



Industry Challenges Bring Changes, Opportunities.



The first quarter of every year gives us a chance to look back on the previous one. I hope you have as much to celebrate as we do. Despite a tough job market, we have hired four outstanding new team members. We expanded our client base due to outstanding customer service. We completed a renovation of our Cortland headquarters, and were able to make a major contribution to the

Suggett Park basketball court improvements.

However, not everyone was as lucky as we have been. Buffalo is still recovering from a disastrous blizzard, while other parts of the country were devastated by fire, flood and even earthquakes. Hurricane Ian was the largest and most deadly hurricane to strike Florida in nearly a century, causing flooding in several states. Meanwhile, other parts of the south and west are in a drought. Wildfires in Arizona, California, Colorado and New Mexico destroyed thousands of properties and millions of acres. These natural disasters, coupled with supply chain issues have wreaked havoc in the insurance industry.

Insurance companies throughout the country and the world are examining their policy forms to try and account for billions of dollars in insurance settlements. Due to inflation, supply chain issues and the increased costs of materials, the average cost of an auto or property damage claim have gone up dramatically, and insurance carriers are facing tough decisions about staffing and rate increases to offset their losses.

What does all this mean for you? It likely means that you will see increases in both your home and your auto premiums, regardless of your insurance carrier. But, you do have options. Making sure that your policy is written correctly, and that you're taking advantage of any discounts is where we come in.

If you're looking for resolutions for 2023, make talking to your agent one of them. Working with an independent agent that you can trust will help make sure that you're protected, at a cost that you can afford. We hope you have a happy and healthy 2023.

Stephen D. Franco, CIC
President

Water: The most destructive element on the planet

We all know the power of Niagara Falls, or the strength of an ocean wave, but if you're a homeowner, you may be surprised to learn that the bulk of water damage to a home isn't due to natural disasters or flooding. It's actually due to unchecked plumbing issues that lurk on the property — things like slow leaks, corroded pipes, and degraded valves and supply lines. Even your water make-up can be a culprit.

Fortunately, many of these issues are preventable with some basic, proactive home maintenance.

Do you want to reduce the chances of water damage in your house? Here are some home maintenance tips that we recommend:

1. Locate your main water shutoff valve and learn how to turn it on and off

Knowing how to turn off your main water valve is critical in the event of a burst pipe or other water emergency. In many homes, the valve is located on an exterior wall of the home, in the garage, or in the basement. If you have a public water supply, the main water valve is typically on the street-side of your home. For homeowners who have wells, the main water valve will most likely be located on the same side of the house as your well. Typically, to turn off the main water valve, you simply turn the valve handle clockwise until it stops. Closing the valve should shut off all water supply into your home in the event of a leak, or if a repair is needed.

2. Have your plumbing systems professionally inspected

If you're unfamiliar with your plumbing system or have concerns about it, have a licensed plumber inspect it for any issues (or signs of impending ones). One good tip is to ask the plumber to tag your main water valve — as well as any other important plumbing valves — for example, with a red flag or piece of tape. This can help you locate them more quickly in an emergency.

3. Visually inspect your pipes regularly

You don't have to be a professional plumber to recognize potential problems with your pipes. It's a good idea to regularly walk through your home to take a closer look at any exposed pipes, fittings, valves and supply lines you can see. You'll want to look for signs of damage. These can include things like:

- Discoloration on metal pipes (blue, green, yellow, or white, usually)
- Cracking or crimping of plastic, PEX, or polymer parts
- Deposits or rust-like build-up
- Frayed metal on braided supply hoses, as well as discoloration

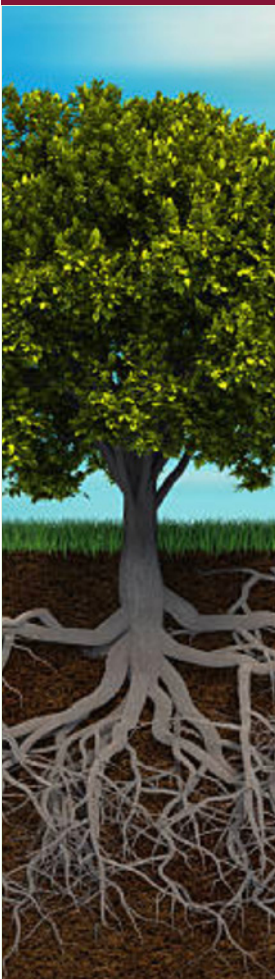
If you spot any of these issues, consider having a licensed plumber proactively replace the part. If left unchecked, they could lead to bigger (and more expensive) problems down the line.

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A few safety checks each year can save you from some big problems.

