

If You Still Have Kitec or Rehau Plumbing Installed, You Must Read This!

Imagine! You arise from your bed in the morning, put your feet on the floor, and the carpet under your feet is WET! If you happen to have a dog or cat in the house, you wonder to your self "...could it be?" But, then (as you get fully awake), you find the "wet" is much more than such a little companion could account for. You realize your floor has been flooded--while you were asleep!

That is what recently happened to some SCA members in a Villas neighborhood. "The problem" they discovered was their Kitec plumbing had burst and flooded their bedroom. Their retirement life was instantly converted into an emergency struggle to stop the flooding before it ruined their furnishings, destroyed personal belongings, and seriously damaged their finances.

The one fortunate part of this disaster was they were not away on a trip like so many SCA residents at this time of year. Otherwise, their entire home might have been flooded over a period of days, and they might have returned to the kind of flooding disasters found in other parts of the country this year.

Our elderly neighbors live in a Villa duplex with the original Kitec plumbing as built by Del Webb. Do you (or someone you know with a Del Webb/Pulte home) still have Kitec or Rehau installed? If so, keep reading. You might be the next victim of such unnecessary leaking and/or flooding!

Our fellow homeowners were quite aware of the Kitec problem, and they believed they had properly completed and submitted the paperwork as required. They had been working hard for many months to try to get Del Webb/Pulte to pay them the \$7,800 that was agreed to as its standard Kitec repair settlement offer. But, the developer had stalled and stalled. Phone calls were not returned. When contact was finally made, the developer's representatives claimed they could not find the member's paperwork, and refused to do anything.

Del Webb/Pulte told them there would be no more Kitec cash settlements and directed our fellow members to contact the law firm handling the class action law suit. They did so—only to learn that their names were also not in those records. As they got bounced back and forth, seeking some solution, a lot of time passed by. It was like being in the "twilight zone" for many months.

Unfortunately, since they were not scientists or construction experts, and since they were not provided any factual information by our association, our fellow SCA homeowners did not realize that the time-bombs we know as "yellow-brass plumbing fittings" in their home were already at very high risk of failing. The Kitec system installed by Del Webb in their villa duplex was already many years past its known failure period. Every day our friends used water, the Kitec system was steadily heading towards certain failure!

But, to return to the morning of the flooding. Our SCA homeowners knew they had an emergency that could not wait for a routine solution. It was obvious they needed to take immediate action to stop the water leaks and try to preserve their furnishings and personal belongings. There was no time to struggle with what they had learned was an unresponsive and uncaring Del Webb/Pulte service organization.

After shutting of the master water supply, an emergency clean-up firm in Las Vegas was called. It did not take long for the firm to discover that the Kitec plumbing system was the source of the flooding. In fact, once they were told the house had Kitec plumbing, they knew immediately what to do. The company moved the large bed and headboard, and cut a large hole in the bedroom wall to expose some leaking Kitec system components. Temporary repairs were accomplished.

Meanwhile, the water had ruined the bedroom carpet and padding, and there was evidence of mold inside the wall due to prior leaking. Other Kitec leaks in other walls could be easily projected. And, among the seriously damaged furnishings from the initial flooding were expensive bedroom wall unit and integrated head board components. The items were water soaked and warped.

It took many hours of contractor cleanup and expense to rid the home of dampness, and to be able to report it as "mold free" in the exposed areas. Now, at their own expense, our fellow SCA members have had to call other plumbers and pay to have the entire Kitec re-piping and repairs done--without any help from Del Webb/Pulte. The plumbers will be working through the "Labor Day" holiday weekend to get finished. Our neighbors will also have to deal with the hassles and expenses of repairing or replacing the water-damaged furnishings and personal items.

In a few weeks, the nightmare that started with a flooded bedroom will finally be over. But, our neighbors expect to have to spend well over \$10,000, and to invest massive time and efforts towards getting compensated. Of course, the members have already been working with their home insurance company, but is not yet clear how the financial settlements among all those involved will end up. One thing is certain; elderly homeowners having to deal with such a flooding problem is a personal disaster. In our opinion, it should be considered "elder abuse" to subject such elderly individuals to known and easily avoidable construction defects.

Finally, we should be asking, where were our Board Presidents and other Directors during the past few years while this plumbing fiasco has played out? Why have most of our directors not been trying to avoid such disasters within our community? In spite of widespread knowledge of Las Vegas-wide plumbing problems by our association attorney and most SCA Board Members, it seems

clear that our Directors and Board Officers have systematically protected the developer's financial interests to the expense of our community members.

If you think those might be unfair allegations, check out the facts for yourself. Dig into the full story of Las Vegas plumbing defects and the problems “yellow-brass” have caused in home plumbing systems in the southern Nevada area in the past decade. Dig into why your boards have blocked efforts by community volunteer engineers and scientists to help educate our members. Why would our Board Officers block such efforts to initiate a standing committee to help educate homeowners on the issues and options on dealing with defective plumbing systems and other major construction defects? Tell us if you can not conclude that most of our SCA Directors have favored the developer's interests over the homeowners.

Bottom Line: if you have not had your Kitec system re-piped, or if you have the Rehau system and it has not had the yellow-brass components replaced, you are seriously at risk of experiencing leaks that could cause a flooding situation like our neighbors in the villas—or worse. SCA members need to be fully informed on their plumbing system situation, and to ensure that repairs are done before hidden leaks begin.

Anthem VOICE