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& Home Improvement Guide

SHERBURNE COUNTY, MN

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HOME IMPROVEMENTS

GREEN THUMB GARDENING



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Sherburne County



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Spring Preparations

1. Test your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms.
 2. Drain approximately 2 gallons from your water heater to eliminate sediment.
 3. Clean your clothes dryer vent duct.
 4. Vacuum your bathroom vent covers.
 5. Replace or clean your furnace filter.
 6. Clean out your basement window wells.
 7. Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils to keep it operating efficiently.
 8. Clean around your air conditioning compressor and make sure that it gets sufficient air flow.
- 
- A close-up photograph of a hand with the index finger pointing towards a white, circular vent cover mounted on a wall. The vent cover has a small red arrow pointing outwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Gutters

Cleaning

Using a ladder and handheld gardening trowel, scoop out decomposing leaves and other debris. (This can be repurposed as mulch or compost). Use a hose to blast out remaining debris from gutters and downspouts. If you experience a clog in the downspout a plumbing snake can be used to clear the obstruction. This will prevent the weight of water and debris that make the gutters saggy and they will last longer.

Gutter Spikes

Look at all the spikes and make sure they are going all the way through fascia board into the rafters. Sometimes these spikes get worked out of the wood, and cause separation from the house. Replacement spikes can be purchased to prevent gutters from becoming damaged.

Cracks and Leaks

Caulking can break down over time, creating cracks or holes that may cause leaks. It is possible to make the repairs yourself. Using a putty knife or chisel, scrape away existing caulking and let it dry completely. Once dry, apply new caulking to seal the cracks or holes to prevent fascia boards from rotting.



Originally part of Benton County, Sherburne County was organized in 1856 and named after Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Moses Sherburne. Settlers were attracted to the rich farmland and ample timber. As settlement grew along the Mississippi River banks, townships were divided and organized. Elk River was selected as the county seat and Sherburne County continued to grow as the railroad lines arrived and transportation improved. With its proximity to the Twin Cities, Sherburne County has now grown from a bustling agricultural area to a commuter's haven. Today Sherburne County is home to approximately 87,832 residents.

CITIES:

BECKER – pop. 4,200

BIG LAKE – pop. 9,799

CLEAR LAKE – pop. 485

ELK RIVER (COUNTY SEAT) – pop. 23,231

PRINCETON – pop. 4,754

ST. CLOUD – pop. 67,136

ZIMMERMAN – pop. 5,316

TOWNSHIPS:

BALDWIN – pop. 5,636

BECKER – pop. 4,711

BIG LAKE – pop. 8,137

BLUE HILL – pop. 1,359

CLEAR LAKE – pop. 2,123

HAVEN – pop. 2,703

LIVONIA – pop. 4,818

ORROCK – pop. 3,564

PALMER – pop. 3,063

SANTIAGO – pop. 2,240

**Populations are approximate.*

BECKER

Once known as Pleasant Valley, Becker grew as a community in the 1850s. Upon arrival of the railroad in 1867, the area began to grow. Pleasant Valley was renamed Becker after George Loomis Becker, who was instrumental with the construction of the railroad. Today Becker is home to approximately 4,200 residents.

BIG LAKE

Located along the Mississippi River, Big Lake originated as an agricultural community in the mid 1800s. Settlers were attracted to the Mississippi River where it could be utilized for transportation and power. By 1864, a hotel, blacksmith shop, mills and general stores were established. Before refrigeration, most of the ice in Twin Cities' iceboxes was acquired from Big Lake. Today Big Lake is home to approximately 9,799 residents.

CLEAR LAKE

Clear Lake was incorporated as a village in 1900 and businesses and creameries were established. 1917 marked the completion of the Clear Lake High School and the railroad arrived in 1924. Clear Lake was incorporated as a city in 1970 and has since continued to grow. Today Clear Lake is home to approximately 485 residents.

ELK RIVER (COUNTY SEAT)

Named after the herds found in the area by Zebulon Pike, Elk River was settled in the mid 1800s. Pioneers utilized the nearby Elk River and Mississippi Rivers for power and transportation. In 1855, Elk River was platted as a village and the community continued to grow. By 1872 Elk River was selected as Sherburne's County Seat. The Village of Elk River and the Township of Elk River were consolidated in 1978. Today Elk River is home to approximately 23,231 residents.



