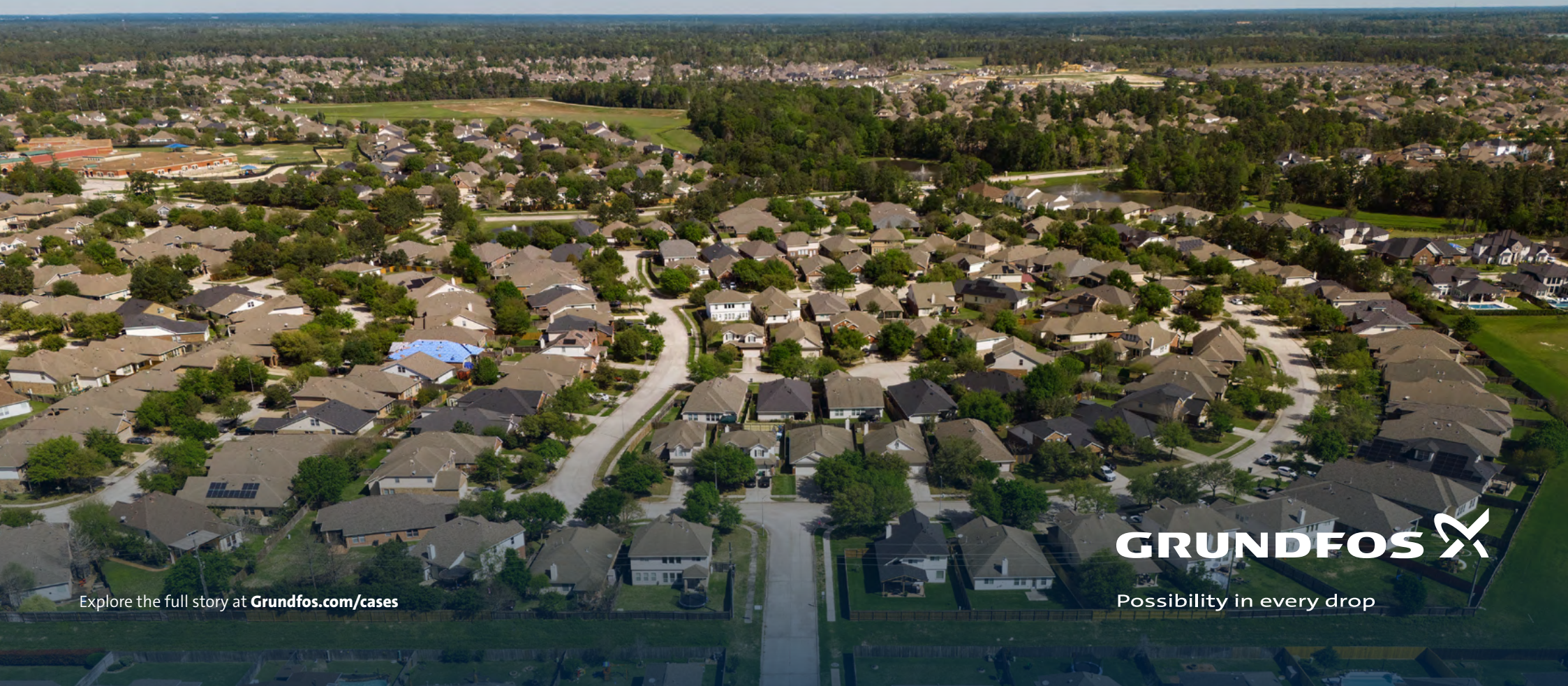
Case | Houston, Texas, USA

Hot water in seconds
Boosting comfort while saving water



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GRUNDFOS

Possibility in every drop

“I love to save money any way I can. I love the comfort. But if I can save money on the water bill, that’s what it’s all about.”

Richie Stansifer, homeowner

The Stansifers used to wait three to five minutes for hot water to arrive to their faucets. Their problem was not unique from their 20+ year-old home in a suburb of Houston, Texas. After a simple installation of a Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT hot water recirculating pump, the family now gets hot water in seconds, saving water and money.

