



# Home Tips®



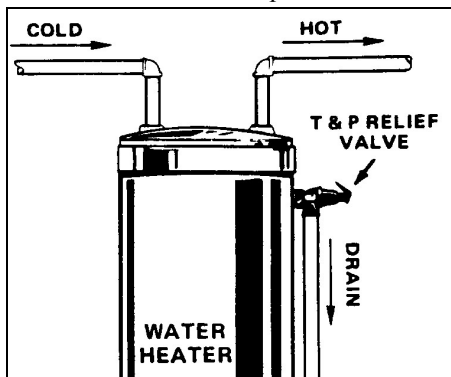
• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 1003 STAR COURT, NORCROSS, GEORGIA 30093, (770) 925-8518 • APRIL 1996 •

## Q & A

### Leaking T&P Valve?

*After testing my water heater temperature and pressure relief valve, the valve now leaks. The water heater is only three years old. Is there anything I can do to stop the leak or should I replace the valve?*

T&P valves can be very annoying at times. Home inspectors often run into this same problem. Sometimes, if the valve has



not been properly tested every year, the valve will not re-seat causing a small leak. Try flipping the test lever a few times. If it still leaks, try tapping the top of the valve lightly with a piece of wood. If

it still leaks, the valve is defective and will need to be replaced.

Reduce sediment buildup in the tank by draining all the water from the tank through the drain valve located at the bottom of the tank. You should do this once a year to prolong the life of the water heater.

### Bath Fan Exhausting Heat?

*We use our bathroom exhaust fan a lot and wonder if it is pulling heat out of the house during the winter months?*

Bathroom fans can exhaust 80 cubic feet of air per minute. In an average size bathroom, that means it can pull all of the heat out of the room every 4 to 5 minutes. This will definitely make your furnace work harder.

However, it is very important to exhaust the moisture out of the bathroom when you take a shower or hot bath. The moisture will create mold or mildew and can also loosen wallpaper. It is better to pay a few cents more for the heat. Only run the fan while you are bathing.

The current building code does not require exhaust fans if the bathroom has an operable window. This is a little

ridiculous because how many people do you know who open a bathroom window during the winter? If you do not have a bath exhaust fan, it is a good idea to install one.

### Foggy Glass Windows?

*One of our insulated glass windows has moisture between the two pieces of glass and it is so foggy that we can barely see out. Is there any way to clean the inside or do we need to replace the window?*

What you have is commonly called "seal failure". Most of the insulated windows have two pieces of glass with a vacuum between them to keep out moisture. Sometimes the seal around the edges of the glass fails allowing moisture to enter between the glass panes. When this happens moisture collects on the inside of the glass. There is nothing you can do to clean the glass.

However, you do not need to replace the whole window. You only need to replace the glass pane. If you know the manufacturer of the window, give them a call and see if they have replacement panes. If not, call your local glass company. They will come out, measure the piece of glass and have a replacement pane manufactured. When it is ready, they can come back out and install it. An average replacement cost is around \$75.00 to \$100.00. The cost to replace the pane is far less than replacing the whole window.

### How Do You Prevent Cold Showers?

*Sometimes when I turn on the dishwasher, I hear a loud shriek coming from the shower. I instantly know someone was blasted with cold water. Is there anyway to prevent this from happening?*

This has happened to everyone at least once in their lifetime. The current plumbing code requires all bath and shower faucets to be a pressure-balancing type that prevents surges of hot or cold water. This also prevents anyone from being scalded by limiting the temperature of hot water to a maximum of 120 degrees.

If you cannot easily replace the faucet, one option is to install a pressure-balancing valve on the hot and cold water lines just before the faucet. Either cut an access opening in the wall behind the faucet or gain access under the floor. They can be purchased from all plumbing retailers or most home centers.

# Stained Roof Shingles?

*Our roofing shingles have a dark stain all over them. We have tried to clean them but nothing seems to help. Is there a way to get rid of the stain and prevent it from coming back?*

The stain you are referring to is most likely algae growing on the shingles. This normally happens the most on the shaded part of the roof where the sun is restricted. The algae grows on the moist shingles. You can kill the algae by using a cleaning solution of 1 gallon of bleach, 1 cup of ammonia free detergent and 2 1/2 gallons of water. Lightly scrub the shingles with a non-metallic brush. Start at the top and work your way down. Be sure not to scrub hard enough to damage the shingles or rub off the granules. Clean the roof in sections and rinse with a garden hose. Be careful of your shrubs because the bleach might damage them. Cover them with plastic. If you are not comfortable with working on the roof, you can contact a professional roofer or handyman to do the job for you.

If you have galvanized roof vents or galvanized pipe flashing, you may notice that the area directly below these items will not have near the algae growth. This is due to the zinc coating on the metal. Zinc has been found to help control algae growth. There is a product called "Z-Strip" that is a 3 inch wide strip, made from a zinc alloy, that can be installed along the top of the roof parallel to the ridge. These strips release zinc ions, which are carried down the roof by rainwater and helps to prevent the algae from growing. The average roof can be protected for around \$60.00. If you are interested, you can contact the manufacturer for more information or place an order at Wespac Enterprises, P.O. Box 46337, Seattle, Washington 98146 or call (800) 845-5863. They will ship anywhere via UPS.

When you get ready for a new roof, consider installing a new type of shingle that is designed to protect against algae growth. One type is available from 3M and these shingles have copper granules that help to prevent growth similar to the zinc strips. For more information call (800) 447-2914.



If you have a question, change of address, comment, home tip or would like to send *Home Tips* to your clients, send your letter to *Home Tips*, Christian Building Inspectors, Inc., 1003 Star Court, Norcross, Georgia 30093. We reserve the right to edit questions for length.

## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN....

*It's time for the following maintenance on your home:*

- Clean out gutters and downspouts of fall leaves.
- Open all crawl space vents.
- Test all ground fault interrupters (G.F.C.I.) outlets and breakers.
- Test all smoke detectors.
- Check all fire extinguishers.
- Change or clean furnace filters.
- Check the water heater for any signs of leaks and test the temperature & pressure relief valve.

## *Quote Of The Month*

**“ANGER IS ONLY ONE LETTER SHORT OF DANGER.”**

- UNKNOWN

## **A Tip Of The Hat To:**

***Pat Graves***  
***Century 21/Real Estate Unlimited***  
***Norcross, Georgia***



*Thank You*

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