

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Have Any Gripes With Your Pipes?

(NAPSA)—Dealing with drains doesn't have to be a disaster. With a little common sense and preventive maintenance you can take steps to prevent plugged pipes. These tips will keep things flowing smoothly:

Clearing Out Clogs

Drains can narrow over time due to the accumulation of soap and hair. Drain maintenance products with organic enzymes can help break down the buildup and keep drains running freely.

When faced with a stubborn clog or slow drain in the bathroom or kitchen, start with low-tech approaches and gradually move up to bring in the "heavy hitters"—chemical drain cleaners.

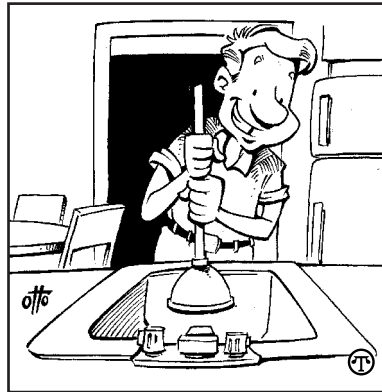
- The good old-fashioned bathroom plunger may help clear some clogs. To use a plunger correctly:

1. Block any overflow holes or other openings with a wet rag.

2. Apply a thick layer of petroleum jelly to the rim of the plunger to create a tight seal and greater suction.

3. Powerfully pump the plunger up and down at least 15-20 times, then stop to test whether water is drawing. If the drain is still slow, repeat the plunging again. When the clog is cleared, flush hot water through the drain for several minutes to clear out any remaining particles.

- For more stubborn clogs, try a commercially available product, such as Zep 10 Minute Hair Clog Remover. The product, available exclusively at The Home Depot, has a fast-acting formula strong enough to dissolve most hair clogs in the bathroom sink, shower or tub, but will not damage metal, plastic or brass plumbing or septic tanks.



GO WITH THE FLOW—The good old-fashioned plunger may help clear many clogs.

- Greasy clogs in the kitchen call for a more powerful drain cleaner. Zep's Heavy Duty Drain Opener is a thick liquid formula that pours straight through standing water and goes directly to the clog, breaking it up fast.

Remember, too, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. To protect bathroom pipes, invest a couple of dollars in a rubber or plastic hair catcher.

In the kitchen, don't pour greasy liquids into your kitchen sink or disposer. Grease solidifies as it cools and this clogs your pipes. Also, never empty coffee grounds in the disposer. Finally, once a week, pour an organic citrus cleaner or drain and disposer treatment down the drain to melt away any fat or grease that may have accumulated. For those with septic systems, using a specially-formulated septic treatment product on a regular basis can reduce septic system back-up.

Following these simple tips will help the water in your drains go with the flow.