Sherburne County Communities

PRINCETON

Named after John S. Prince, a lumber manufacturer from St. Paul, Princeton was first settled in 1849 and platted in 1855. Within 10 years, sawmills, flour mills, blacksmith shops, hotels and general stores were thriving. The first newspaper, "The Princeton Appeal," was issued in 1873. Early industry included logging, manufacturing and agriculture, and by 1902 Princeton produced the most potatoes in the Northwest. Today Princeton is home to approximately 4,754 residents.

ST. CLOUD

Once a way station on the Red River Trails, St. Cloud developed from three separate settlements and unified to offset hardship. The city was incorporated in 1856 and is named after the Parisian suburb, Saint Cloud, by John Wilson. Since the 1880s, granite quarries have operated in St. Cloud, deeming the area "Granite City." Today St. Cloud is home to approximately 67,136 residents.

ZIMMERMAN

Zimmerman began as a community called Lake Fremont after the explorer John C. Fremont. In 1910, Lake Fremont was incorporated as a village and it was not until 1967 that Lake Fremont was renamed Zimmerman in honor of Moses Zimmerman, an influential farmer who assisted with the development of the railroad. Today Zimmerman is home to approximately 5,316 residents.



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I have been in the cabinetry business for 35 years. I have been involved in all areas of wood-working, from residential millwork to commercial cabinetry and fixtures. I started Boones Custom Cabinets in 2005 with just myself and only two part-time employees. Through quality craftsmanship and word of mouth from our clients, we now have grown to have five full-time employees. We try to stay small so we can give our clients a more personal experience.

Our clients also get the opportunity to work one-on-one with our very own in-house Interior Designer. Heather has been with us since May of 2015. From working on home remodels and new home designs, she understands the importance of function and personal needs that vary client to client.

We work with all species of wood and do all different types of finishes, such as paint, paint with a rub-through, stain of all types, and glazes. We deal with many different countertop selections; laminates, granite, cultured marble, and man-made solid surfaces. We also have a vast selection of hardware and upgrades with pullouts, drawer & cabinet organizers, and inserts. We do it all, from designing to the installation. Check out our past projects at www.boonescustomcabinets.com

The winter can be tough for everyone. During these months you find yourself dealing with cold temperatures, ice, and snow. Here are a few ways to make your winter safer and more enjoyable.

Prevent slips and falls on ice.

- Wear cleats on your boots or shoes while outdoors.
- Take your boots or shoes off when indoors. They may have snow or ice on the bottom making them slick on smooth surfaces.
- Salt and sand driveway and sidewalks or have someone do it for you.
- Step down when getting out of a car or off a curb instead of stepping out.

Keeping warm

Before going outside in the wintertime you need to prepare yourself to prevent things like hypothermia or frostbite. Warning signs of hypothermia include, lots of shivering, cold skin that is pale or ashy, feeling very tired, confused and sleepy, feeling weak, problems walking, slowed breathing or heart rate. Warning signs of frostbite include, skin that's white or ashy (for darker skin) or grayish-yellow (for lighter skin), skin that feels hard or waxy, and numbness. Dress in Layers when going outside. For the best results, wear polypropylene or another man-made fabric next to the skin, a knit middle layer, and a man-made outer layer. Never stay in the cold if you have wet or damp clothing, it cools the body more quickly. Depending on the temperature or wind chill you may want to cover all exposed skin to reduce the risk of hypothermia or frostbite.

Carbon monoxide poisoning and fires

During the winter months the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning and fires is much greater due to the different heating methods used to stay warm. While trying to stay warm we are heating our houses with fire places, furnaces, electric heaters, and boilers. When one of these heating methods fail or stop working properly there are potential safety hazards.

- Make sure carbon monoxide detector and fire alarms are working properly.
- Have fireplace and chimney cleaned or furnace and boiler inspected.
- Make sure electric heaters are working properly and not too close to anything flammable.
- Keep a fire extinguisher easily accessible in the areas of your home that have a potential fire hazard.
- Never try heating your home with things that are not made for it like, a stove, oven, or grill.

