

Imagination leading to innovation

Thomas Dudley applies some creative thought to solve common problems with equilibrium float valves...

There are many historical examples of great inventions arising from the frustrations of ordinary people simply trying to do their jobs.

Percy Shaw found driving in the dark difficult until a cat stepping into the beam of his car headlights gave him the inspiration to develop the cats eye.

Hungarian journalist, Ladislo Biro invented the first ballpoint pen after noticing that ink used in newspaper printing dried quickly, leaving paper smudge-free. He decided to create a pen using the same type of ink.

Just two examples of advances made by

people prepared to find creative solutions to common problems.

Thomas Dudley Ltd has used this approach for many years – resulting in products such as the Dudley Turbo range of two-part syphons that enable servicing of the syphon to be carried out without the need to disconnect the water supply or dismantle the cistern. More recently the Dudley Vantage concealed cistern was developed with the skills shortage in mind – leading to a product that can be installed in less than half the time of traditional concealed cisterns.

The Company has now employed this tried

and tested approach in the development of its new WRAS approved range of quiet, compact Dudley Hydroflo equilibrium float valves for use in WC cisterns.

A survey of plumbers revealed that two common problems repeatedly arose with equilibrium float valves: firstly the filter is often difficult to remove for cleaning. The normal method is to use a screwdriver or other sharp tool to prise the filter out of the valve. This is far from ideal and results in many filters being lost or accidentally punctured and rendered useless.

To combat this, every Dudley Hydroflo has a 'filter-friendly' plastic key attached to the head of the valve, allowing quick, easy and secure removal of the filter without any risk of damage. When the filter is removed, it's attached to the key – removing the risk of the filter falling into the cistern or even WC pan.

Ivan Isherwood, Joint Managing Director says: "We demonstrated the Hydroflo at three shows during 2002 and the filter removal key was warmly welcomed by installers – a simple solution to a long standing problem!"

The second common complaint with existing float valves on the market is that the float stem has to be 'snapped' into position in the float arm. This can leave the float stem badly kinked and the float may become detached.

Once again, Thomas Dudley Ltd provide a reliable and permanent solution through Hydroflo float valves having a unusually designed float stem that is easily screwed through a special opening in the float arm. This eliminates any kinking of the float stem and also, Thomas Dudley states, makes it impossible for the float to become detached from the arm once the valve is fitted into the cistern and in use. A ratchet on the float arm enables precise water level adjustments to be made and once set the float level stays firmly in place.

Furthermore, Hydroflo float valves comply with the requirements of BS1212 Part 4 – passing rigorous 200,000 cycle endurance tests and a 0.5 – 14 bar pressure test. Every valve is 100% tested before leaving the factory and comes complete with a lay flat silence tube for extremely quiet filling.

Hydroflo valves are, apparently, unique in featuring two backflow prevention devices. An air break above the silence tube and a special membrane inside the head of the valve combine to offer one of the safest float valves available.

Bottom and side inlet versions are available through most plumbers merchants. **ENQUIRY NUMBER 120**



(above) The Dudley Hydroflo has a 'filter-friendly' plastic key attached to the head of the valve.