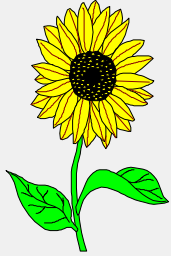


# The Building Inspector

Newsletter



[www.Moirhomeinspections.com](http://www.Moirhomeinspections.com)



## Summer 2008

We hope that everyone is enjoying the warm sunny days that are Summer!

We have some weather appropriate “How-to”'s and “Tip's” in this issue of our *Newsletter*.

### The Perseid Meteor Shower

The Perseids are probably the most-watched annual meteor shower. The shower has a very long duration, from about July 15 through August 25. The shower is most interesting around its peak on August 12 or 13. This year, the peak comes on August 12 because of the leap year. Evening Perseid rates are fairly low, and the bright Moon makes things worse this year.

The highlight of the show comes during the predawn hours when the Moon is down and the radiant is high.

Predawn rates for observers with truly dark skies may exceed 100 Perseids per hour. Adjacent mornings from August 10 through August 13 are well worth watching, although rates will be significantly lower.



### Index

#### Page 1

Perseid Meteor Shower  
Quick Tip

#### Page 2

HUD 203k Consulting  
Bees

#### Page 3

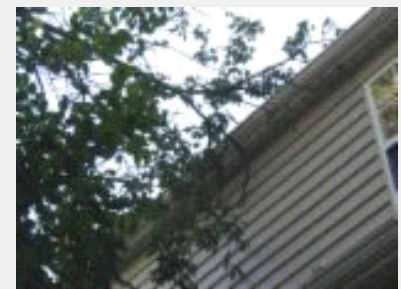
Vinyl Siding  
Garden Watering

#### Page 4

Roof Maintenance  
Recipe

### Quick Tip

Prune trees and shrubs so that branches do not come in contact with exterior siding or the roof surface.



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## Did You Know that Michael is a HUD FHA203k Consultant?

Perhaps you know someone who would like to buy a home that needs repairs. The FHA 203K loan allows you to purchase a home “in its present condition,” and then do the needed repairs in the six months following.

All the money for the needed repairs is included in your new loan, and waiting for your use in your escrow account.

One Loan in two parts: The first part of the loan pays the seller; the second part is put in an escrow account to be used as you do the renovation!

Of course, you have probably purchased and are settled in your new home. The FHA 203k also allows the refinance and cost of repairs of your current home. In the case of a refinance, the first part pays off your mortgage, and again, the second part is put in the escrow account for your use.

You can call us, or you can visit [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) for more information.



**Turn This.....Into This  
With HUD 203k**

## Bothered By Bees?



An easy trap to make is from a plastic 2-liter pop bottle. Discard the lid. Cut the funnel shaped top off the bottle and save it. Fill the bottom with a few inches of soda pop or sugar water. Invert it into the bottom part of the bottle. Punch a few holes where the two pieces meet around the sides.

Tie strings in these holes to make a hanger. Rub a little petroleum jelly around the opening so escaping wasps will lose their footing.



## Vinyl Siding Do's & Don'ts

### DO WASH IT

Once a year, invest an hour or two in rinsing every bit of the siding with a garden hose to get rid of dust and dirt. If allowed to accumulate year after year, the siding will eventually begin to look distinctly grimy and won't come clean unless scrubbed.

### DON'T BASH IT.

Be careful where you park your lawn mower, bicycle, or snowblower. Vinyl doesn't dent (unlike aluminum, which sustains big, permanent damage when smacked with a line drive or poked with a rake handle), but it can crack or break, especially when rendered brittle by cold weather. Replace any damaged sections as soon as you can.

### DO INSPECT IT

Although vinyl siding doesn't cause wood rot, it may conceal moisture-related problems from another source. If a leak is hidden behind the vinyl siding -- which is itself impervious to decay -- it may go unnoticed for a long time. Investigate any suspicious streaking or staining that appears on the vinyl itself or on the exposed foundation wall beneath, either of which may warn of hidden trouble. Because the nails or screws that secure the siding to the wall lose their holding power in rotted wood, loose areas of siding are another warning sign.

### DON'T MELT IT.

Vinyl has a low melting point and is slow to burn. "You'd be amazed at the number of people who park their gas grills a foot away from the siding and fire them up," Jeff May says. "Then later they notice a big melted patch on the wall." Keep that barbecue a safe distance away from the wall, and be careful with those patio torches and any other sources of intense heat.

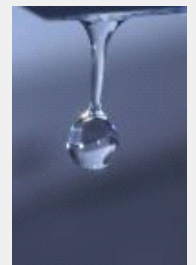
### PAINT IT?

Well, Maybe. Although the whole purpose of vinyl or aluminum siding is to avoid painting, it can be painted with any good-quality exterior latex paint. That can be a useful option if you want to squeeze another few years out of a badly faded batch of vinyl, or if you've moved into a house whose color you just can't stand and you want to buy time while you consider other options. But -- and this is an important but -- vinyl should never be painted a dark, heat-absorbing color, or it will tend to warp and sag when exposed to strong sunlight. Stick to white, gray, pale yellow, or some other

## Hot Weather Watering



Create mini-reservoirs for tomatoes, peppers, or squash from empty plastic milk jugs or soda bottles. With a sharp knife, cut several small, X-shape holes in the bottom, bury about half of the jug or bottle in soil between two plants, and refill as needed. The water will seep slowly and deeply down to where the plants' roots can use it most.



## Roof Maintenance

People generally make a habit of taking a good look at their roof in the autumn, before a long winter sets in. But summer storms can do damage caused from high winds, heavy rain and hail. Unless you are having trouble with visible leakage, checking the roof a bit more often than once a year is advisable. Roofing material, like anything else, is subject to wear and tear, and is your first line of defense from the elements.

A roof that is neglected can cost you much more than what it normally would in terms of damaged roof boards, studs, and even interior ceilings and walls.

Just going up on the roof and looking around isn't enough. You will need to look for specific things. Let's look at what needs to be done:

1. Check flashings on the roof. Flashings are the metal pieces in a roof that cover interruptions in the roof plane, such as around dormers, chimneys, and vent pipes. If it appears there is damage, fix these problems right away, or call a roof contractor and have them fix problems. Inadequate or faulty flashing will allow melting snow to enter the interior, causing not only infrastructure rot, but possible damage to interior walls.
2. Asphalt roofing materials have a granular surface, much like fine gravel. As the asphalt ages, it becomes brittle, and these granules will come out over time. If you see a lot of these granules in gutters, chances are the roof is aging. Look for bare spots in asphalt shingles, and inspect closely for signs of tearing or warping. If you notice shingles curling up, it is time for replacement.

Taking the time to do a thorough inspection on a regular basis will save you a lot of money in the long run.

## Frozen Monkey Treats



Here is a healthy snack that your kids will go bananas for!

Peel a banana and cut it in half. Insert popsicle sticks into the cut ends.

Dip the bananas into yogurt or melted chocolate, and then roll the bananas in chopped nuts, crushed cereal, or coconut shavings.

Place the bananas on a small waxed paper-lined baking sheet and set the sheet into the freezer for an hour or so.

Fun to make and even more fun to eat!