Fallen Trees – Who's Really Responsible?



Trees can be tricky, but for the most part homeowners are responsible for what falls into their own yard. So if a storm causes your neighbor's tree to fall in your yard, your homeowners insurance could help cover the cost of removing the tree and remedying the damage it caused on your property, after your deductible.

The same is true in reverse: If a tree on your property falls in your neighbor's yard, your neighbor should contact his or her insurance company to determine what type of coverage is available for damage or cleanup in their yard.

In most cases, neighbors are able to work things out without too much trouble. Depending on the extent of the damage, you may need to file a homeowners insurance claim. Your homeowners insurance may or may not cover the cost of tree cleanup, depending on your policy and the company you work with.

If there's ever an issue between neighbors, you can rely on your agent at Bailey Place and your claims adjuster to help straighten everything out. Our friends at Erie Insurance helped out with some valuable advice.

The Claims Process

If a tree falls on your house, the first thing to do, if it's safe, is to try to prevent further damage to your home and property. Make sure to take some photos to document what happened. Then call your insurance agent, who can explain your options and help you understand if and how to file a claim. When you file a claim, a claims adjuster will come by to evaluate the damage and explain how your homeowners coverage comes into play. It's recommended that you call your claims adjuster before you contract to have the tree removed.

Sometimes trees fall on cars. If it's not safe or possible to remove the tree from the car yourself, you should call a professional to remove it. (Again, talk to your insurance agent and a claims adjuster first and take a few photos of the fallen tree on your car.) Depending on the damage and terms of your insurance coverage, the optional comprehensive coverage you may have under your auto policy could provide coverage for the loss.

Preventing Tree Damage

Preventive measures matter when it comes to trees. Start by looking for signs of distress such as dead limbs, cracks in the trunk or major limbs, leaning to one side and branches that are close to a house or power line. Mushroom growth on the roots or bark can also signal trouble.

Homeowners should be concerned about the health of their trees. It's possible for you to be held responsible for resulting damage to your neighbor's house or property, if your tree falls due (in whole or part) to your own neglect. One of the best things to do is to regularly have large trees trimmed by an insured contractor.

McGraw Box Brewery

– Same Family – New Adventure

Seventy years ago a family-run factory in McGraw was hand-crafting quality wood products. Today, that same family is still in business, as McGraw Box Brewing. The brewery is a new endeavor for the Ousby family, located in McGraw, NY and provides craft beers of all types along with New York State ciders from Critz Farms and wines from Owera Vineyards.

A third-generation business built on a foundation of history and dedication, the factory buildings were transformed from a wood products facility to a microbrewery. While the operation has changed, the focus of providing quality products remains the same. "Our attention to detail provides great tasting IPA's, sours, lagers and stouts," said Tina Ousby, who co-owns the company with her husband Chris. "Our head brewer Mike and assistant brewer Matt strive to produce flavors that are sure to please the tastebuds."

Even if you're not a microbrew connoisseur, McGraw Box always has something fun going on. The facility is family and pet friendly, with plenty of room to relax and enjoy yourself while sampling one of our 20 microbrews. Play a game of giant Jenga, giant Connect 4, join a cornhole game or play table top ring toss. They offer outdoor seating overlooking Trout and Smith Brooks, and also on the snowmobile trail, and look forward to having you stop in to warm up this winter.

Customer Spotlight



Tina and Chris Ousby host a variety of events at their family-owned brewery in McGraw.

Wednesdays has featured cornhole tournaments and country line dancing lessons. Thursday night is Trivia Night. You will often find live music and food trucks on Friday and Saturday nights, pitch tournaments, and other community events.

Have an event you want to host? "Our event room is the perfect solution for Bridal/Baby showers, holiday parties, graduations, birthday parties, small wedding receptions, or any event," Tina said.

McGraw Box Brewery is located at 1 Spring St, McGraw, NY. You can learn more at mcgrawboxbrewing.com and sign up for email alerts or follow along on Facebook and Instagram for up to date event schedules.

John Joseph Inn

– More than a Wedding Venue

Ithaca native John Hamilton visited the historic Rose Inn, site of his marriage, after it had been destroyed by a fire years earlier. Immediately recognizing the value of restoring and preserving a place both he and the community held so dear, John was able to realize his dreams of operating an exceptional full service inn and restaurant, and decided to embark on a new journey.

Since opening as the John Joseph Inn in 2006, it has become synonymous with Finger Lakes weddings, luxury accommodations and extraordinary culinary experiences. Situated minutes from downtown Ithaca and Cornell University, the John Joseph Inn has eight guest suites onsite and is an ideal spot if you're looking for a relaxing getaway. The inn and surrounding grounds also act as the perfect place to host your next corporate retreat or special event in the Finger Lakes.

