

Ask Jon Eakes

Hidden Dangers in your Home: Canada-AM special series

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Welcome to JonEakes.com. I hope you found the special series on Hidden Dangers in your home interesting. Unfortunately in a few short minutes on TV I cannot say much, so here are links to more detailed information on each of these topics that you saw on TV. A thanks to CarsonDunlop, home inspectors in the GTA, for finding me the right houses to show you these problems:

CarsonDunlop.com.

RADON

Click here on RADON for more information. In the first article in the list that pops up you will find good general information and a hot link to a free download book from CMHC about Radon. In other entries you will see the Dranjer, a very effective dry floor trap specifically designed to stop radon from coming through your basement floor drains and sump pump pits.

HIGH POWERED KITCHEN FANS

Although backdrafting of chimneys by powerful exhaust fans can potentially kill you through carbon monoxide poisoning, for most of us it is a moderate pollution problem, which means it never shows up in medical records. In my experience I have found that it can be responsible for everything from strange odours in the house to nausea and flue like feelings that seemed to have no cause -- part of the sick building syndrome. I remember one interesting house where two smokers always smoked under the range hood when it was cold outside to keep from polluting the house, but in fact they were drawing musty attic air into the bedroom through the ceiling recessed lights. One lady living in a basement apartment, next to the furnace room, was constantly going to her doctor for strange flue like symptoms, until she heard one of my radio shows and stopped using her kitchen fan until a combustion air duct was installed next to the furnace. In both cases, once they understood what was happening, they were able to solve the problem. For a lot more information, click here on High Power Fans, which includes a link to download the summary of the National Research Council's research report.

ATTIC PROBLEMS CAUSED BY CEILING POT LIGHTS

For more details, including an animation of the problem as well as a hot link to the proper sealed light fixtures we showed on TV, click here on RECESSED LIGHTS IN INSULATED CEILINGS.

SHOWER TILES AND GROUT ARE NOT WATERPROOF

I don't know how many times I have had people tell me that the grout and caulking in their shower was perfect, there were no plumbing leaks and they still had either water spots on the ceiling below or tiles popping off the wall with mold behind. It wasn't until the guys at Schluter Systems taught me the building science about how much moisture actually does go through the grout in the form of vapour, not mentioning any cracks, that I came to understand the real need for a waterproof membrane right behind the tiles. Even concrete boards can hold a lot of water and although they won't rot, that stored water can cause problems. The real beauty of the system we showed on the TV show was that it allows the tiles to be adhered directly to the waterproofing layer with non-organic, inert thin-set mortar which will not support mould growth. Follow this link to Water Proof Showers to learn more.

Friday's Question session:

Where to get Air-Loc Pot lights?

Dealing with Iron Bacteria in water systems: Web search Iron Bacteria, but I will have a database entry on the whole subject soon. Check back in my database.

Moisture coming up through the floor of a new garage. Rather than trying to depend on french drains and waterproofing, arrange the landscaping to keep the water away from the garage. Click here for

more information on LANDSCAPING

Removing fog from the inside of a thermal pane window? Click THERMAL PANE for both DIY and commercial solutions.

Follow this link for a discussion on HUMIDITY LEVELS AND CONDENSATION in your home.

I want to thank Canada AM for the opportunity to raise your interest in these important topics and I just love the combination of TV and the Web as a means of giving you the in-depth information that we never have time to give you on TV. If you click on the Search tab on the top of this page you will have access to thousands of pages of home improvement questions and my answers gathered from my 40 years of radio and TV broadcast. I hope it is useful to you.

Jon

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