Winter Driving

- Don't drive in bad weather unless you have to.
- Never use cruise control on snowy, icy, or wet surfaces.
- Increase your following distance.
- Have a phone on you and let someone know your plans.
- Check your car or get it inspected to make sure things like the tires, antifreeze, window wipers, window washer fluid, oil, battery, and other components are up to date and working properly.
- Stock your car with emergency supplies like a first aid kit, extra warm clothes or blankets, jumper cables, shovel, window scraper, a warning device like a flare or caution lights and a material like kitty litter or sand in case you get stuck on ice.
- Keep your gas tank close to full in case you end up stuck or stranded and to prevent gas line freeze.
- Clear off the entire car for increased visibility.
- Never warm up your vehicle in an enclosed area like a garage.

Fall Preparation & Clean Up

- Clean out the gutters.
- Clean or replace dirty furnace filters.
- Clean humidifiers by replacing old filters and clean the inside compartment.

- Drain and winterize outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Winterize air conditioning unit (depending on climate).
- Remove fallen leaves from the lawn and fertilize.
- Service sprinklers and irrigation system.
- Put away seasonal furniture.
- Put up storm windows.

- Repair damaged sidewalks, driveways and steps.
- Seal windows and cracks around the house.
- Insulate the duct work in your home.

- Test smoke and CO monitors also inspect fire extinguishers.
- Get the furnace and water heater checked by a professional.
- Check fireplaces for soot or creosote build-up.
- Get your winter equipment ready.
- Inspect your roof for damage.

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For a company with hometown roots dating back to 1902, First National Bank of Elk River remains positively progressive. Voted Best Bank of 2016 in all three of the cities it has banking services, First National is clearly doing many things right.



There are three things our customers and employees want...Information, access and preferential treatment. As a community bank, we are accessible and able to provide quick answers and timely turn-arounds. This having been said, First National Bank of Elk River has been a leader of innovation and web-based banking in our marketplace. We're small enough to know your name, and big enough to get the job done.

"We have been and intend to remain an independent bank. We will continue to work on generational changes and the needs of our customers and employees as best we can. If you can make someone happy about where they bank or work, that's success", says Houlton.

Spice Up Your Garage



Storage

Once you have established the room needed for vehicle storage, it's time to consider storing other things. A hanging bike rack is a great way to free up space on the floor. Open shelving for tools and building materials can also be very convenient and cost friendly.

Insulation

If you plan on working in the garage during the winter months this will be very important for keeping down heating costs and staying comfortable.

Internet

Since we are living in the future now and internet is everywhere, why not have it in the garage? If your wireless from the house does not reach, you may want to get a range extender. It is very helpful to have access to tutorials or online music playlists when working on projects and spending long periods of time in the garage.

Plumbing

If your garage is heated, then you may have water running to the garage. If so, why not install a utility sink and possibly a bathroom? These additions are very convenient when it comes to not dragging a mess from the garage into the house.

Furnishings

Sometimes the garage is a great place to get away. There are a lot of different ways to make the space a little more comfortable. It is pretty easy to find an old television, an old couch or futon, and a fridge. If you are looking for a way to get out of the house without leaving home, these few things that could have you relaxing in no time.

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Kristoffer Kiphuth
President of Northland Siding
& Insulation, Inc.

Home Improvements

You have a better chance collecting on your investment when spending money toward basic home maintenance such as new siding rather than remodeling a kitchen or bathroom. Siding replacement has been known to recover approximately 93 percent of its cost, according to studies. The only home improvement that may be likely to return more at resale is a minor kitchen remodel, which has been known to return roughly 93 percent. Replacing roofs and windows have also been known to have a high return, returning 80 percent or more at resale.

Kitchens and Baths

Spending the money for a kitchen or bath remodel is a solid investment, often returning more than 100 percent of the cost. Minor kitchen remodels also provided returns of more than 100 percent in certain areas upon resale.

When it comes to decide exactly what to improve in your kitchen or bathroom, think traditional. Wood cabinets, commercial appliances, natural wood or stone floors and stone countertops. Walk in showers have replaced whirlpool tubs as the necessity in bathroom remodeling. Most people would rather have a shower than bath if they can only choose one.

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Swimming Pools

There are two types of pools; above-ground and in-ground. A pool is a very big investment no matter which direction you go with it. Both above-ground and in-ground pools are a pretty big commitment. However, if comfort and convenience is what you are looking for, a swimming pool is money well spent.

