

HOMEXPERT

Simple ways to improve your home comfort, safety and value.

Summer 2008

\$3.00

MY WORD

Change is Good

By Steven Heidler & Mick Heidler



Dear Friends,

It's time again to shift gears with this shift in seasons. For a lot of us, that means the daily schedule changes.

Work gets busier, or slower, depending on what you do. Kids are taking a break from school, but not from all their activities. The days get longer, and you spend more time outdoors.

Change is good. And for those hot weather fans among you, the good times are really on their way. As we say goodbye to those cool spring breezes, the temperatures are rising, of course, and lots more water use is taking place.

With extra water needed for the lawn and garden, or a few extra showers for active members of the household, summer can create many pressures on your plumbing system. If you experience any trouble, just give us a call and we'll get someone out there right away to help

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INSIDE...

- Home Maintenance
- Save on Vacations
- Summer Remodeling

MONEY WISE

Cut Costs With Conservation

It's used for everything from crops to dishwashing and even makes up about 60% of your body. But it's quickly becoming harder and harder to meet the fresh water demands of the 6 billion inhabitants of our fair planet.

In fact, according to Water Partners International, over 1 billion people still lack access to clean drinking water – and at any given time, over half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by victims of a water-related disease.

In the face of drought and pollution, it's never been more important to conserve water resources. Luckily, there are small things that each of us can do to make a large impact...

Reduce Water Waste

It doesn't take a lot of effort to save hundreds – or even thousands – of gallons of water in your home each year. When you do, you're helping the environment and your wallet.

- If you have older, more inefficient fixtures, consider upgrading to newer models. Just by changing your toilet to a 1.9 gallon-per-flush model you can save 18,600 gallons of water and up to \$90 a year.
- Fix leaking faucets and toilets. One drop per second from your

faucet wastes 2,700 gallons of water per year. A leaky toilet on the other hand, wastes as much as 500 gallons a day, or up to \$1,000 a year. That's a lot of your hard-earned money to flush down the drain.

Save H₂O Outside

Water isn't just wasted inside the home. Lawn care and other outside uses represent huge wastes of our most important natural resource. Here's how you can keep your "yard of the month" lawn without straining water supplies:

- Water lawns in the early morning or evening. You'll lose less water through evaporation which means it stays in the soil where your plants need it most.
- Use runoff water and downspouts to water shrubs, trees, and gardens. You'll save on water expenses and time.
- Mulch around trees and shrubs. You'll lock in moisture and fight the affects of water evaporation.

You don't need a degree in environmental science to know that saving water is good for you and for the planet. So, if you need any help with more ways to save H₂O, give us a call and we'll be happy to help in any way we can. That's what we're here for!

Your Quik Call Comfort Hotline:

410-268-7191

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Summer Remodeling: Is Going Green Right for You?

“Green” is in. Homeowners across the country are making their households more environmentally friendly based on three basic principles: energy efficiency, resource conservation and health. At the same time, the old principles that prevented many from taking this step – expense and aesthetics – no longer hold as much weight.

With green-friendly products available in a wide range of cost and style these days, you can take baby steps or giant leaps in bringing new ideas home.

Replacing old energy-guzzling appliances with more energy-efficient models can reduce energy use and operating costs that, over time, can enable them eventually to pay for themselves.

In other words, the costs may be higher upfront, but over the long run, energy-efficient appliances will be a better deal – particularly with the refrigerator, which is the most energy-consuming appliance in your kitchen.

Water use is also an environmental concern. Choosing faucets with aerators is one of the cheapest water conservation steps you can take. You’ve still got the option for the bigger upfront commitment of energy-efficient washers and dishwashers.

HOME WISE

Rising Temperatures Turn Up the Heat On Home Maintenance

There’s no denying that the “lazy days” of summer can actually prove to be hectic. Family vacations, neighborhood cookouts, time spent with friends and relatives . . . It adds up to a lot to do and little time to do it. But there are some things that are too important to get lost in the shuffle and one of those is seasonal home maintenance.

Summer maintenance isn’t just about the never-ending cycle of mowing and manicuring the lawn. It extends to preparing your home for the coming Fall and cooler temperatures. It may seem like rain on your parade, but routine maintenance can save thousands of dollars in repairs and damage in the long term. And it might just be easier than you think...

1. **Caulk all exterior windows and doors.** You’ll reduce energy bills and help keep bugs and other undesirable creatures outside where they belong.
2. **Don’t forget the chimneys.** Taking care of chimney sweeps and inspections now gives you enough time for necessary repairs before next season.

Plus, scheduling is easier and often less expensive thanks to off-season promotions and discounts.

3. **Inspect your attic fan.** These fans use very little energy to operate on and can drastically cut cooling costs. They’ll also increase your indoor comfort for the remaining hot season.
4. **Clean your entire clothes dryer vent system.** Lint is highly flammable and can create a fire hazard when it builds up. Plus, improper dryer ventilation can actually bring the silent and deadly carbon monoxide gas back into your home.
5. **Repair driveways and patios.** Leaving cracks can allow water to seep in and soften the ground underneath, causing more cracks and expensive repairs. For anything less than a quarter inch wide, concrete caulk should do the job. For larger cracks, it may be necessary to use a concrete patch.

