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Better Home Living™

The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!

How to avoid drain clogs and sewer backups

One extreme truth about drain clogs and sewer backups: They only happen on weekends and holidays when it is either expensive or impossible to get a plumber.

Here are three main ways to avoid sewer backups and clogged drains. They may seem simple, but people often don't take them seriously.

1. Don't flush anything but toilet paper.

Seriously, don't flush feminine products of any kind. Don't flush paper towels, facial napkins, and certainly not diapers.

2. Don't dump a bunch of stuff down your garbage disposal at one time.

This might become clear if, for example, you try to stuff all your potato peelings down the garbage disposal at once. After you do that, you can take the disposal trap apart and fish them out that way. This experience usually cements this rule in the mind of most cooks. Most find this out in preparation for a holiday dinner. Worse, if the large lump of stuff makes it through the trap, it is going to lodge in the sewer line. Very bad look for Thanksgiving.

3. Don't pour grease down your drain. Some people think grease is the only thing you can put down the drain. And, that is wrong. All fats can be melted by running hot water down the drain with them, but the fats won't stay that way. They will ultimately harden and block the sewer line.

If you have slow drains or a block, solve the problem and call a plumber. Liquid drain openers can hurt pipes and that will cause many expensive future problems. At least a plumber can discover the cause of clogs and backups.

How many calories are in Thanksgiving dinner?

Oh, baby. We just went there. Forewarned is forearmed, right? Or something like that.

You can stick your head in the sand, or you can have some facts and prepare for the onslaught (a little pre-holiday salad or extra workouts, say). So, for those who prefer to be informed, here goes:

Thanksgiving dinner can easily be worth 3,150 calories, according to the Calorie Control Council, whose website includes a chart that outlines 159 grams of fat as well. Their sample dinner didn't even include skin on the turkey and only counted one serving of cornbread, one tablespoon of butter, and one slice of pie. And no booze.

More likely, we're all headed for more than 4,000 calories, practically two days' worth of calories in one meal. And our carbs can easily approach an eye-popping 500 grams.

The Council doesn't recommend avoiding Thanksgiving dinner but does provide some tips for reducing the calorie count and for preparing yourself. This includes exercise, eating something healthy beforehand so you don't go into a meal famished, socializing away from the table of food, and using a smaller plate to encourage portion control.

Free Cleaning Tips at www.mopsnbuckets.com



I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

*Christopher Dunlap
Mops & Buckets, LLC*

A brief history of Pie

At first blush, it might seem like a classic that has remained steady and predictable over the years. Pie is pie, right?

Look a little closer. It turns out, we can sneak a peek into history and fads when we consider what types of pie were popular at the time. Consider these, from Taste of Home:

* Earliest pies: Probably meat pies and fruit pies. As long as there have been apples, someone has put them into a crust.

* Icebox Pie. Nothing screams old-timey like the term icebox. This dessert came to prominence in the 1910s, when insulated boxes with ice were still a popular method of keeping food cold.

* Vinegar Pie. Though it sounds more like a punishment than a dessert, this custard-type pie, which emerged during the Great Depression when ingredients were limited, apparently has a mellow sweet-tart flavor.

* Jell-O Pie. A little Jell-O, a little fruit, a pie crust: boom. 1950s, anyone?

* Mini Pies. These took off in the 2010s. Are we more indecisive about fruit or cream pies? Do we just like to sample? Is it a by-product of a tapas phase? Who knows? And who cares, so long as they're delicious!

* Allergen-friendly pies. Also, a recent trend, pies today can be nut free, gluten free, dairy free, Keto, you name it. Again, so long as it's yummy, bring it!



Do You Know...

... someone that could use our services? Perhaps a friend, family member, co-worker, or someone from church?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services at your recommendation; you will receive \$100 after their 4th cleaning!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send your \$100 Bonus!

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!

Thanks a Bunch!

"The ladies are very thorough and responsible. They have a pleasant attitude and show a great deal of pride in their cleaning. They are receptive to the client's requests. I am lucky I found this group of professionals..."

*Angela Lannes
Miami, FL*

A special thanks to all our customers who referred us!

Above the din, can we hear a thank you?

Thanksgiving is a kind of simple refuge from all the "noise" We can enjoy a great meal, a football game, reminiscing with friends and relatives, and we can make our own, more pleasant din.

That alone should be enough to make us grateful.

Gratitude was almost certainly an element of the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving in 1621. The event -- now both criticized and beloved, steeped in myth both bad and good -- was a festive break from hardship. They didn't know yet their harvest would be disappointing. They didn't yet know they would reject their ideas of holding goods common. There was dissension and strife over food and work.

The Pilgrim's story rings with gratitude, but also desperation. In England, they were imprisoned and impoverished because they wished to worship their own way. They went to Holland, where they could worship, but perhaps no longer remain English: It was their identity and pride. So, they traveled 66 days to the New World in a leaky ship, over angry waves, stuffed into a ship's hold, seasick, and frightened. They landed in what was the wilderness of Cape Cod in November. Whatever comfort could be found, they would have to make it themselves. Half of the pilgrims died in the winter of 1621, leaving just 52 to carry on.