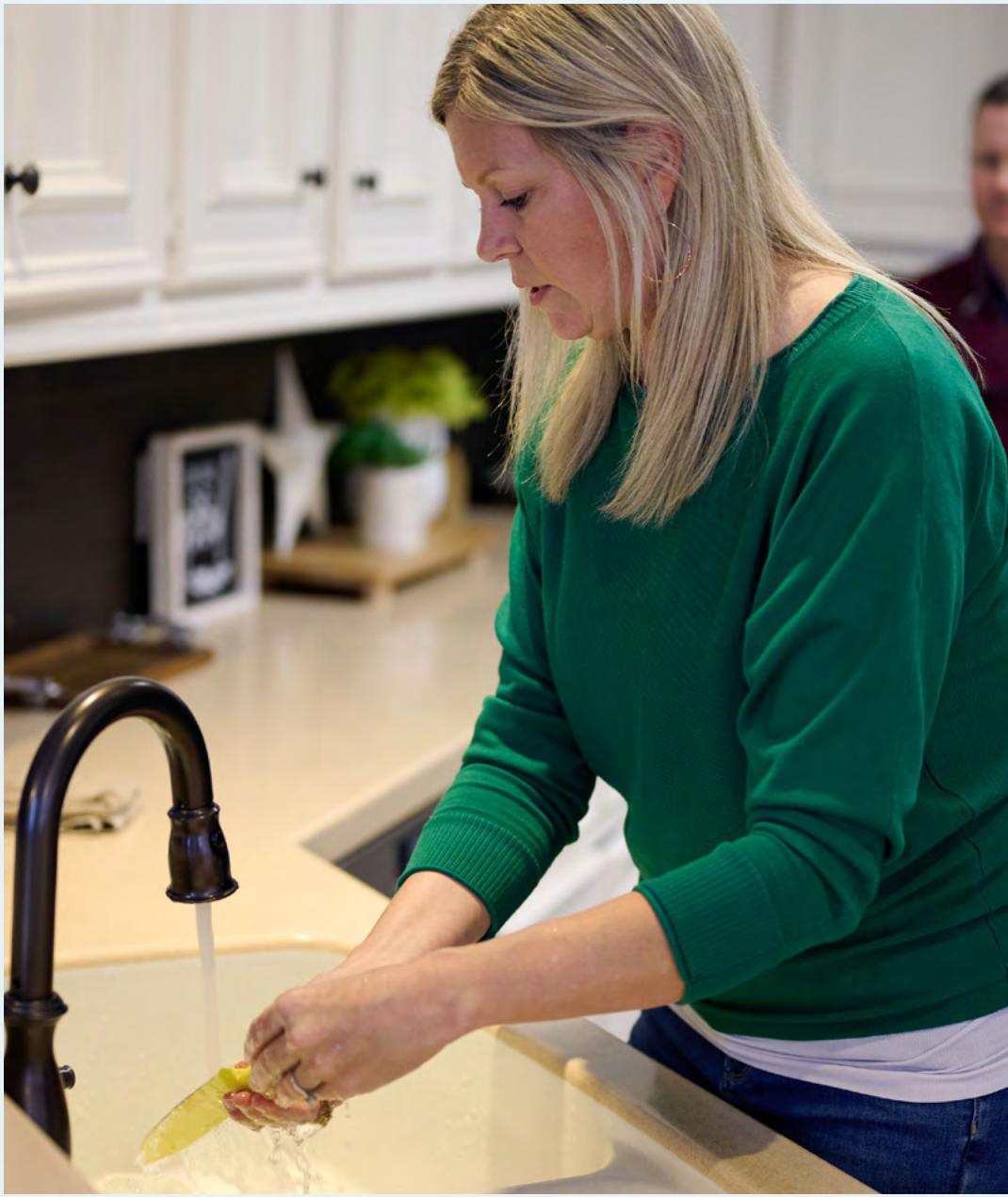
The situation

Richie Stansifer’s family knows how to wait for hot water. Since they moved into their home in Klein, Texas (a suburb of Houston) 13 years ago, taking a shower meant turning on the water long before getting in.