There’s no need to let home repairs ruin your summer, but overlooking them now can cost more in the long run.

HEARD BY OUR EDITORS

- The average American spends 120 hours a month watching TV – the equivalent of *five whole days* in front of the small screen.
- In 1894 there were only 4 automobiles in the US.
- When offered a new pen to write with, 97% of all people will write their own name.
- A diamond will not dissolve in acid. The only thing that can destroy it is intense heat.
- Coffee, as a world commodity, is second only to oil.
- Jergens Lotion was created in 1880 by Andrew Jergens, a former lumberjack.

Keeping Cool in the Summer Heat

Every year around this time, the earth's rotation brings on more direct rays from the sun. In other words, it sure gets hot around here. Add in summer energy bills that keep going sky-high and what is one to do?

First, the more you can keep the harsh rays out, the cooler you'll be and the less work your air conditioner will have to do.

Windows – Have you considered installing ENERGY STAR qualified win-

dows? They lower energy bills and save you money over single-pane and even new double-paned, clear-glass windows through various technologies.

If you aren't quite ready to replace your windows, try window films. They are basically a transparent plastic plus adhesive that is applied to the interior of your windows. They can block up to 80% of the sun's heat while protecting fabrics on furniture.

Also, use dark curtains or blinds for your windows, and keep the windows and their coverings closed during the heat of the day.

Exterior Shade – Sunscreens, or solar screens, are another option. They are mounted in wood or aluminum frames and installed on the outside of the windows to stop the sun. They're often made of fiberglass that won't block the view through the window. Retractable canvas awnings,

also provide protection for patios and windows.

Oh, and don't forget "nature's shade." Plant trees and shrubs near your air conditioning unit, but be careful not to block the airflow.

If you aren't quite ready to replace your windows, try window films.

Efficient Cooling – How efficiently you cool your home makes a big difference in your comfort and utility bills. If your home comfort system is more than 10 years old or isn't keeping your house

comfortable, consider replacing it with a system that has the ENERGY STAR rating.

Also, set your temperature as high as is comfortable. Or install a programmable thermostat that can automatically adjust the temperature for day and night settings.

Change filters monthly, and make sure you keep your current system maintained. These efficiency efforts, from proper maintenance to appropriate insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings – can cut your energy use from 20% to 50%.

"Quotable"

Summer afternoon – summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language. ~ Henry James

News

Flash

Save Big On Summer Vacations

With fuel prices already surpassing record highs and predicted to continue climbing, it's no surprise that families are looking for more ways to save money during the high-drive season. One area that's easy to trim back without losing the fun is the family vacation. There are simple, easy ways to have a great time without spending an arm and a leg:

- **Stay close to home.** When you visit www.seeamerica.org you can see all the tourist offerings for surrounding states, including attractions that are often only hours away. You'll save on travel expenses and time.
- **Avoid weekends.** Travel and lodging on the weekend is often more expensive than during the week. If possible, plan to leave and return on a Monday or Tuesday. This can save hundreds of dollars, especially if you decide to fly.
- **Forgo the hotel in favor of suites or rental properties.** The lodging price may be higher upfront, but your family can easily spend four digits over a week-long stay by eating out for every meal. With a kitchenette, you can make several of your own meals.
- **Consider joining AAA.** Yearly membership is around \$59, but you receive a 20% discount at many major hotel chains – including Disney properties – in addition to rental car and restaurant discounts.

See? Summer vacations don't have to break the bank in order to provide a good time. After all, the point is to spend time together, not see how much you can spend.

MY WORD (...from page 1)

keep your plumbing in good working order.

Oh, and don't forget the impact water use can have on your energy costs. If the time is right to replace an older water heater with a new energy-efficient model, let us know and we'll get right on it.

HomePoints

Two thirds of the water used in a home is used in the bathroom.

We wish you a summer of fun activities and many good times.

Sincerely,



Steven Heidler & Mick Heidler

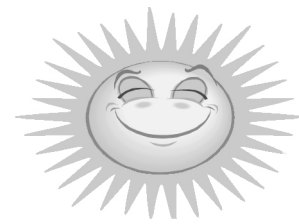
P.S. We hope you'll enjoy the great tips for your household contained in this newsletter. We also hope you'll enjoy the special offers on this page. But if you aren't going to be able to use them, feel free to pass them along to your friends.

Kabobs, Anyone?



Want a permanent solution to your propane problem? Your plumber can connect your gas grill to your home's natural gas lines. No more fumbling around with heavy propane tanks or running out of gas. Call **Heidler, Inc** at **410-268-7191** today.

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\$10

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(One certificate per visit. Does not apply to service call/emergency fees.)

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There Are Some Things You Just Can't Fix

It's true. No matter how hard you try, there are just some things you can't do anything about. Fortunately, making your home your dream home isn't one of them. And we can help. We're dedicated to making your home beautiful and helping you save that's why **Heidler, Inc** at **410-268-7191** offers full bathroom and kitchen remodeling services. Just call **410-268-719** and let us know how we can help you make your dream a reality.

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