"We are ideal for weddings, but love to host your corporate events too," John explains. "Our conservatory features a fireplace room, stylish furniture and access to many audio visual needs."

During your event, you'll have complete access to John's culinary prowess, and thirteen acres of manicured gardens to explore throughout your stay.

The inn also hosts specialty chef's tasting during the wedding off season that are not to be missed! As a graduate of the world-renowned Culinary Institute of America, John takes great pride in his culinary offerings and genuinely loves

Customer Spotlight



John Hamilton and his team at the John Joseph Inn are happy to host all kinds of events.

creating dining experiences that guests will not only remember, but talk about, for years to come. Explaining the 5 course chef's tasting, John says every ingredient is carefully selected "to nourish the senses and gratify the soul."

John and the entire John Joseph Inn team thrive on creating exceptional guest experiences, and look forward to being at the heart of Finger Lakes hospitality for years to come. To learn more, please visit www.johnjosephinn.com.

Getting to Know You

Bailey Place is proud to announce the addition of our two newest account managers. Both Tom and Brooke work in our Cortland headquarters. Stop in the office, say hello, and let them help you with your home or auto insurance.

Brooke Preston

Hometown: Cortland

Hobbies: Playing in a women's Pitch league

Pets: Two lab dogs, Rebel and Belle

Favorite drink: Fun flavored margaritas

Pineapple on pizza? NO

Current Book: Lot's of books with her three young children

Favorite Vacation Spot: The beach

What do you enjoy about insurance? I like meeting new people and helping them protect their families.

Tom Conlon

Hometown: Cortland

Hobbies: Bocce Ball

Sports Team: NY Mets, unfortunately

Favorite drink: Heineken

Pineapple on pizza? Absolutely not

Current Book: The Guns of August

Favorite Vacation Spot: Washington DC

What do you enjoy about insurance? I like helping people. Insurance can be confusing and expensive, so I enjoy working with clients to find them the right product.

Bizarre Real-Life Insurance Claims

Real (and really odd) excuses about car accidents made for insurance claims:

- **"Going to work at 7 am this morning I drove out of my drive straight into a bus. The bus was 5 minutes early."**
- **"I didn't think the speed limit applied after midnight"**
- **"In an attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole."**
- **Q: Could either driver have done anything to avoid the accident?
A: Travelled by bus?**
- **"An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car and vanished."**
- **"I thought my window was down, but I found it was up when I put my head through it."**
- **"I had been driving for forty years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident."**
- **"As I approached an intersection a sign suddenly appeared in a place where no stop sign had ever appeared before."**

BAILEY PLACE

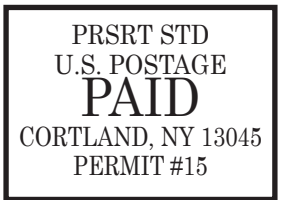
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4. Watch for evidence of slow or weeping leaks

Not all leaks are obvious. In fact, slow leaks can be some of the most insidious, as they're often very difficult to spot before a larger problem occurs. Routinely check your appliances, such as your washing machine, dishwasher, or even fixtures, and the area around your appliances for signs of leaks.

Look in cabinets and areas that have pipes connecting to appliances or fixtures (under the kitchen sink, for example) for telltale signs. Is there discoloration or damage on the wood below a pipe or fitting? Is the paint peeling? These environmental signs could point to a slow leak.

5. Tag or label any items you replace or repair

If you do end up having a licensed plumber replace a part or make a repair, be sure to label the item with the date it was replaced or repaired and keep records of the work done. Plumbing fixtures have a set lifespan and knowing when you last replaced or repaired a part can help you plan ahead for a maintenance check of that fixture.

6. Have your water tested

The chemical make-up of your water can lead to corrosion. Mineral content, pH, and chlorides are examples of water characteristics that should be measured and controlled to prevent issues with your plumbing system. This is especially important if you own a well. Consider having your water tested and treated, if necessary, by a certified professional to help guard against an often-overlooked threat to your home's plumbing.

7. Inspect and replace toilet supply lines and valves proactively

Just as you inspect your exposed pipes, you should also check your toilet supply lines and valves regularly. Make sure the supply hoses going to and from your toilets are in good condition and consider



replacing them if they have signs of wear and tear or are more than a few years old. Read the installation instructions carefully and do not overtighten connections. Many of these products are installed hand-tight only, which means don't use a wrench. You should also open your toilet tank and evaluate the flushing valve for signs of degradation, including crazing, cracking, or discoloration of plastic components.