

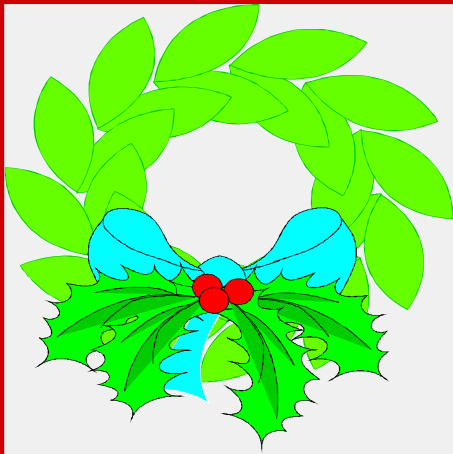
The Building Inspector

Newsletter

Issue 4. Volume 3



www.Moirhomeinspections.com



We would like to
take this opportunity
to thank all of our
clients and friends

for the opportunity to provide our ser-
vices to them, and to wish all of you a
very Happy Holiday Season and all the
best in the coming New Year!

Have you checked out the Environmental Protection Web Page lately? They are celebrating 40 years and they have a new feature that allows you to get maps and environmental information for your area; all you need to do is input your zip code. Try it at www.epa.gov .



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EPA

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For more holiday safety tips,
check out these websites:

The American Academy of Pediatrics at:

<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/novtips.cfm>

The U.S. Fire Administration at:

http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/home_fire_prev/holiday-seasonal/holiday.shtm

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Do you need a humidifier?

In winter months, your house may become too dry from the heated air being circulated through your home. If the air is too dry, some things you may notice could be:

- More colds and flu's than normal
- Dry and cracked skin or lips
- Static electricity
- A general feeling of discomfort and dryness
- Wood flooring and moldings can dry out and develop gaps or even cracks.
- Houseplants will get sickly and you might even find some wallpaper starting to peel at the edges and seams.

Adding humidity to the air in your home will help get rid of these problems. You can do that in a number of ways, such as adding a central humidifier to the heating system, boiling a pot of water on your stove or drying your clothes on a rack in the basement, but one of the cheapest and easiest ways is to get a portable humidifier. The Environmental Protection Agency says that your home's humidity level should be between 30 and 50 percent.

Regardless of the method they use to humidify air, tabletop models run from about \$20 to \$70, and consoles run from \$75 to \$150. Tabletop units output from 2 to 4 gallons per 24 hours. Small consoles output 8 gallons per 24-hour period. The latter can handle up to a 2,000-square-foot area. A large console may output 14 gallons, enough to humidify a 3,250-square-foot house.

Central evaporative humidifiers are hooked up to the heating equipment, and water is piped directly to them, so they're out of sight and out of mind most of the time. Because they deliver humidified air directly to rooms throughout the house, they're particularly efficient. The only drawbacks are that you need a forced-air system to operate a central humidifier and humidification takes place only when the forced-air system is running (this isn't a problem in most homes because it is generally the heating process that dries out the air). Equipment prices range from \$140 to \$200; the cost of installation depends upon the complexity of the work, but it is likely to run about \$100.

Christmas Safety Tips

- Whether you choose to decorate a fresh tree around the holidays or an artificial tree there are some things you need to consider. When selecting an artificial tree make sure its UL approved and flame resistant. If you opt for a real tree make sure it's as fresh as you can get it. Keeping your thirsty Christmas tree well hydrated is the best way to prevent a tree fire. When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant".
- Check each set of tree lights for frayed wires, broken bulbs, and loose connections. Turn off lights before you go to bed or leave the house.
- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals.
- Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards for younger children.
- Keep holiday plants away from children and pets. Mistletoe, holly berries, and Christmas cactus are poisonous if swallowed.
- Don't leave gifts out in the open in the home. Keep those locked and your blinds drawn when you aren't home or are sleeping/otherwise occupied. Most home burglaries happen this time of year, and it would be awful to have the presents stolen along with your other treasured possessions.



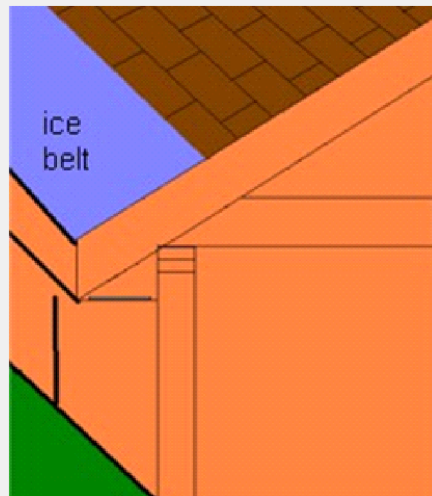
Ice Damming

Yes, it's that dreaded time of year again! Ice dams are caused by the melting of snow on the roof, which flows down the roof to the edge, where it freezes and builds up. What causes this?? Sometimes even the best roof designs can get them. Generally, it is caused by a warm attic and cold eaves. That allows the snow to melt up on the roof over the attic, and then refreeze when the water reaches the eaves. The eaves are cold since they are not over the house, but are hanging out there in the cold. If the ice doesn't fall off the roof, and hangs on, then the water melting above, will build up behind the ice.

Well...that water that is building up behind the dam can get high enough to get under the shingles and leak into the attic. It often shows up as water leaking from the window trim or as wet spots in the ceiling close to the walls. If it happens once it can stain your woodwork, and make those ugly water marks on your drywall and will rot the roof decking, and other framing members.

An Ice Belt is Metal flashing installed all the way along the eaves and extends to the area of the roof above the attic. It covers the area where the ice will form. It serves two purposes, first it provides a surface which permits the snow and ice to just slide off preventing most dams. Second it provides a surface that water won't flow up under as it does with shingles.

And you can always install a metal roof. These, while they are expensive, will eliminate ice dams completely. The snow and ice will slide right off, and they have no horizontal seam that water can get up under.



Peppermint Bark

Ingredients:

1 cup crushed peppermint
2 lbs white chocolate
Peppermint flavor
(optional)

Directions:

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Combine candy cane pieces with chocolate (add peppermint flavoring at this point if desired.) Pour mixture onto a cookie sheet layered with parchment or waxed paper and place in the refrigerator for 45 minutes or until firm. Remove from cookie sheet and break into pieces (like peanut brittle.)

