Plumbers prepare for "Brown Friday"

Service calls expected to spike during the holiday weekend

Originally Published November 25, 2021: https://www.fox13now.com/news/local-news/plumbers-prepare-for-brown-friday

SALT LAKE CITY — Retailers aren't the only ones who are busy on Black Friday. Plumbers across the state anticipate a spike in calls for service in the wake of Thanksgiving festivities.

According to Jared Bytendorp, director of plumbing for Black Diamond Experts, this is because families typically cook more and invite a larger crowd over to celebrate the holiday. This translates to a rise in requests from people looking for help unclogging their sinks and toilets.

"It puts extra stress on the plumbing system, the toilets particularly," said Bytendorp. "The same with the disposals... so there's a lot of drain clogs and toilet issues, usually the day after Thanksgiving."

Black Diamond Experts, a home service company based in Salt Lake City that offers plumbing, heating, air, and electrical services, usually sees a 25-30% increase in service calls on Black Friday, but calls start coming in as early as Thanksgiving itself. Due to the volume of calls, some people usually end up waiting until Black Friday.

"It does put a strain on our system, we usually get to most of that the day after," said Bytendorp. "If they're backing up and holding, then we make it a priority to get to them first."

As for what people can do to mitigate possible plumbing problems, Bytendorp offers a few pieces of advice.

"Watch what you're putting down the drains," said Bytendorp. "Make sure you're not putting stuff down there like the grease and stuff that's going to back it up."

Sometimes, you may be able to clear up a clog on your own with a little bit of work before calling for professional help.

"I would start with the simple stuff," said Bytendorp. "Clear out the P trap, see how far the drain is, toilet plunge... use those kind of remedies first, and then call a professional."

In the event that an attempt to unclog the drain isn't working out, you may be tempted to reach for chemical solutions to break up the clog. However, you may want to think twice before pouring such substances down a clogged drain.

"I generally don't recommend any kind of chemicals to do that," said Bytendorp. "Because once they don't get it cleared with that, we got to come with our snakes, and it usually splashes in our techs' faces."