They suffered all this just to be true to themselves: To worship as they pleased, own their work, speak their own language, and govern themselves. On Thanksgiving, let us be grateful that we have these freedoms.



"Main menu. Please listen carefully as my grades have changed..."

Amish Noodles -- A must for Midwest holiday gatherings

In a swatch of the middle of the country, Amish noodles (not soup!) star at family gatherings.

This dish is called chicken and noodles in Indiana and it is widely served in that state and parts of Illinois and Ohio, and northern Kentucky.

Influenced by Amish cooking, chicken and noodles are made using Amish egg noodles. These noodles come in different widths from thin to thick. For a hearty meal, the thick noodles are more like dumplings that fill up everyone fast, for little money.

Family cooks use their own recipes, some incorporating cream of chicken soup, others relying just on broth. But the key is that authentic dish has just three ingredients: Chicken broth, Amish noodles, and chicken.

Chicken and noodles are often served over mashed potatoes as a gravy, making a comfort meal, although one heavy on carbs and starch.

Some families remove the broth before serving the noodles. Others keep the broth to be served as a thick soup or gravy.

Easy Chicken and Noodles for 6

Requires a 6-quart stockpot
1 pack 16-ounce Amish egg noodles
8-10 boneless, skinless thighs.
4 quarts chicken broth
Salt and Pepper to taste

Put chicken in stockpot and cover with enough broth to boil the thighs. When done, remove thighs and shred the meat. Add the rest of the broth and noodles to the stockpot.

Bring noodles to a boil and cook about 12 minutes in the broth until they are done but not soft. There will be some leftovers, so you don't want the noodles too soft to reheat.

Turn down the heat to the lowest setting and add the shredded chicken. Cover the pot and let the noodles soak up broth and the chicken re-warm. About 15 minutes.

Serve warm with broth over mashed potatoes or dish into bowls. Some people serve only noodles and save broth for reheating.



Trivia Teaser – Bedtime Reading

1. Which poet has "miles to go before I sleep" in his poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"? a-Edgar Allan Poe, b-Robert Frost, c-Langston Hughes, d-William Blake.

2. Private eye Philip Marlowe made his first appearance in the 1939 novel "The Big Sleep" by which writer? a-Elmore Leonard, b-Dashiell Hammett, c-Ross Macdonald, d-Raymond Chandler.

3. Which Shakespeare character muses "To sleep, perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub"? a-Puck, b-Macbeth, c-Hamlet, d-Othello.

4. Which Washington Irving character fell asleep in the Catskill Mountains for 20 years? a-Ichabod Crane, b-Ebenezer Scrooge, c-Rip Van Winkle, d-Daniel Webster.

5. Who is the creator of the Sandman comic book series introduced in 1989? a-Neil Gaiman, b-Mike Mignola, c-Alan Moore, d-Grant Morrison.

6. In a tale by Hans Christian Andersen, whose sleep is disturbed by a pea placed under 20 mattresses? a-The Snow Queen, b-The Princess, c-Little Match Girl, d-The Little Mermaid.

7. "Doctor Sleep" is a sequel to which horror novel by Stephen King? a-"The Shining," b-"Mr. Mercedes," c-"Carrie," d-"Pet Semetary."

8. Who wrote the classic children's book "Goodnight Moon"? a-Beverly Cleary, b-Maurice Sendak, c-Margaret Wise Brown, d-Robert McCloskey.

9. Which playwright wrote the verse dramas "A Sleep of Prisoners" and "The Lady's Not for Burning"? a-Christopher Fry, b-John Milton, c-Thomas a Becket, d-Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

10. Which 19th century poem ends "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? Fled is that music - do I wake or sleep?" a-"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," b-"The Cloud," c-"Song of Myself, d-"Ode to a Nightingale."

1-b, Robert Frost
2-d, Raymond Chandler
3-c, Hamlet
4-c, Rip Van Winkle
5-a, Neil Gaiman
6-b, Princess
7-a, "The Shining"
8-c, Margaret Wise Brown
9-a, Christopher Fry
10-d, "Ode to a Nightingale"

Answers to 'Bedtime Reading'