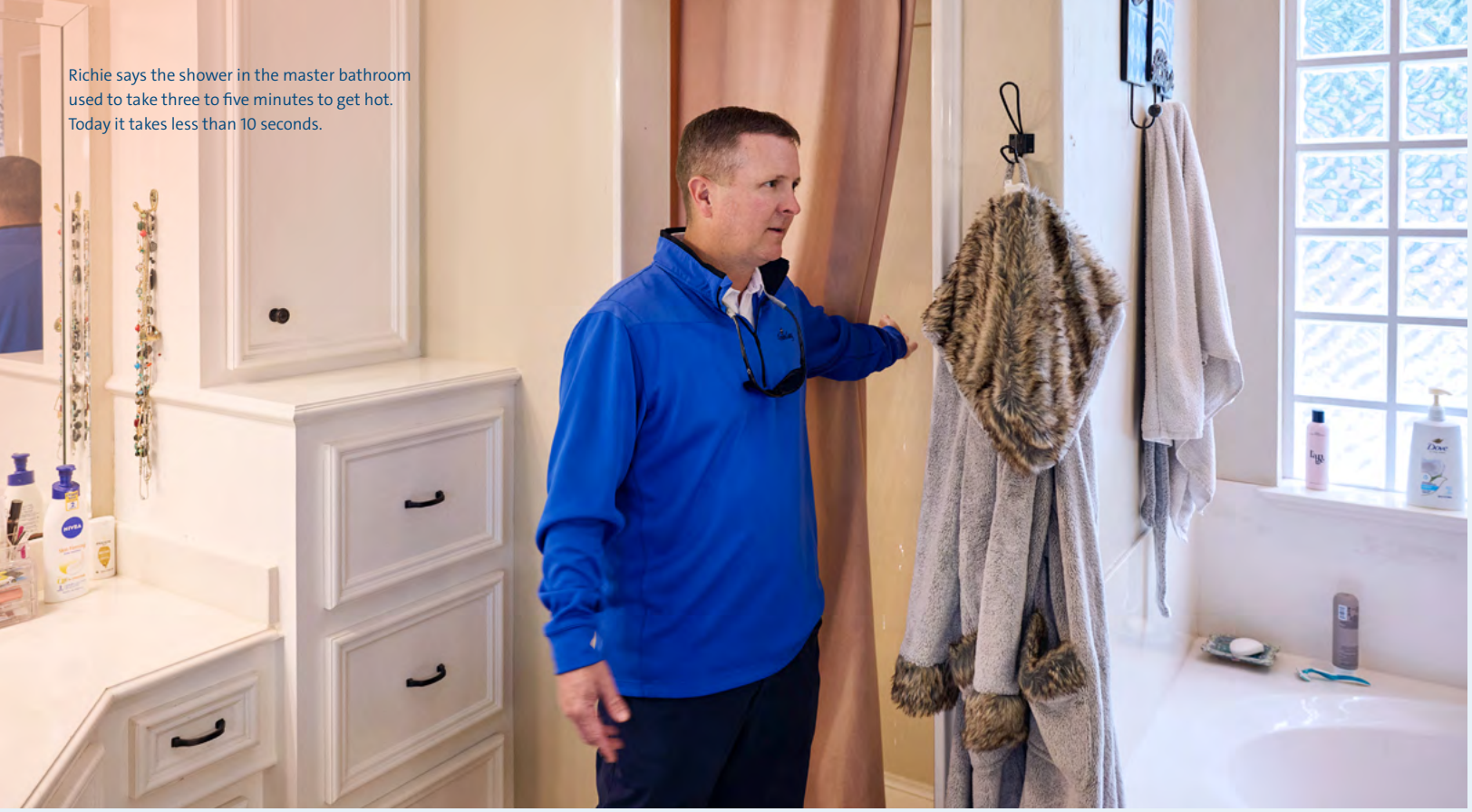
“In the mornings I used to turn on the shower, go into the kitchen and get the coffee started, and then come back to the shower and it would just be getting hot,” Richie says.

