often. Otherwise, they will naturally run and hide from a fire instead of getting out of the house safely. Get a family fire-escape plan ready and have fire drills at least once a month. You can even print out the drill and tape it to the refrigerator so the whole family is reminded often of the plan.

- Make sure that everyone knows two ways out of every room.
- Teach children to crawl on their hands and knees to get low under smoke.
- Teach children how to close door behind them to slow the spread of fire and smoke.

- Plan alternate escape routes.
- Teach children to lay low and shout their names out if they are trapped in a smoke-filled room.
- Plan a meeting spot outside the house, at a neighbor's or in a special place in the yard a good distance from the house.
- Teach kids that once they get outside, they should stay outside.
- Make a sketch of the layout of each floor of your house, including windows, doors and stairways. Mark escape routes from each room on the sketch.
- Hold frequent fire drills, including some at night. Make sure everyone is following the plan perfectly.

- Assign a member of the family to be responsible for the younger and older members of the family. Get a "buddy" system going so everyone is taken care of.
- Assign a responsible adult to look after house pets in case of fire.
- Assign someone to call 911. And if there is a fire, remember, COUNT HEADS, STAY TOGETHER and DON'T GO BACK into the house for personal belongings.