

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

August 2019

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Avoid Plumbing FAILURES

One of the services offered by ServiceMaster by A-Town Hi-Tech is water damage restoration. In the event of a water intrusion in your home or business, time is a key factor in minimizing damage. But there are things that you can do to prevent a water disaster from happening in the first place.

Plumbing system failures are by far the single largest cause of residential water damage insurance claims. Water begins to damage certain materials like drywall, baseboards, hardwood floors and furniture almost immediately causing serious issues.

The Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) urges property owners to inspect interior plumbing components and complete preventive

maintenance measures to reduce chances of interior water damage.

IBHS conducted a study of water damage insurance claims, identified five leading causes of damage, and developed the solutions featured below.

1. PLUMBING SUPPLY SYSTEM FAILURE—The average cost of a plumbing supply system failure was more than \$5,000 after the insurance deductible was

See "FAILURES" on next page

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paid, according to the IBHS study.

Potential indicators of a plumbing problem include increasing water bills, banging pipes, rust stains, moisture on walls or floors, and signs of wet soil near the foundation. If you see any of these signs, or you suspect something is not right, call a plumber as soon as possible for a system inspection.

2. TOILET FAILURE—One-third of all toilet failures in the study resulted from an overflowing toilet.

After you flush, wait for the valve to completely finish refilling the tank and bowl. If an overflow looks imminent, turn off the supply valve.

Twice a year, inspect a toilet's components, such as the fill, supply and flush valves and the supply line. Consider upgrading the toilet's supply line to a sturdier braided steel hose.

3. WATER HEATER FAILURE—The

most common causes of water heater failures in the IBHS study were a slow leak or a sudden burst in the tank, closely followed by supply line failures.

Check the life expectancy and warranty for the water heater and replace accordingly. Proper maintenance, such as flushing sediments and inspecting the heater's anode rod, can increase life expectancy.

You should also inspect valves to ensure proper operations, and use ball valves in place of gate valves whenever possible.

4. PLUMBING DRAIN SYSTEM FAILURE—The IBHS study found more than half of plumbing system failures were the direct result of sewer backups.

If the home's sewer system is connected to the city's sewer system or if you are located downhill or below street level, contact a plumbing professional to install a

back-flow prevention assembly into the home's sewer system.

5. WASHING MACHINE FAILURE—One burst inlet hose, and your laundry room is flooded in a matter of minutes, with water quickly spreading to other rooms and adjacent areas.

Replace rubber hoses every three years and consider upgrading to sturdier braided steel hoses.

When leaving the house for an extended period of time, turn off the hot and cold water supply valve to reduce failure risks.

Don't try to cut corners by overloading the machine, and use it only while someone is at home.

Pass this information along to your friends and neighbors and remember to call **Service Master by A-Town Hi-Tech** immediately if you should ever have a water intrusion.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

August 16, 2019 is National Tell A Joke Day!

**What did the ocean say to the shore?
Nothing...It just waved.**

**What do sea monsters eat?
Fish and ships.**



Delicious on its own, and also tasty mixed with rum for a frozen mojito.

Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup mint leaves, packed
- 1/4 cup grated lime zest
- 1 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 1/2 cups citrus-flavored sparkling water
- 2 tablespoons rum (optional)

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com



Mojito Sorbet

Directions

Heat the water, sugar, and mint leaves in a saucepan over medium heat, and stir until the sugar is dissolved.

Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 3 to 5 minutes to extract the mint flavor. Set the mixture aside to cool, and strain out the mint leaves.

Pour the cooled mint mixture, lime zest, lime juice, sparkling water, and rum into a bowl and mix well.

Pour into the container of an ice cream maker, and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Serve immediately for a softer texture, or freeze in a sealed container for a harder sorbet. Let hard-frozen sorbet thaw a few minutes before serving.



What is KOMBUCHA?



Just like yogurt and kefir, kombucha is packed with gut-healthy bacteria.

As it rises in popularity, the fermented drink has gained its cult following - as well as its haters. Seems no one stands in the middle: you love it or hate it.

Fermented food and drinks are high on the food trend list in 2019, as people seek ways to work probiotics into their diets via their food rather than in pill form.