“It took at least three minutes.” Richie, who works for plumbing distributor Ferguson, explains that the house came with two tankless water heaters. “In the past, when I turned on the hot water, a tankless heater would crank up and start heating the water. And then the water had to go through the coils and flush out the line – and it would take that long for the hot water to get down to the master bath.”

Richie, telling the story in the master bathroom, is joined by Myron Grimes from Grundfos representative company PMI Sales & Marketing. Myron says, “It’s what we call a ‘cold-water sandwich,’ where even though this runs for hours or 30 seconds, you’re always going to have a slug of cold water that's still in that line.”



Kelly Stansifer washes dishes in hot water that comes instantly to the kitchen tap. Richie (background) says of his family of four, “It has different benefits for all of us, but for me it means saving on water bills.”



Richie says the shower in the master bathroom used to take three to five minutes to get hot. Today it takes less than 10 seconds.

“There’s about 6 million people in Houston. If everybody saved this much time to get hot water, it would save millions of gallons of water.”

Richie Stansifer, homeowner

The solution

About a half year ago, the Stansifers had a Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT hot water recirculation pump installed. “Being in the plumbing wholesale business, I knew what a recirculation pump was,” Richie says, adding he wanted to test one at home. “As soon as they were done installing it, I came home to check it out.”

Richie demonstrates by turning on the shower. “See it’s already getting hot. That’s less than 10 seconds. That’s pretty awesome,” he says.

Myron Grimes explains the concept behind the Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT. “We’re adding a small pump, not much bigger than a grapefruit,” Myron says, “We also add a small T crossover valve that goes under a fixture in the cabinet out of sight. So, we’re creating a loop for the hot water to transfer from fixture to fixture to fixture and back into itself.”

He explains that the pump has a paraffin wax disc with a thermostatic meter. “When the hot water hits the disc, it actuates the valve and lets water creep past and creates the loop, so you have hot water at every fixture much faster than you would normally have to wait for hot water to get there. It’s a great system. Tons of water saving technology.”

Myron adds, “There’s not a lot of plumbing involved. You’re changing out some supply lines and connecting a pump. Not too many modifications. People don’t realize how simple of a fix this can be – probably a two-hour job and your comfort level is going to be through the roof.”

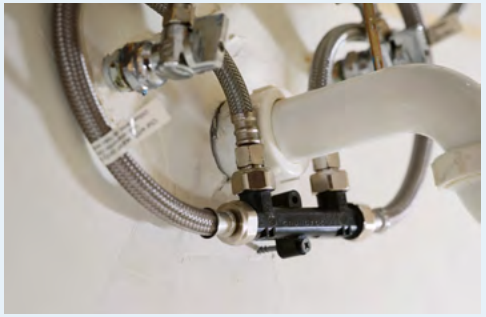
The Stansifer's neighbourhood in Klein, Texas outside of Houston. "If they don't already have a recirc pump, every house in this neighbourhood would benefit from one," says Richie.

Easy fix for older homes

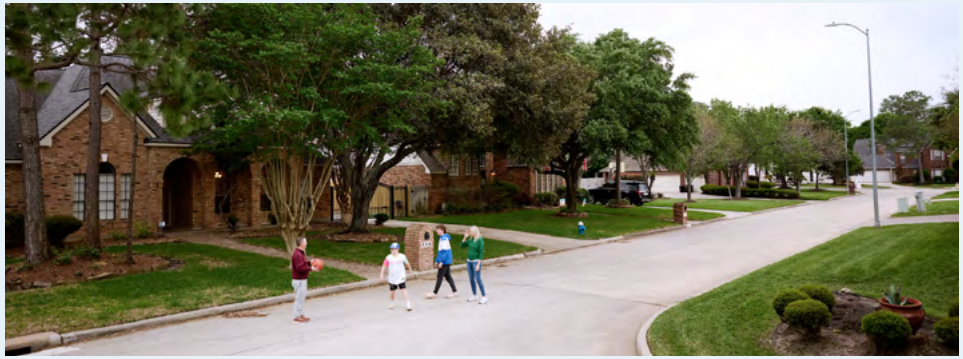
Myron says that particularly older homes have their own challenges with piping design – which means it can sometimes be difficult for a plumber to create a hot water bypass system. The Grundfos solution changes that – and it works with both tank and tankless hot water heaters.