Upkeep

Both above-ground and in-ground pools will require all the same general maintenance such as chemical balance and filtering. Now, thinking in long term, an above-ground pool can be torn down for storage or an up-grade or you can even reposition it at your convenience. In-ground pools are more permanent and may require structural maintenance at some point, so keep in mind that an in-ground pool is a big commitment.

Appearance

In-ground pools can be built to have a lasting, very attractive appearance. This can dramatically change the appearance of the yard. There are many directions you can go with lighting and landscaping. Above-ground pools can be a nice addition to the house by building a deck, and can also be tucked away into a corner so you still have a yard.

Customization

If you are looking for a very unique custom made look, the in-ground pool is the way to go. There are two options, you can have a concrete pool custom designed to look any way your imagination can come up with. Or if you are looking for something a little easier you can go with the pre-manufactured fiberglass style. The above-ground pools have fewer options available as far as custom shapes, however, there is still plenty that can be done by building a structure around it, or doing some landscaping. Zoning regulations/ordinances dictate that fencing around swimming pools is required by most communities.



Whirlpool Installation

How do I know what will fit?

Now, before you even go shopping and get your heart set on something, know your limitations. Measure the space you want to fill with the whirlpool. Most come in three sizes ranging from 5-6 ft. in length. You also need to consider that there is going to be extra machinery and tubing going into this project. Also, consider how big you want the deck of the tub to be in case you like candles and that sort of thing close to you while you're in the water. Also, get the measurements of any doors or hallways you will have to pass through.

Will the existing floor support the extra weight?

If you're working with a wood joist floor type of construction, you will need to consider tub weight plus how much it will weigh full of water and people, then possibly add support or bracing as necessary. If you are replacing a standard cast iron tub this will probably not be an issue for you. Any time you're remodeling in the bathroom, especially in an older home, you may uncover rotted or water damaged floors that must be repaired and reinforced before you can safely make any improvements.

What about the plumbing?

First things first. The plumber must be able to access the entire area in order to properly install the plumbing, as well as the motor box for the whirlpool's jets. This motor has to be easily accessible in case it breaks down. Some type of door is recommended as opposed to tile. Get the specs from the store for the model you are interested in before even calling a plumber. Make sure the plumber you hire is licensed and show them the specs and they will be able to tell you what you will need to do to make it work.



An advertisement for Bob Country Variety. It features a wooden background with an acoustic guitar and a cowboy hat. The text reads: "TRUE COUNTRY VARIETY!" in large white letters. Below that, "BOB" is written in large red letters. Underneath, it says "TOTAL COUNTRY" in black, followed by "105.5 • 106.1 • 107.5" in red. Below that, it lists "St. Cloud", "Twin Cities", and "Rochester" in small black text. At the bottom, "MyBOBCountry.com" is written in red and black.

An advertisement for Lincoln Marketing's website. It features a map of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. The text reads: "Check out YOUR NEW County Web Page!!!". Below that, there are two numbered steps: "1. Go to: www.LincolnMarketing.us" and "2. Type in the county you wish to visit & BOOM!!! You have everything you need!". There are images of a smartphone, a tablet, and a desktop monitor displaying the website. A search bar is also shown with the text "EXPLORE TOURISM IN MINNESOTA, WISCONSIN, IOWA AND MORE. FIND MAPS, GUIDES & MORE." Below the search bar, there is a list of services: "• Maps • Resident Guides", "• Residential Services", "• Important Phone Numbers", and "• Hunting/Fishing Seasons & More".



Recycle as much as you can. Even simple everyday things, such as plastic bottles and aluminum cans, can make a huge difference.



Switch your incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent ones. Save money and energy.



Bring your own reusable shopping bags with you to the supermarket or the mall.



Donate your unwanted clothing to a local charity. Eyeglasses, household items, electronics and even vehicles can be accepted.



Recycle your used ink and toner cartridges. Most office supply stores accept used cartridges.



Recycle your used batteries. This prevents poisonous mercury from seeping into our water supplies and soil. Switch to rechargeable ones.



Switch to unbleached toilet paper, paper towels and coffee filters. Avoiding bleached products can help preserve our water supply and soil.



Reduce - Reuse - Recycle



Unplug any unused appliances. Your cellphone charger uses electricity, even when your phone isn't charging - especially if you are not going to be home.



Bring your own lunch. You'll avoid using non-recyclable styrofoam to-go containers and unnecessary throw-away packaging.