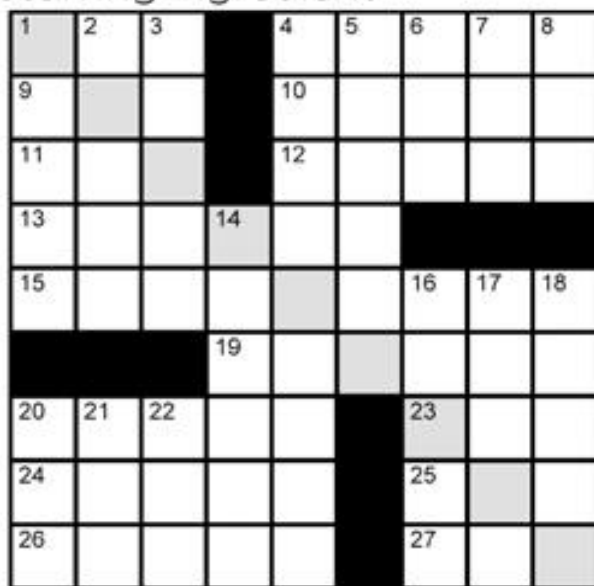
Stuffing ingredient

Across

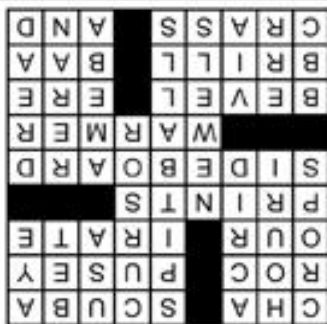
1. When doubled, a dance
4. Kind of diver
9. Mythical bird
10. U.S. educator
11. "Days of ___ Lives"
12. Choleric
13. Crime scene evidence
15. Buffet's kin
19. More hot
20. Cut at an angle
23. Poetic palindrome
24. European flatfish, related to the turbot
25. Bleat
26. Ill-mannered
27. Furthermore

Down

1. Riding whips
2. Muslim nymph
3. Bitter
4. Illegal pitches
5. Desktop arrow



6. Olympics chant
7. Wager
8. Affirmative vote
14. Staircase posts
16. Amorphous creature
17. Aired again
18. Apprehension
20. Telly network
21. Drop the ball
22. By means of



The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

How to clean your washing machine

Have you neglected to clean your washing machine? It can seem counter-intuitive at first -- this is the machine that CLEANS things, so shouldn't it, by definition, be clean?

Nope. Dirt and grime from all those dirty clothes don't wash away entirely and eventually builds up in your machine, as well as hard water minerals and possibly mold and mildew. So, then you're essentially washing clothes in dirty water. Yuck.

The good news is there's a cheap and easy fix. All you need is some white vinegar and a hot water cycle.

Run your machine on a hot cycle using about two cups of vinegar. Vinegar is great for cleaning and removing odors and as a bonus is non-toxic.

You should also consider scrubbing the inside of the machine with a vinegar and hot water mixture, including the soap dispenser, which gets especially gunky. Also get the rubber seals.

Another version, though similar, recommends using four cups of vinegar with the hottest setting and then pausing the cycle and letting it sit for an hour before continuing with the wash cycle. Then run it again, this time with one cup of baking soda.



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About Our Company

Mops & Buckets is a full-service residential cleaning company that operates in both Miami Dade and Broward Counties.

Services include general cleaning, deep cleaning, carpet cleaning, construction cleaning, move-in/out cleaning, and window washing.

Owner Christopher Dunlap has been in the cleaning industry for 10 years and feels it is important to provide cleaning services that place the utmost importance on the health and safety of his clients and employees. For that reason, Mops & Buckets is an active participant in the industry association ISSA (International Sanitary Supply Association). They also use Green Sealed Certified products to minimize toxins being released both in the environment and your home.

Eggs get a better rep

Eating eggs was once thought to be as bad as smoking cigarettes. But a new study debunks that idea.

A study published in the journal Heart, says eating a whole egg per day may lower your chance of developing cardiovascular disease. Researchers found a 26 percent decrease in the risk of hemorrhagic stroke, a 28 percent decrease in hemorrhagic stroke death, an 18 percent decrease in death resulting from cardiovascular disease, and a 12 percent decrease in ischemic heart disease.

All the devices, all at once: Wi-Fi 6 on its way

If you keep up with the latest gadgets, you might have noticed that some of this year's releases of laptops and phones boasted of Wi-Fi 6 compatibility.

But what does that mean?

It's the latest version of wireless capability, designed to increase speeds, reliability, and range. Or as an article in Wired pointed out, it's connectivity designed for a world where we have multiple devices running at once.

Wi-Fi standards are established by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers approximately every five years, with the last round in 2014. Amusingly enough, the geeky group only recently began giving its standards layman-friendly names like "Wi-Fi 6." Wi-Fi 6, in some circles, is also known as 802.11ax.

So why should you care? Only the devices that have been certified compatible can access Wi-Fi 6, which, says Wired, will allow more devices to simultaneously operate on the same Wi-Fi.

The result: your device could experience four times the capacity and four times the throughput, or how much data moves from one spot to another. There's also better security.

Most manufacturers aren't expected to fully adopt Wi-Fi 6-compatible equipment until next year, and the ones already out are significantly pricier than current models. But once everyone's on board, get ready -- you'll need new ways to keep your kids off their devices once they figure out everyone in the family can indeed stream at once.

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Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

~Mark Twain