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Do's and Don'ts in Maintaining the Plumbing System & Leak Prevention

Japanese: 配管システムの維持管理および漏れ防止に関する注意事項。この通知の日本語版が必要な方は、オフィスにお知らせいただくか、お立ち寄りになってコピーをお受け取りください。

Korean: 배관 시스템 유지 관리 및 누수 예방에 대한 주의사항. 이 공지의 한국어 복사본이 필요하신 경우, 사무실에 알려주시거나 사무실에 들러 복사본을 받아가시기 바랍니다.

Chinese: 维护管道系统及防漏的注意事项。如果您想要这份通知的中文副本，请告知办公室，或亲自来领取一份。

Dear Resident,

Please see these important pipe maintenance and practices to keep the new pipes in good functional shape. The tips below will help you and the AOA save money on plumbing bills.

What Causes Blocked Drains?

To keep your drainage system working at its peak, it is important to know the different materials that can cause blockage. Being aware of these materials should help you avoid putting them down the drain. Below are some strainers to assist in catching food or hair from going into drains.



Do use kitchen sink strainer.



Do use shower / tub drain strainer.

Here are the leading causes of blocked drains:

1. Food Scraps. How do you dispose of food scraps or leftovers? If your answer is to throw them straight into the garbage disposal or directly into the kitchen sink, you might soon face a blocked drain. Large chunks of food CANNOT be processed properly by a garbage disposal.
2. Human Hair. Human hair is also one of the main reasons you might experience blocked drains. You can protect your shower's floor drain by using a strainer. This is usually available in different hardware stores, although you may have to spend time choosing a strainer that will fit your floor drain precisely.
3. Soap Scum. Soap scum is the residue from body and hand soaps. It often builds up in drainpipes and causes blockages. Sometimes, pouring hot water into the drains is enough to melt the soap scum. If that doesn't work, you must get professional help from licensed plumbers.



Do's

Follow these practices to keep your drains functioning and well-maintained:

1. DO clean the drains regularly with strainers and hot water. The various components of drainage systems need regular cleaning to prevent blockage. There are simple ways to do this. Check for hair strands and food scraps in your drains after using them. Pick them up and throw them in the trash bin to prevent clogging. A drain strainer is an additional tool that you should consider to prevent clogging as it effectively filters the main culprits of blocked drains.

If you notice that your kitchen or bathroom drainage is slow, resolve the problem immediately before it worsens. A good start would be to pour hot water down the drain if you think that the cause of the slow drain flow is oil or soap scum buildup. This should be done at least once a week.

2. DO flush regularly. New toilet designs are lower flow than older models. If a low-flow design isn't flushed soon enough, this may cause a clog. These designs may require more flushing because they can handle less waste.
3. DO run water while using the garbage disposal. Running water while using the garbage disposal helps to prevent your disposal from jamming. A jammed disposal can lead to clogged pipes due to food scraps not being broken down enough. ***(Please remember, try to avoid using the disposal. If a drain screen is used, then the disposal should hardly be necessary.)**
4. DO use your pipes! "Use it or lose it", applies to your unit's drainpipes. It is recommended that water-use appliances and fixtures (sinks, washers, toilets, tubs, showers), be used at least every 2-3 weeks. They all go to drains that may crack if allowed to dry out during extended periods of nonuse. Residents must be sure to regularly run all waste-use appliances and fixtures in their units.
5. DO have your tub's overflow gasket replaced if not recently replaced. It is located between the tub's spout and drain. The gasket needs to be periodically checked. These overflow gaskets were not included in the pipe replacement project. If your gasket has dried up and the tub is filled to the overflow drain, it will leak onto the floor of your bathroom and to units below. Overflow gaskets should be replaced every 5 years.



6. DO replace your laundry supply hoses. You should replace your laundry supply hoses every 3-5 years. Statistics show that 80% of hoses break by the 10-year mark, and the average breaking point is 8 years. A broken hose can leak up to over 5 gallons per minute until shut off.

To prevent leaks and flooding, you can also:

- Inspect hoses regularly: Check for cracks, kinks, corrosion, discoloration, bulging, or bubbling.
- Clean hoses annually: Clean your hoses at least once a year.
- Only install braided stainless-steel hoses:
- Check installation: Make sure the hose is properly installed and securely connected.

7. DO exercise your shut off valves. If your shutoff valves are never turned off and back on they can freeze and stop functioning. These are valves under your sinks and toilets.

You should turn off your home's water shut-off valves at least once a year to test their functionality and ensure they work properly in case of a leak; ideally, turn them off and on once or twice a year. If a valve is very tight and does not want to turn, DO NOT FORCE IT, as it could break and flood the unit and units below.

Preventative measures:

- Regularly turning the valves off and on prevents them from freezing (getting stuck in the "on" position) due to disuse.
- Before leaving on vacation: Always turn off your water supply before going on vacation to avoid potential water damage from leaks while you're away.
- During plumbing work: Turn off the water supply when working on any plumbing fixtures or appliances in your home.



Don'ts

These are the practices that you must avoid if you want to observe proper drainage maintenance:

1. DON'T throw grease or oil down the drain. As mentioned, grease and oil are one of the leading causes of blocked drains so it is crucial that you avoid pouring them into your kitchen sink or garbage disposal. You can filter oil after frying food, place the oil inside your fridge to solidify, then throw it into the garbage.
2. DON'T put starchy foods, fibrous foods, coffee grounds, or eggshells down the drain. Rice, pasta, oats, and tough shelled fruits and veggies should be composted or thrown in the trash, NEVER down the garbage disposal.
3. DON'T flush anything besides toilet paper. Do not flush any materials aside from toilet paper, urine, and human waste. Although many wipes are labeled as 'flushable' they can still clog and damage your pipes. Cat litter is NEVER flushable as well. Always discard wipes, dryer sheets, feminine hygiene products, Q-tips, hair and dental floss into your regular trash.
4. DON'T use commercial drain cleaners or pour cleaning products down the drain. Most commercial drain cleaners are manufactured using harmful chemicals which can break pipes made of plastic or corrode those made of metals. Common household chemicals and cleaning products can kill off the essential bacteria needed in sewer systems, as well as eat away at your home's pipes.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

BTP MGMT