Start a compost bin in your yard. There are even ones that you can store under your kitchen sink.



Be crafty. Let old items be an inspiration for a craft project and repurpose old items. Punch holes in tin cans to make candle luminaries or use empty yogurt containers to organize nuts and bolts.



Have a green-cleaning product party. Invite your friends over to make enough vinegar-based homemade cleaners to share.



Run your washer/dryer/dishwasher after 5pm. This is when less electricity is being used, especially in larger cities. In air-conditioned summer months this can help prevent blackouts.

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Energy Savings Tips

Summer Energy Saving Techniques

Conduct an energy assessment to find out where you can save the most. This will allow you to see where the biggest problem areas are.

Windows

- Close curtains during the day to block sunlight and open them at night.
- Plant trees, shrubs, or vines to help shade your home.
- Apply solar window film to windows.

Adjust Your Thermostat

- When you're home and awake, set your thermostat at the highest comfortable temperature.
- When you're out of the house, turn your thermostat up. You can save 1-3 percent per degree, for each degree the thermostat is set above 72 degrees, depending on the outside temperature.
- You can set a programmable thermostat to keep the temperature where you want day and night.

Maintain Your Cooling Systems

- Schedule service for your cooling system.
- Do regular maintenance to keep your cooling system operating efficiently.

Fans and Vents

- Keep inside air vents clear from furniture and other objects.
- Run energy efficient ceiling and whole-house fans to circulate the air.
- Use the bathroom vent to remove the heat and humidity after showering.

Appliances and Electronics

- Try not to use the oven on hot days. Cook on the stove top, microwave, or grill outside.
- Keep your fridge and freezer full. The refrigerator will run less often.
- Air dry dishes in the dish washer.
- Wash laundry with cold water and air dry.
- Unplug electronics when not in use.

Lighting

- Use light emitting diodes "LED's". They use less energy and have a longer life span, plus they produce less heat than incandescent and CFL bulbs.

Winter Energy Saving Techniques

Windows

- Open curtains during the day to allow sunlight in and close them at night.
- Tape a clear plastic sheet or film to the window frames.
- Install insulating drapes or shades on windows.

Adjust Your Thermostat

- When you are home and awake, set your thermostat at the lowest comfortable temperature.
- When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat down about 12 degrees for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating bills.
- You can set programmable thermostats to keep the temperature where you want day and night.

Air Leaks and Insulation

- Seal the air leaks on the inside and outside walls of your home. These can be holes for pipes and wires, gaps around chimneys, or unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.
- Check your attic's insulation. Depending on what climate you live in, there are different insulating products and thickness that work best for your area.

Maintain Your Heating Systems

- Schedule service for your heating system.
- Do regular maintenance to keep your heating system operating efficiently.
- Furnace - Replace your furnace filter once a month or as needed.
- Fireplace - Clean the flue vent regularly and the inside of the appliance with a wire brush periodically to ensure that your home is heated efficiently.

Lower Your Water Heating Costs

- On average 18% of the energy consumed in your home is from the water heater. Turn down the temperature of your water heater to a setting around (120°F). This will save energy and can help prevent burns.

Lighting

- Use light emitting diodes "LED's". They use less energy and have a longer life span.

Kitchen Make-over

Countertops

Check with your local building supplier to achieve the look and properties you desire, such as stain resistance, ease of cleaning and maintenance.

Install an Island

A kitchen island can be functional for prepping meals. An island can also be integrated into a kitchen dining and gathering space.

Your Stove

A wide range of stoves, wall ovens and counter top ranges are available. Choose the features you desire such as traditional, convection, single or double ovens, self or continuous-cleaning, gas or electric depending on your available space and budget.

