



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

July, 2008

Educational Section: **AC Condensate**

[This Article could save you \\$1000sssss](#)

The primary output of your AC units is COLD AIR. Most of us wouldn't live in Arizona without it. An ignored by-product is **WATER** (called condensate) as the AC unit squeezes the humidity out of the air.

[Where is your AC condensate going?](#) The failure to answer that question cost Arizona homeowners thousands of dollars every cooling season.

System by system here is the overview:

Roof mounted units: Condensate drops into a factory mounted pan under the unit. The pan has a threaded plastic drain coupling onto which should be attached a plastic pipe that drains the water off of the roof (occasionally into a roof mounted plumbing vent). **Regular Inspection task:** Be sure that you condensate piping system is in tact and that water is not draining onto the roof because over time, this will degrade roofing material.

Split systems with attic air handlers: Condensate water drops into a factory mounted pan under the unit. A plastic condensate line is piped down an outside wall and typically exits near the foundation. The builder was required to put a safety pan under the unit incase the factory system fails. This pan is piped to the outside and typically exits higher on the outside wall. **Regular Inspection task:** First, take the time to understand the configuration of your system. Enter the attic and check the condition of the safety pan and piping. There should be no water and minimal rust in the safety pan. If there is water in the safety pan or significant corrosion, have the unit serviced. With the unit operating for 20/30 minutes, go outside and be certain that water is dripping from the pipe proximate to the foundation. Do this regularly. If water is dripping from the high pipe, the factory pan or condensate line is blocked and the unit should be serviced. (If you have your system professionally annually serviced, you can skip the attic stem and just monitor the outside pipes).

Split systems with closet or garage air handlers: These systems only have the factory mounted pan under the unit. You need to understand the configuration of your condensate drain system. Condensate may be piped to the outside, it may be piped to a plumbing waste pipe (usually under a sink), or it

may be collected in a tank located in the air return (under the air handler) and pumped to a plumbing waste pipe. THESE SYSTEMS FAIL FREQUENTLY RESULTING IN WATER DAMAGE/MOLD IN THE HOME. On a regular basis, monitor the space under your air handler. Consider installing an alarm system or failure mode equipment which includes an equipment cut off switch.

Maintenance Item for July: **Change AC filters**

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance/inspection items.) Change your AC filters monthly. Your AC system will run more efficiently and use less electricity. I prefer the pleated filter that cost about \$3.00.

Question of the Month: **Tile roofs and water stains?**

Why can a tile roof look fine and yet there are water stains in the home? Water gets under most scalloped tiles roofs in wind driven rain storms. If there are openings in the under-layment (felt paper) either from cuts, damage, or aging; water will find its way into the home. Another common source of leaks is insufficient, improper, or damaged roof flashing. Roof flashing is utilized at plumbing vents, roof valleys, roof transitions, chimneys, etc. Finding/correcting leaks requires removal of tile and evaluation of underlayment/flashing. We recommend that roofs repairs be performed by licensed roofing contractors. (Be sure that your roofer is qualified for the type of roof in question).

Safety Tip of the Month: **CPR**

It's swimming pool season. It would be ideal if all adults in Arizona knew CPR. After many years, in 2007, the Red Cross changed the CPR protocol. Invest 3 hours and a minimum fee to learn the new CPR protocol. You never know when you may be called on the make the difference between life and death for a child. **Inspection class for realtors:** Arizona Academy of Real Estate (Bell and 99th Ave) offers a **3 credit hour course** "lowering risk through inspection". This course is taught by Mark Andrews (yours truly). I promise that it will be educational and fun! Contact the Academy for dates and details. Ph# 623 505 5380

Let our experience work for you!



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