



NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 2010

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

When we arrived on site, we found water running out of the light fixture in the Family Room in the Basement into a pail that the insured had put in place. The textured ceiling had wet spots showing through and the seams opening up. The carpet was wet and the globe of the light fixture lay in pieces. There was a heavy moisture reading to the center beam dividing the Family Room and the Billiard Room. The drywall on the beam was starting to buckle from the water.

We went upstairs to the Main Floor to locate the area on this wall which is directly above the water damage below. These rooms have vaulted ceilings. We checked the interior partition wall between the Living Room and the Sun Room for moisture content. All readings were normal.



Directly above this point on wall is the roof valley that connects the main roof from the extended roof over the Main Floor, 1 storey extension. The gutter at the bottom of this valley was plugged with leaves which extended part way up the valley. On top of the leaves was the snow from the recent snow storm which had turned to ice from melting then freezing. The roof was covered in snow and the temperature was warming up melting the snow on the roof. The run off was puddling in the valley and could possibly be backing up under the flashing caused by the freezing. It was too dangerous for someone to go on the roof to investigate further, so we were able to clean out the gutter and clean the debris from the valley. Once we had done that the water running out of the light fixture stopped, so we thought we had resolved the cause.



We proceeded to move the contents, lift the carpet and remove the pad. Extraction was completed. The light beige Berber carpet was treated for mineral staining (commonly called brown out) and treated for Mildicide. Drying equipment was put in place. When we left that morning, we felt that the water backed up through the flashing from the cedar roof valley, ran down the trusses into the interior of the partition wall, down onto the beam in the basement and out onto the drywall ceiling. The drying process had commenced and appeared normal.

The insured left around noon and returned around 8 that evening. When they went down stairs to see how the room was drying out, they found water pouring through the ceiling fixture again. We responded to their call and decided to cut a hole in the ceiling at point of saturation to the drywall in the ceiling. We found a plumbing pipe and there is no plumbing to that section of the home. It could only be part of the radiant heating system. That morning, we had the boiler checked to see if the pressure was down. The pressure was normal at that time.



We went upstairs directly above the pipe and found an access panel in the wall behind the china cabinet. Upon opening the access panel, we found the distribution branch for the radiant heat in that part of the residence. One of the rubber hose piping (rubber is used because it is flexible enough to join the line in the floor with the connector to the branch line) had ruptured and was leaking. It had been installed in a standard partition wall rather than a mechanical wall (normally plumbing, air conditioning, or heating lines run in a mechanical wall constructed of 2 x 6 rather than 2 x 4). When the drywaller installed the drywall to the Sun Room side it squeezed the hoses into the rest of the line. It put pressure on the line causing it to rupture. When we repaired the line that ruptured, we found that some of the other lines had also been ruptured by the disturbance. We repaired all lines to insure that another occurrence like this one does not happen again. It will be recommended that a register is installed on the Sun Room side to give the additional room that a normal mechanical wall would allow.



The wall on both sides of the partition wall is showing heavy moisture content. We will allow them to dry naturally without a fan and leave the furniture away from the wall until it is dry. There is wallpaper on the Living Room side and paint on the Sun Room side.

Since the heating system is zone controlled, heat is called for through individual thermostats in each zone. When a zone is closed and not calling for heat, there is no circulation of water in the lines. When we tested the water in the morning, the water was cold running out of the light fixture. When we tested the water that evening the water was luke warm indicating it is coming from the heating system.



We believe that the zone that ruptured called for heat in the early morning hours, ruptured and started to leak into the basement ceiling in the Family Room. The insured found the damage when they went down to the basement and called us. The zone that caused the damage has a heavy traffic area for opening and closing of exterior doors, thus it called for heat constantly but was not delivering due to the rupture. Once we arrived on site, we started using the basement door for entry rather than the front door which allowed the zone's thermostat to stop calling for heat. It stopped calling for heat which means it closes the line at approximately the same time that we had cleared the debris from the roof valley and gutters. After the insured went out the thermostat called for heat again and the damage resumed.

The cost of this loss was \$ 5,000, however it could have been a lot worse since the open area concept of the basement would have produced more costs in repairing the water damage.

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