"We can take older homes and create this simple loop system with this COMFORT T, making a much more efficient home," Myron says. "This not only increase the comfort level but will save a lot of water, too."

Richie adds, "Our neighbourhood was built in the early Nineties. Every house is eligible for this product. So, if they don't already have a recirc pump, every house in this neighbourhood would benefit from one."



A "T" crossover valve is installed under a sink in the Stansifer's master bathroom. Along with the Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT pump, the T helps to create a loop, circulating hot water among fixtures in the home.



The Stansifer family in front of their home in Klein, Texas, a suburb of Houston.

The outcome

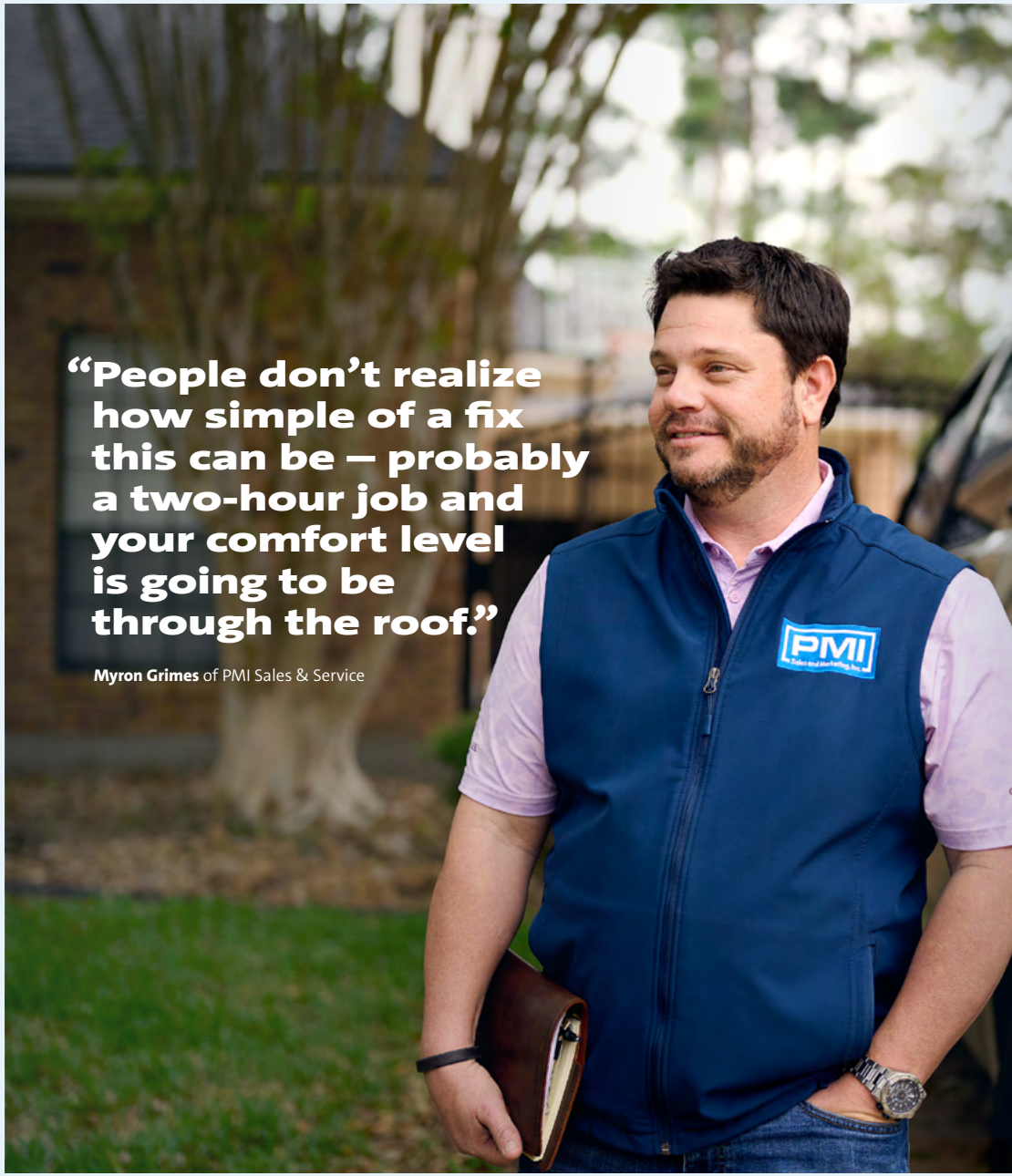
Richie's family feels the benefits. His son Luke, 11, says, "Before, I'd have to turn on the shower and then go back to my room and get some clothes and stuff and wait a couple of minutes until it got hot. But now I turn it on, and it just gets hot in 10 seconds. So, I get to sleep a little bit later. I don't have to wake up earlier to turn the shower on," Luke says.

