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Summer 2008

HOMESENSE

Smart and simple ways to enrich your home living



AirCare

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 windows? 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.

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%.

To learn about other steps you can take, call us and ask about our free energy survey.

MyWord

CHANGE IS GOOD

By Tim Boulden

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 – but hopefully only outside! Our goal during this season or any season is to keep you comfortable. So please let us know how we can be of help.

If you've already had your spring tune-up on your air conditioning system, you should be in good shape when the heat hits its height. Still, if you experience any trouble at all, just give us a call and we'll get



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SAVE BIG ON SUMMER VACATIONS

There's nothing like the open road in summertime – where you pack the cooler and the kids and head for the lake, the beach, or the mountains. Trouble is, the open road these days is filled with thousands of other travelers headed in the same direction!

Summer vacationers will also notice a little thing called “gasoline prices” – now at record highs. What's more, the travel organization AAA recently conducted a survey that showed summer travelers could experience a 5% increase in lodging and dining costs.

Hold on, now! Don't put that suitcase back in the closet just yet. The summer vacation is as important as ever.

To keep costs under control while making the most of your summer vacation, the best advice is the age-old advice: plan ahead. Create a budget. Figure out what

you can afford.

A recent AAA survey showed that a family of four will pay an average of \$247 per day for food and lodging. But you can adjust that downward with the low-frills route – or upward with high-priced accommodations and entertainment venues. Your costs will depend on your choices. Analyze your options for the best financial fit for you.



Before You Go

Before you head out on the highway, think smart:

- Buy what you can ahead of time, like film, sunscreen, and first-aid supplies. That saves you from the high-prices of convenience stores or hotel shops.
- Remember, the family that

travels together stays together – and for hours at a time. Many of the old car games of yesteryear have given way to on-road movies with portable DVD players, and that helps. You could also borrow books on tape from your local library. Other good bets: drawing supplies, books, magazines, and handheld video games.

- Pack the snacks.

Vacation travel without snacks in the vehicle is like vacation travel with a bunch of people saying, “I'm hungry.” Pack a cooler to keep the on-the-road complaints to a minimum. That saves on on-the-road food costs too.

If you're undecided about your summer vacation plans, you can find a great resource at www.seeamerica.org.



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.



Whatever you decide in terms of “green,” just remember that saving a little now can save a lot later – and not just money. You're also ensuring

that your children, grandchildren, and the many generations to come have the resources they need to leave happy healthy lives.



Fitting the Flow Of Modern Life...In the Bathroom

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. 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. So go ahead and set aside a few days to take care of business. Then sit back, relax, and enjoy the rest of your summer. After all, a few of those "lazy days" never hurt anyone.

DidYouKnow?



- The average American spends 120 hours a month watching television – 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.

*Tell your friends you get smarter reading HomeSense!
We can add them to the list, too. Just call!*

MyWord



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someone out there right away.

On the other hand, if you haven't scheduled your tune-up yet, we'll gladly make time on our schedule to give your system a thorough evaluation and our best recommendation for keeping it running smoothly.

HomePoints

Every year, more than \$13 billion worth of energy leaks from houses through small holes and cracks.

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

Sincerely,

Tim Boulden

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.

WIRED

- More house fires are caused by faulty wiring than any other source...

Sadly, many could've been prevented with a simple **home wiring check**. Wires get loose; Circuit breakers get dirty; Water gets where it shouldn't. There are many reasons...

But the **ONLY** reason people don't have a wiring safety check is they don't think about it. Until it's too late.

Call us to make sure your home is safe. A quick call to us can save your home... and maybe a lot more.

Call Mister Sparky at 888-8-SPARKY!

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Some Things Are Just Better Au Naturel...

Like environment friendly Bio-Smart®. It destroys blockages and odors in your plumbing system naturally – and helps prevent future drainage problems.

But it's only available through your plumber. So call **Boulden Plumbing** at **888-528-3848** for your Bio-Smart® today.

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Is There Such A Thing As "Too Busy" To Save Money?

Sometimes it seems like the stream of demands on our time is never-ending. Harried schedules and mountains of commitments make it easy to forget the importance of keeping your heating and cooling system tuned. But "too busy" now can mean "too much" later—too much time, too much hassle, and too much expense to repair your home comfort system.

Especially since research shows that lack of maintenance is the #1 cause of a system failure. Have you budgeted the \$3,000-\$7,000 for a new system? I promise, "saving money" by not getting a tune-up can be very costly!

That's why we're offering to take care of this for you. Our valued customers can get a seasonal tune-up for smooth, efficient running, plus a full system safety check to keep you healthy and safe for just \$89. This small investment in home comfort could save you thousands in repairs or replacement costs. So call today – we're never too busy to keep you comfortable!

Boulden's One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning at 888-333-8888

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HOME SENSE

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