



Nick Schey is the owner of S3 Plumbing and Mechanical, LLC.

## Smart Plumbing

IDEAS TO KEEP YOUR HOME'S PLUMBING IN TOP SHAPE

**M**OST CAR OWNERS KNOW to get a regular oil change and tune-up, and they are reminded by the computers in their vehicles to do so. However, homeowners may not have their plumbing system inspected regularly. Consider purchasing an annual inspection agreement, at a minimum, so that a licensed plumber can make a routine inspection of the system and provide useful information regarding adjustments or repairs. It is much easier and less expensive to schedule routine repairs than making emergency repairs, and if there is damage, it takes more time to involve insurance and remediation companies.

### SMART STEPS TO TAKE

In residential, there are a lot of new products coming to market and many of them are smart. You can now control many aspects of your plumbing

system right from your phone. Here are some examples.

- Wi-Fi enabled Water Usage Monitors to inform you of sudden spikes or sustained usage while fixtures are “off” which may indicate a leak.
- Wi-Fi enabled Main Shutoff Valves which allow you turn off your water remotely if, for example, you have a spike in your usage while out of town but have no one to turn the valve off.
- Wi-Fi enabled Leak Sensors that can be placed inside sink cabinets and utility rooms (these require a power outlet). These sensors relay “leak” information back to your phone if water is detected on the sensor, allowing you to use the Wi-Fi enabled Main Shutoff Valve if you are away from your home.
- Wi-Fi enabled Sensors for your sump and

ejector pits that provide real-time feedback if the water level in those pits rises above normal levels. If water is rising above normal levels in the pit, this may indicate a faulty pump or backup, giving you more time to have it serviced before water appears on the floor.

### AVOID COMMON PLUMBING REPAIRS

**Hose Bibbs:** At the end of fall, before it gets cold, disconnect your garden hose from the hose bibb—the water spigot on the exterior of your home. If you leave the hose attached, it allows water to freeze inside the hose bibb, which will burst the assembly. This can lead to not only the expense of replacing the hose bibb, but also potential water damage inside the home.

**Food Disposals:** Put a strainer in your sink drain so that the strainer catches as much waste as possible. Minimize the amount of waste that goes to the disposal. This will prevent clogs in your plumbing system and lengthen the life of your disposal.

**Dishwashers and Washing Machines:** Though not in the scope of typical plumbing work, these appliances need to be cleaned and disinfected regularly to prevent bacteria and clogs at the drainage screens. There is a lot of information online about the dangers that can arise if these appliances are not cleaned properly—E.coli, salmonella, staph, rashes, allergies, etc. Try to look up the manufacturer and make of your dishwasher and washing machine online and read through the maintenance guide. Also be sure to replace the supply hoses every few years.


**Clogs:** Do not use chemical drain cleaners; you can Google why. If you think you have a minor clog in a toilet, use a plunger. If you think have a clog on a sink drain buy a Brasscraft “Hair Snake” product # BC00112 at a hardware store. They are about \$3.50 and will solve most problems if you are able to unthread the top of the drain assembly. Keep about five of these in a drawer at home and use them a few times a year to regularly clear out hair from shower drains, tub drains, and lavatory sink drains.

**Flushable Wipes:** Do not use these. Your drains, ejector pump, and wallet will thank you.

**Frozen Pipes:** Imagine for a moment that there is another polar vortex in Illinois and it's -20. If you have plumbing in your garage or above it,

keep those garage doors closed to prevent those pipes from freezing and bursting. If you have plumbing on exterior walls, open the cabinet doors and allow warm air in. If you have exterior water lines that are not heated, remember to have them blown out with air and closed off so that they cannot freeze and burst.

Having a mindset to maintain your home's plumbing on a regular basis can prevent larger, costly problems over time. Consider smart devices to stay informed and have remote control. For peace of mind, a professional licensed plumber can help keep your home's plumbing in top shape.

To learn more, visit [S3 Plumbing & Mechanical online at s3pm.com](http://S3 Plumbing & Mechanical online at s3pm.com), or call 847-783-0033. 



Having grown up in the Barrington area, Nick Schey attended Montessori in North Barrington, then Saint Anne in Barrington, and Saint Viator High School in Arlington Heights where he was a two-year captain on the Varsity Football Team. After high school, he attended The University of Chicago where he was a Captain on the Football team and earned a BA in Economics. Later, Nick attended Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul where he earned an MBA in Corporate Finance and Valuation.

Growing up, Nick worked at his dad's plumbing company in middle school doing filing in the office, then digging undergrounds in the field in high school, and later generating various productivity and expense reports in college and grad school. Having that exposure to entrepreneurship and "how" a business operates gave Nick a unique advantage later in life when it came time to start his own career. And it certainly didn't hurt that Bill Schey (Nick's father) instilled in Nick a laser-focused work ethic.

Prior to S3, Nick's professional background was in Corporate Finance and he started his career in Oak Brook at the corporate office of a nationwide highway construction services company. The overarching goal was to accelerate acquisitions and take the company public. However, in 2009, that dream began to unravel. In June 2010, S 3 Plumbing and Mechanical, LLC. was born with its owner a third-generation plumber. Nick and his wife, Allie, have two young children—Madeline and William—live in Barrington, and have rescued three dogs together from a Barrington Hills animal rescue.

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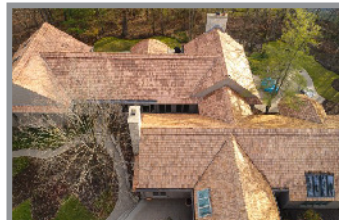
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