Ventilation

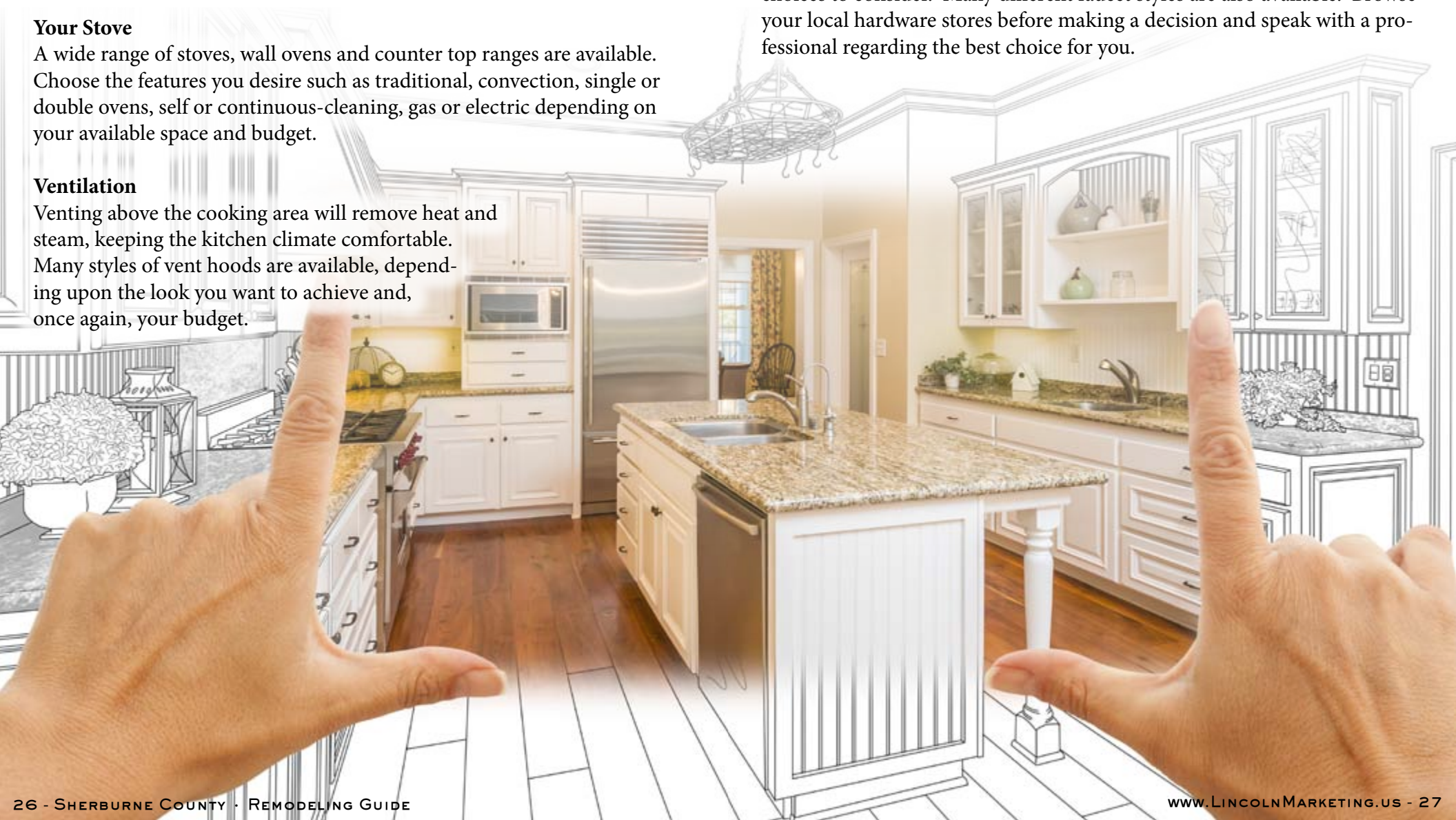
Venting above the cooking area will remove heat and steam, keeping the kitchen climate comfortable. Many styles of vent hoods are available, depending upon the look you want to achieve and, once again, your budget.

Lighting

Under cabinet lighting gives your kitchen a feeling of warmth and also reduces shadows. Track lighting can be a good choice as it is adjustable to face any desired direction.

The Kitchen Sink

Single, double, shallow, deep, stainless steel, porcelain - these are the many choices to consider. Many different faucet styles are also available. Browse your local hardware stores before making a decision and speak with a professional regarding the best choice for you.



Get Active!!!

Go Outside and Do SOMETHING!

- Yard Work
- Gardening
- Walk the Dog
- Bike Ride
- Swimming
- ANYTHING!!!

Anything to get your heart rate up, and your blood flowing... YOU'LL FEEL BETTER and it's good for your health!

