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Smart and simple ways to enrich your home living

HOMESENSE



AirCare

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Any Truth To The "Air Scare"?

You turn on TV and they're yelling at you about it. The newspaper warns you about it. And here I am, yet another voice of dire predictions about the next breath you take.

However, we read about IAQ (Indoor Air Quality) from the *technical side*. Our industry holds seminars, measuring *dozens* of data categories about IAQ, and what – if anything – needs to be done about it. And unlike the 30-minute infomercial on the topic, I don't have a storeroom of machines to "sell you, or else". But I do have this...

The problem is real. With IAQ problems, you and your family are breathing them while in the home, just like a lit cigarette (but not as smoky!). The dangers can include a continual parade of allergens, carcinogens, pet dander, roach droppings, and worse... if you can imagine. (We've seen things

from new construction sites that aren't fit for print!)

Many times, you don't *know* you have the problems other than higher than normal 'sick days', being overly allergy prone, or general tiredness and other symptoms that seem, well, "normal".



You can find out exactly what is in your home and how to control its effects on your family. How?

Get an IAQ Analysis – On our next tune-up visit, we can check your home's

return air. Technology has now given us smaller devices to actually "measure" IAQ if there's a problem. Just give us a call and let us know.

Whether the solution to your indoor air quality woes is better ventilation or total home air filtration, you have options. Let us know how we can help keep your home the haven your family deserves.



Refresh Yourself

By Jim Lugge



Hello Friend,

Something strange always happened to me around this time of year. I start to get just a little antsy. Maybe it's the fresh air, the warm sun after a cold winter, or just the sense that good things are on their way. Whatever the reason, Spring always fills me with renewed anticipation and promise.

There's so much to get done – and, as usual, never enough time. I'm sure you feel the same way. That's why I want to give you one less thing to worry about.

Your HVAC and plumbing systems just worked hard through the winter to keep you comfortable, and as the weather heats up, they will be working even harder. The last thing you need is a comfort crisis. A preseason tune-up can keep your systems performing without an unwanted interruption – and I'll take care of it *for* you.

Why? Because the opportunity to serve customers like you is part of what gives me Spring Fever. So go on, enjoy the rejuvenating effects of Spring and let *us* worry

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HomeWise

How to Boost Your Property Value (without getting soaked!)

Bathrooms are among the most popular remodeling projects, second only to kitchens. The benefits include comfort, beauty, function and property value.

There are three general bathroom categories. First, the “economy” version seeks function over form, tending only to the basics of sink, toilet and bath. The other extreme, the “luxury” model, gives you the basic functions plus roominess, ambiance and amenities. Most bathrooms in between seek to balance function and style with cost and comfort.

You can take many steps to keep costs down. So, what should you



do? And what should you not do? We’ve got some answers.

Plan carefully. Once construction begins, changes can be expensive. Also, decide on the features that are important to you and set aside the budget dollars to make that happen. Especially consider spending more for quality fixtures.

Consider simple improvements. Instead of replacing stained tubs and showers, consider re-glazing them. Of course, one of the easiest ways to add to your bathroom’s attractiveness is to buy a new shower curtain. Also, don’t overlook new soap dishes, toilet-tissue holders and towel bars.

Use soft lighting. Bright, harsh lights can be a lot to face early in the morning – especially in

the mirror. Minimize shadows with at least a two-bulb fixture.

Don’t try to cut corners on structural, plumbing or electrical materials and installation. Get the best that your budget will allow. Durability and performance are key in these areas.

Don’t move plumbing fixtures. It’s expensive and may not be necessary. We can advise you on fixtures that work (and look) better in the same space.

Don’t move walls – unless you must. Moving walls is expensive, but it can be worth it in the long run when your “luxurious” bath serves as a real motivation for future home buyers.

Let us help you with your remodel or upgrade. Just give us a call.

HomeFront

No Home Immune to Termites

In their natural state, termites eat fallen logs and stumps off the forest floor. But on your property, they can eat away the equity you have built up in your home and property. Termites infest millions of homes nationwide, causing over \$750 million in damage annually, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

The experience of homeowners nationwide shows that no home, new or old, is safe from termites. By building mud tubes, termites can cross concrete, brick, cinder block, metal termite shields, pre-treated wood, and non-repellent chemical barriers. Only a professionally applied termite treatment can prevent their entry.

