



City of Wayne Newsletter

City of Wayne
Utilities

Volume 13 — Issue 10

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ENERGYWISE TIP ~ Infiltration

Infiltration! It sounds like a headline ripped off the daily news or part of a book title from a Tom Clancy action/thriller. You might dismiss what I will share as a conspiracy theory. However, you should know, this one likely involves you.

Consider the following:

- ◆ Everyone uses energy to heat and cool their homes. In fact, most Nebraska homes use four times more energy per year to keep them warm than to keep them cool. Thus, the forces of inadequate original construction and decay of building materials over time silently feed the infiltration monster hiding in so many homes. Ultimately, it leads to people asking, "Why is my electric bill so high?"
- ◆ Conspiracy? I ask you to consider these two deceptive energy wasters and view your home in a different dimension. It requires taking a "Twilight Zone" perspective. As Rod Serling would say, "It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition..." It is the realm of infiltration in your home!
- ◆ Infiltration is caused by wind, negative pressurization of the home, and air buoyancy forces combined with how these variables allow outdoor, unconditioned air into your living space. To put it simply, these intruders are leaks!
- ◆ Where do the biggest offenders occur? According to the Department of Energy:

- ◆ Floors, walls and ceilings (average 31%) - This includes recessed can lights that mount in an attic. If they aren't sealed and insulated, they can leak. Another common oversight is band joist areas, which are where the house's frame makes contact with the basement or foundation. This area on homes built prior to the 1970s was seldomly sealed, while newer homes may have missed proper sealing during construction.
- ◆ Ductwork (average 14%) - You might think since most ductwork is inside the space you're trying to heat and cool, leaky ducts don't matter. They do. They can create pressure imbalances that draw outside air into your home. Even in "tight" homes, all duct unions and joints must be sealed.
- ◆ Windows (average 10%) - Most people suspect windows as the main reason for energy loss in their home. In reality, unless your windows are of poor quality or have outlived their useful life, there's another lurking problem. While you might suspect the window itself, most infiltration usually occurs around the window and how it mounts through the wall. Caulk ages and cracks over time. If sealants weren't used when your windows were first installed, you might assume costly full-scale replacement is necessary over inexpensive retrofit sealing. The

bottom line: If you feel a draft around the trim of your windows on windy days, you've got infiltration. Seal it up!

- ◆ Fireplaces (average 14%) - Who doesn't love a toasty fire on a cold night? While ventless fireplaces and wood stoves are popular, their penetrations through an exterior wall often cause infiltration concerns. Done right, they provide an excellent source of heat and ambience. Done wrong, they literally send your heat up the chimney!
- ◆ Penetrations (average 10%) - Whether it's plumbing vents through the roof or dryer vents through the side of your home, inadequate sealing can allow unwanted air inside. Foam seal all penetrations to ensure no unwanted air from outside comes in, as well as any unwanted "critters."

Conspiracy? I think not.

Your local utility wants to help you make the most of the energy they provide you. If you'd like additional information on finding and reducing infiltration in your home, please reach out to them. You may be eligible for incentives to reduce the cost of energy efficiency improvements. Your local utility can update you on other incentive opportunities.

Inside this issue:

- Energywise Tip* 1
- Department News*
 - ◆ *Backflow Prevention* 2
 - ◆ *Green Notes*

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

October 6th

October 20th

NOTICE TO WAYNE UTILITY CUSTOMERS

City Hall is now open. However, we are still limiting the number of people into the building, as well as keeping the 6 feet of distance between the public.

We are still encouraging utility payments be made by using the City's on-line bill pay services or by calling (402) 375-1733 to pay by debit/credit card. Checks and cash (to closest dollar amount) can still be dropped off in the two drop boxes located in the front and back of

City Hall.

Thank you!!

Department News ~

Backflow Prevention ~

What is Backflow?

Backflow is the unwanted flow of used or non-potable water or other substance from any domestic, industrial or institutional piping system into the pure, potable water distributions system.

Why is Backflow Bad?

Backflow is bad because of the potential for hazardous chemicals to contaminate good drinking water which can result in serious illness.

Your garden water hose may be hazardous to your health.

Do you know the dangers of backflow?

A man sprays commercial weed killer containing an arsenic compound on the lawn using a garden hose attachment. After finishing, he disconnects the applicator. Since it is a hot day, he takes a drink of water from the hose. A short time later, he dies from arsenic poisoning.

How could this happen?

While the man was spraying weed

killer, the water pressure dropped, which resulted in the chemical being sucked back into the hose. Later, when he drank from the hose, the poison was in the water. He unknowingly poisoned himself.

When water flows backward through the water supply system, it is called "back siphonage" or "backflow." The danger comes when any hose, including a garden hose, is connected to a harmful substance. If the pressure in a water main drops while the hose is submerged in polluted or contaminated water, then the water (and whatever is in it) could be sucked back into the water pipes inside your home and into the drinking water supply. Water pressure drops are not uncommon. It can happen when firefighters battle a nearby blaze or before an authority crew repairs a broken water main on a nearby street.

Some harmful substances to be wary of are chemicals used to kill weeds, insects or lawn ferti-

lizers. The cleanser used around the kitchen sink could be hazardous if ingested, as could the bacteria in the water from a wading pool or waterbed.

Keeping your water safe from contaminants is easy. The following steps will help protect your drinking water:

- Never submerge hoses in buckets, pools, tubs or sinks. Keep the end of the hose clear of possible contaminants.

- Don't use spray attachments without a backflow prevention device.

Purchase and install inexpensive backflow prevention devices for all threaded faucets around your home. They are available at hardware stores and home-improvement centers.

WISE WORDS

"Before you judge a man, walk a mile in his shoes. After that, who cares?...He's a mile away and you've got his shoes!"

~Billy Connolly

Green Notes ~ Stuck with the Yuck?



If you've been wondering where you can take your yucky household hazardous waste items like oil & latex paint, cleaning chemicals, pesticides, aerosol cans, and even nail polish remover, try the City of Norfolk's Household Hazardous Waste Facility. This HHW Facility serves the entire Lower Elkhorn Natural Resource District, which includes all of Wayne County and surrounding areas. Located at 610 E Monroe Ave in Norfolk, it is open Mon thru Fri 7:30am to 5pm, and Sat 7:30am to noon. Only households are allowed to bring their HHW. Check the website for a list of acceptable items or call first with questions: **4 0 2 - 8 4 4 - 2 2 3 1** or <https://norfolkne.gov/government/depar>

[tments/solid-waste-division/household-hazardous-waste-facility.html](#). Other disposal options for businesses are listed on the website.

A reminder that our annual electronics recycling event has been postponed until next fall due to COVID-19. If you prefer not to wait, try Nebraska Electronics Recycling & Disposal in Norfolk. Call first at [402-750-6093](tel:402-750-6093) to confirm what they will take and if there are any fees.

For more tips on the Green Path to the Good Life, like the Wayne Green Team on Facebook or visit www.cityofwayne.org/greenteam.



The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting, buying, or securing financing for any housing. The prohibitions specifically cover discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability and the presence of children.

If you believe you may be a victim of housing discrimination, contact HUD 1-800-669-9777 or your local Fair Housing representative:

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YOUR CHOICE. YOUR RIGHT. YOUR HOME.