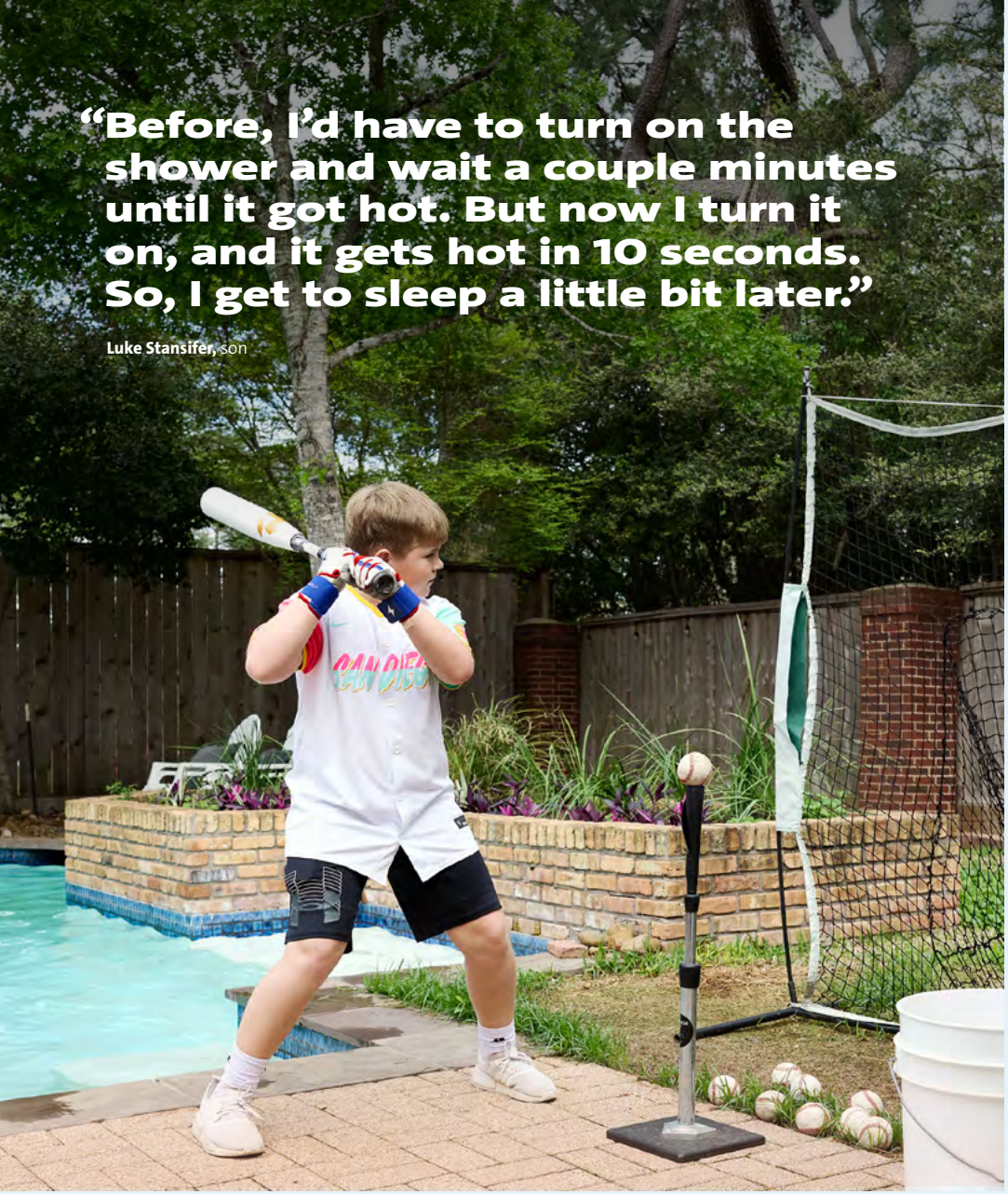
Richie says, "For me, it's all about money. I love to save money any way I can. I love the comfort. I love the, 'Hey, I can jump in the shower on a cold morning and not sit there and freeze for five minutes.' But if I can save money on the water bill, that's what it's all about."