Chances are, you won’t actually see termites or a termite swarm, which lasts less than an hour. More likely,



you’ll see evidence of swarming – sudden appearance of winged termites; piles of small, lacy wings; or mud tunnels. To see if the bug in question is a termite or an ant, look at its waist (if it will let you). The termite has a thick waist where the ant has a slim waist.

Under ideal conditions, a typical termite colony with 250,000 workers can eat about 20 feet of a 2 x 4 board a year. Termites eat wood from the inside out, sometimes defying detection for years while doing extensive damage.

If you find evidence of an infestation, there’s no need to panic. It’s unlikely the damage will get much worse from the time you first discover termites until the time your home is treated. Call Bel-O Pest Solutions today for a free inspection. With 70 years of pest control experience we can solve any pest problem.





How Necessary *Is* Spring Cleaning, Anyway?

Spring cleaning has become a ritual of transforming the home to match the changing outdoors. The urge to bring that same sense of refreshing inside grows stronger. And while cleaning may not be high on your hobby list, this small investment in home maintenance can help maintain your property value as well as keep things running smoothly year round.

An organized approach can make the process both more productive and enjoyable. So here's your quick list of Spring cleaning "musts":

Sort Through "Stuff"

There are always those things you can't bear to part with: clothes, books, old bicycles. The two year rule is a good measure for whether you need to keep it or toss it. That means if you haven't used it in the past two years, it's just taking up space. Take a deep breath, then let it go. Literally. You'll be making better use of your space as well as clearing the clutter.

Give your home comfort system a little affection

That means replacing filters in furnaces or air conditioners, and vacuuming and cleaning grates, coils and condensers. A Spring tune-up can also help prevent future breakdowns and repairs.

Clean rugs, carpets, and floors

Shampooing wall-to-wall carpeting and waxing bare floors not only extends the life of your flooring, it impacts your health. Thorough

cleaning can remove many allergens and pollutants that can affect your home's indoor air quality.



Check Your Safety Devices

Replace your smoke detector, carbon monoxide detector, and emergency flashlight batteries. This should be done every six months since batteries lose energy even

when they are not in use. Test fire extinguishers to be sure they are functioning properly too.

Clean Windows, Shades, and Curtains

Remove and wash window treatments. Clean blinds to remove dust. White vinegar or ammonia solutions should be used to wash windows. If you also replace storm windows with screens, be sure to make any needed repairs before storing.

Spring gives us the chance to start fresh and take control of our lives, homes, and the year ahead. Make the most of the opportunity. It is, after all, an investment in yourself.



DidYouKnow?



- Venetian blinds – which were actually invented in Japan – are known as 'Persian blinds' in Venice.
- If you head directly south from Detroit, the first foreign country you enter is Canada, not Mexico.
- While science has been traditionally identified as largely dominated by men, *women* were responsible for inventing Bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laser printers.
- More than half of the world's population – that's over 3 billion people – have never made or received a telephone call.
- The screwdriver was invented before the screw.
- A German company has built the first washing machine that talks and recognizes spoken commands. Now if it could only load itself!
- Neglected plants will cry for help. When thirsty, they emit high-pitched sounds that are too high for the human ear to hear.

MyWord



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about your home comfort.

Spring is a time of renewal, and whether it's spending time outdoors or just enjoying the break from the winter doldrums, there's no time like the present for spending more time with family and friends.

HomePoints

By properly venting and insulating your attic, you can save 20% to 35% in energy costs, as well as help control indoor air problems.

Wishing you the best and looking forward to visiting you in your home soon.

Sincerely,

Jim Luge

P.S. We hope you'll enjoy the great home tips that come in this newsletter, but don't forget to check out the super offers you'll find on this page. If you aren't able to use them, feel free to pass them on to friends. After all, your friends are our friends, and we'd love to help them out too!

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Is It Really Possible to Eliminate Your Home's Power Outages?

Each minute your refrigerator is off increases the chances of **bacteria and mold breeding** on your food. If your power fails during freezing weather, hypothermia is a very real, very deadly risk. We read about tragedies like this every year.

Then there's the basic stuff that goes out: No lights, phones, or security system. You keep wondering "when" or "if" the power will come back on. You can quit wondering because all this is avoidable.

We've looked at *hundreds* of generators, and none have been to our standard. The ones at the discount stores are loud, require messy and dangerous fuels, emit choking exhaust and invite fumbling with long cords.

But with the *Carrier System* you can forget about losing power and dangers of "other" systems. That's a thing of the past.

Call The Bel-O Man for a completely free generator survey at 235-6626. Make sure your home and family are protected before the first storm.

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