Painting Tips from an Expert



1. You must clean the walls

Any kind of dust, dirt, or grease spots will ruin a smooth finish, so with water, a little mild dish soap, and a sponge, lightly scrub the surface. Then rinse walls with clean water to remove the soap residue.

2. Tape off the trim, window, and the door frames

Painter's blue tape is what is recommended for this part of the process, and can be applied up to a week ahead. Immediately after painting, remove the painter's tape before the wall dries, that way you won't peel off any paint with it.

3. Prime the walls

Primer helps maximize the sheen and coverage of the paint and gives the finish coat a much more uniform appearance.

4. Brush where you can't roll

Use a brush to paint around trim and in corners, wherever your roller can't reach, with an angled brush. Extend brush painting out two to three inches from windows, moldings and doors.

5. Use the "W" technique

For maximum efficiency, start in the corner of a wall and roll on a three-by-three-foot W style pattern, then fill it in the W without lifting the roller off the wall. Continue this pattern in sections until you're finished. Remember to paint only one wall at a time.

6. Paint the trim

When the walls have completely dried, tape where the trim meets the wall. Paint the moldings and the window and door frames with an angled brush.

Landscaping Ideas

Save Money on Plants

If you wait until the end of the season to make purchases, you are likely to get some pretty good deals. Trees, plants, shrubs, and flowers will be going out the door at clearance sale prices. Even if the plants look a little beat up or the leaves look a little brown and tattered, as long as there is a healthy looking green stem, the plant is salvageable as long as it is planted quickly and watered properly.

Homemade Walkways

To give your yard a little character, consider creating a custom walkway. This type of project can be done inexpensively using leftover materials from a previous project. Consider using excess bricks from a retaining wall project, or if you just took down a retaining wall, you could repurpose the bricks into a sidewalk. Or if you have some leftover concrete mix, you can make custom shapes using cardboard. This can give your yard a very unique and personalized look.

Perennials or Annuals

This probably seems like a no brainer, however, choosing something that will re-grow year after year will save you a lot of work and money in the long run. Annual plants can be purchased at a lower cost and you can leave a little room between and around your perennials to switch things up every year and have a fresh new look every season.

Make your own Compost

A compost bin can be easily made from scrap materials such as broken pallets or scrap lumber, or if you are not very handy with building things, you can purchase a compost bin for a reasonable price on the internet or a hardware store. By recycling organic waste materials in the compost bin and mixing with equal part soil, you can make a very healthy environment for your plants to grow in.

Access

If you are building a fence or some type of wall, remember that you will probably need to get equipment and or materials through your yard, this will be handy for situations like tree trimming/removal or building or demolishing a structure. If you are hiring someone to do the work, be prepared to encounter additional costs if there is no access or something has to be removed and replaced, having sufficient access could save you a huge headache in the future. Remember a survey as well as a building permit may be needed.

Landscaping

Whether flowers or shrubs, perennials are a wise choice as they do not have to be replaced annually and ultimately can save you money. Consulting an arborist for guidance would be helpful if adding a tree is desired. A young tree will probably be the least expensive choice. A pathway using stepping stones can be a nice touch. Professional advice would be recommended. Tired of lawn maintenance? Rocks, pebbles and boulders can be a possibility. Choose the type to compliment your home.

Fencing:

Check local building codes for maximum height requirements.



10 Tips for Green Thumb GARDENING

Don't like all the dirt in your fingernails while you work in the garden? Before you go out, run your fingernails across a bar of soap and you'll effectively seal the undersides of your nails so dirt cannot accumulate. Then, after you are all done gardening, use a toothpick or nailbrush to remove the soap and your nails will be sparkling clean.



Spray vegetable oil on your string trimmer to help prevent jamming or breaking (Treat before installing string in trimmer).

2.



Make a convenient measuring tool out of a long handled garden tool by laying it on the ground next to a tape measure. Use a permanent marker to copy the inches and feet. Next time you are spacing plants you already have a dual-purpose measuring tool in your hand!

Write the names of your plants (with a permanent marker) on the flat parts of stones of any size and lay them in front of your plants for natural looking markers.



The next time you boil or steam vegetables, use the leftover water to water potted patio plants, and you'll be surprised at how the plants grow with "vege-soup."

You can use leftover tea and coffee grounds to help acidify the soil of acid-loving plants like azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias, gardenias and blueberries. A light sprinkle of about 1/4 of an inch applied once a month will help keep the pH of the soil on the acidic side.