Grundfos estimates that an average home in the US waits about 2 minutes for hot water to reach the tap.

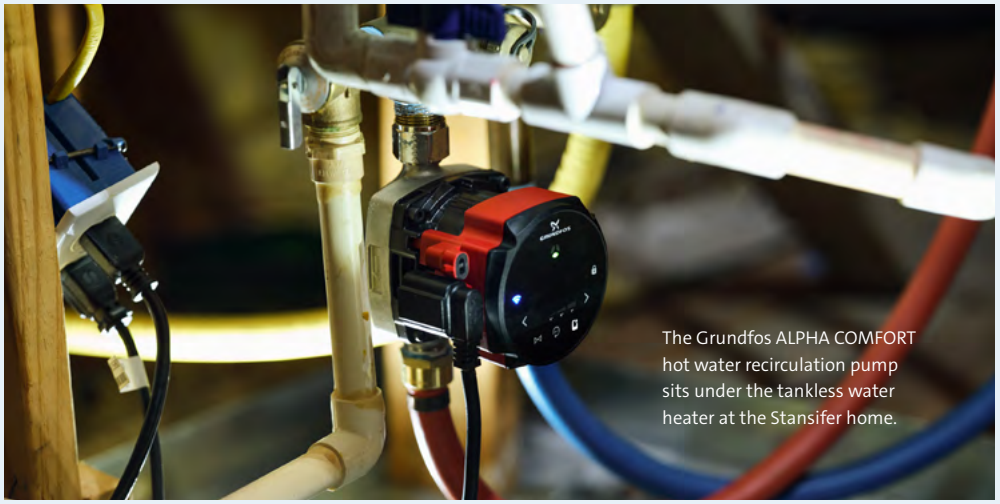
This means a hot water recirculation pump can save American homes up to 12,000 gallons (45 cubic meters) of water a year.

Richie says, "There's probably about 6 million people that live in the Houston metro area. So, if everybody saved this much time to get hot water, it would save millions of gallons of water."





Sources. The facts and quotes in this story come from interviews onsite at the Stansifer home in Klein/Houston, Texas, March 18-20, 2024.



The Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT hot water recirculation pump sits under the tankless water heater at the Stansifer home.

Grundfos supplied

For hot water within seconds at all fixtures in their home, Richie Stansifer’s family now has a Grundfos ALPHA COMFORT hot water recirculation pump installed. To learn more, please see our website here.

Watch video

Topic
Domestic hot water recirculation

Location
Klein, Houston, Texas, USA

Distributor & dealer
Ferguson & PMI Sales & Marketing

End customer
The Richie Stansifer family

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