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A Chinese belief says good things come in pairs; unfortunately, sometimes the bad do, too.

This regular series in the HeadsUp Homeowner Newsletter highlights situations when certain things you're noticing in your house may point to potential or current problems you may not be aware of.

Does your house have stains?

Have you driven down a residential street and noticed conspicuous rust-colored stains on the exterior of houses, or even on your house? The likely culprit is condensation draining from the secondary air conditioning drain pipe.

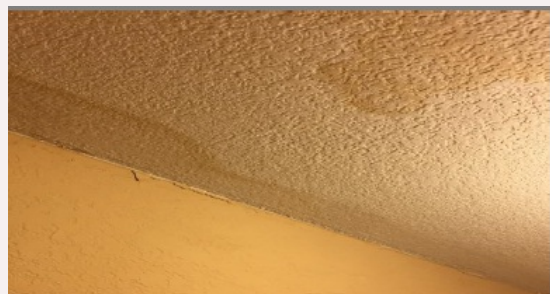


The reason it's called a "secondary" drain is because condensation moisture produced by



The secondary condensation drain system is for emergency drainage only when the **primary** condensation drainage is not operating properly. You may notice that the secondary drain pipe opening is usually placed above a window or door, or other conspicuous spot. This is so you will easily see the dripping condensation and know that there is a problem with the **primary** drainage. The rust color is evidence that condensation has been draining into the secondary pan long enough to rust the metal surface of the pan.

If the secondary drainage is ignored the homeowner may start to notice related damage, such as water stains on a ceiling under the location of an attic drain pan.



the air cooling process should always drain into the **primary** condensation drain directed to the plumbing drain system of the house. HVAC condensation should never be allowed to drain to exposed areas of the house, including open areas underneath the house.



By the time you notice a large rust-colored stain area it's obvious that the HVAC condensation system has been operating deficiently for a very long time, possibly years. The rust color comes from the secondary condensation pan from which the secondary condensation pipe drains. The secondary pan should never be receiving condensation either.

The secondary drain pan could have been receiving drainage for so long that the oxidation of the metal pan could be producing pin holes allowing moisture to drain directly on to the ceiling below, or if the secondary drain pipe is also blocked the condensation water may simply overflow the pan. Some systems are installed with overflow sensors which turn off the HVAC system if the secondary pan floods, which also alerts the homeowner to the problem.



It is highly recommended to have seasonal checkups by an HVAC professional to avoid these problems altogether.

Inspection of HVAC systems is part of the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) standards of practice (SOP) for basic home inspections. Learn more at HeadsUpHome.com

Seasonal Maintenance TIPS

A key to good house maintenance is to keep an eye out for anything that doesn't look right. It's currently deep in the summer and very dry; a time when noticing any unexplained moisture or pooling water should be suspicious.

Places you should not see an active and unknown source of water is on, in, or under the house. Such evidence would indicate a leak of some type, and/or malfunctioning mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning condensation drainage, or an open water heater pressure valve for example.

Pooling water in the yard should be investigated also, possibly caused by water line or sprinkler system damage, or if present, an overflowing septic system possibly.

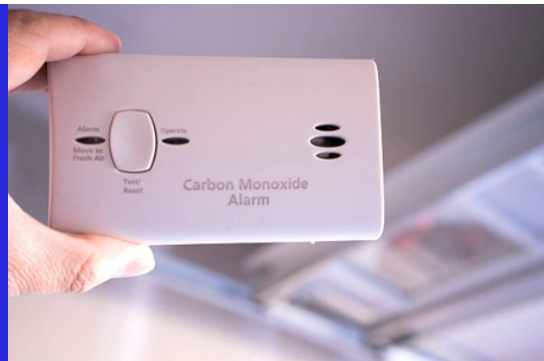
Uncontrolled and defective water and moisture conditions **will** cause physical maintenance problems in some way sooner or later. A plumbing professional will be the most

SAFETY CORNER

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is often referred to as the silent killer. This invisible, odorless gas is produced by a chemical reaction most often resulting from inefficient burning (combustion) of energy fuels (natural gas, propane, oil, etc.) in fuel burning appliances such as heater furnaces and water heaters, however, a vehicle left running in an attached garage can also cause infiltration of CO in the living area of the house.

Homeowners of houses with fuel burning appliances and/or an attached garage should install CO detectors following the instructions of the detector manufacturer.

authoritative resource to assess a suspicious water situation.



RESOURCES

Can I Help?

If you're noticing something questionable about your house, feel free to [email](#) a picture or description.

I'll be happy to respond as to what it is, what it could potentially affect, or help guide you to a resolution.

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