You can use chamomile tea to control damping-off fungus, which often attacks young seedlings quite suddenly. Just add some tea to the soil around the soil of seedlings once a week for healthy plant.

Here is a really quick way to dry out your herbs: Just lay a sheet of newspaper on the seat of your car, arrange the herbs in a single layer, then roll up the windows and shut the car doors. Your herbs will be dry in no time!



Use your blender to grind up egg shells. Just like a mother bird chews up worms for the baby birds making the food easier to digest, grinding eggshells makes it easy for your garden to absorb the calcium egg shells retain.

Animals (cats especially) seem to think all of the hard work you've put into your garden looks like a huge litter box. To keep them from pooping on your basil and other plants, strategically place a few plastic forks around your plants to deter them from destroying your fresh herbs, fruits, and vegetables.



Remodeling Safety Tips

Keep your Children Safe

Take note of potentially toxic materials you will be using for your project. Lead paint, asbestos, mold, and even dust are health hazards during a remodel, especially when the project includes demolition.

Keep children and pets out of areas where those hazards exist and away from toxic chemicals, such as paint strippers.

Power Tools

When using power tools be sure take out for use and put away when finished for the day. Don't leave them laying around for your children to stumble upon.

Materials

Building materials—such as adhesives, paints, sealants, and varnishes—can emit volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, even when stored. Exposure to VOCs as well as other pollutants can cause immediate symptoms, including respiratory irritation, headache, dizziness, and memory impairment. Some organic compounds may pose a cancer risk.

Keep your Pets Safe



Remember to separate your pets from your project.

Using Ladders Safely

Using a ladder is not always 100% safe. Use these practices when using a ladder:

Always open a stepladder to its fullest position, lock the spreader braces on each side in place, and pull down the bucket shelf.

Whether you are going up or coming down, always face the ladder head-on, and use both hands to hold onto the side rails or rungs.



Don't climb higher than two rungs from the top; don't sit or stand on the top or the bucket shelf.

To keep yourself from overreaching and getting off balance, never let your navel go beyond either of the ladder's side rails.

If you must work on a ladder in front of a door, lock the door.

Put the paint can or tray on the bucket shelf before you climb the ladder. And don't go up the ladder with tools in your hand or in your pockets.

If possible, get someone to stabilize the bottom of the ladder with both hands on the lower legs of the ladder.

Take it slow. It is not a race to the top. Use both hands and plant your feet carefully on each step.



Safety Tips

FIRST AID FOR BURNS & CHOKING

BURNS

For minor 1st and 2nd degree burns smaller than 3" in diameter: Cool the Burn. Run cool water over the burned area for 5 minutes, or until the pain diminishes. Never put ice on a burn!

Bandage the burn with sterile gauze:

It is important to use loosely wrapped gauze. This will avoid pressure and the bandage protects blisters. NEVER put lotions, vaseline, ointments or butter on burn. Do not break any blisters, which can cause infection.

Take Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen or Acetaminophen to relieve pain:

Minor burns usually heal with these basic treatments. Be aware for signs of infection which may include: increased pain, redness, fever, swelling or oozing. If symptoms develop, seek medical help. Avoid tanning the burned area for at least a year. Protect the area with sun-screen outdoors. Avoid giving aspirin to children.

For 3rd degree burns/all major burns - DIAL 911

DO NOT run cold water over large severe burns - this can cause shock.

DO NOT remove burnt clothing.

Check for signs of breathing/coughing/movement.

If there are no signs of breathing begin CPR.

Elevate burned areas above heart level, if possible.

Cover the burn(s) with cool, sterile, moist bandages, towels or cloth.

CHOKING

Most people clutch at their throats when choking, an obvious symbol for help. However, if a person isn't giving that signal, be alert for these indications. Inability to talk, difficulty breathing or noisy breathing, inability to cough forcefully, skin/lips/nails turning blue, loss of consciousness.

The Red Cross recommends a "five-and-five" method for first aid: First give five blows between the person's shoulders with the heel of your hand. Second, perform the Heimlich maneuver (abdominal thrusts) five times. Alternate between five back blows and five abdominal thrusts until the blockage is dislodged.



IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 911

Build • Plant • Live • Grow



LOCALLY

...and support
the community
you live in!

you live in!
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