For the uninitiated, kombucha is a type of effervescent fermented tea (though not an alcoholic drink) that originated in China around

2,000 years ago. It has a base of sugar, tea, bacteria and yeast. It has a bitter taste that can take some getting used to, and comes in a wide variety of flavors from a wide variety of brands.

Proponents claim health benefits from gut health to reduced inflammation, improved cholesterol levels, blood sugar control, antibacterial properties, and even a reduced risk of cancer. Today, it can be commonly found in most grocery stores or made at home.

Go on a MONEY Date

Ever heard of a money date? It's a thing. On a money date, spouses agree to get together to talk finances in a (allegedly) fun and non-threatening way. The idea is to keep on top of budgets and, perhaps more importantly, to work together on goal-setting.

The idea is to keep it affordable, so that might entail staying home with a good bottle of wine or out to a quiet dinner where you can talk.

Pro Tip: tackle the heavy lift-

ing issues prior to finishing that first glass of wine.

For singles: you can take yourself on a money date, too. This thing with money IS a relationship, even with ourselves.

Setting aside scheduled time to talk about finances forces you to focus and not get distracted by other life demands.

Put it on your calendar, and don't forget to bring your laptop and some pens and paper. Yes, even to a restaurant.



An important part of a money date is dreaming about the future.



Air Conditioning Efficiency TIPS

Summer time can bring some high utility bills, as we crank air conditioners. It's a good idea, whether for your wallet or for the environment, to consider tips for making your air conditioner work more efficiently.

First, check the seals. Check around window units to make sure they are sealed and that extra heat isn't getting into the house in the first place.

Check also that your attic is properly insulated, which does

just as much good in the summer as it can in the winter. Insulation prevents attic heat from leaking into your home and also the cool air from escaping.

Keep your filter clean so the unit can operate better and keep vents clear. And consider ceiling fans to better circulate the air.

If you have central air, make sure the ducts are checked regularly; not only do they accumulate allergens, but they work harder when they get clogged and dirty.

Use blinds to keep the sun from baking your house's interior.



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Upcoming Community Events Around Abilene

Movie in the Park: Bumblebee, 08/02/19 , 8:45 to 11 p.m.

Nelson Park. 2070 Zoo Lane, Abilene, 325-734-5302, Alyssa Hartley, Free

Don't forget to bring your lawn chairs and blankets to relax on during the movie. Enjoy the park splash pad before the movie begins.

Champion's Day, 08/03/19, 9 to 11 a.m.

Adventure Cove, 2742 S. 9th St., Abilene, 325-734-5302, Alyssa Hartley,

Free-Disabled persons; \$4-Per person for up to four family members

Champions day is a special time for our champions to come out without all the noise and distractions from the general public. Each person with disabilities can come for free, with the reduced rate of \$4 for up to four family members.

CDOA's Back to School Bash, 08/10/19, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Adventure Cove, 2742 S. 9th St., Abilene, 325-692-9557, Jenny McLeod, Free; Limit 500

Children's Dentistry of Abilene is hosting a back to school bash at Adventure Cove. The first 500 guests get in free. There will be children's characters, drawings for great prizes and all kinds of family fun.

Military Appreciation Day, 08/17/19, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Taylor County History Center, 133 N. William St., Buffalo Gap, Taylor County History Center, Free

All current and former military personnel and their families receive free admission to the Taylor County History Center.

All Hands on Deck! Show, 08/24/19, 2 to 4 p.m.

Historic Paramount Theatre, 352 Cypress St., Abilene, 917-991-7685, Jody Madaras, \$25-\$55

America's Favorite WWII Big Band Roadshow. Direct from Branson, this show is an homage to the days of Bob Hope, and an award-winning authentic WWII-era Big Band Roadshow & Radio Broadcast reproduction featuring the songs, dances, laughs, and favorite radio commercials that America has loved for 70 years; a perfect show for seniors, veterans and patriotic Americans of all ages! Stars Broadway veterans Jody Madaras, Valerie Hill, NY voices, and a 9-piece Big Band orchestra.