

The Building Inspector

Newsletter

Issue 3, Volume 1



www.Moirhomeinspections.com



Winter Issue



We hope everyone is keeping warm!

Special Announcement

Did you know that EPA has designated January as National Radon Action Month?

As a result, we are offering a Radon Test at half our current rate.

Order a Radon Test for only \$75.00 when included with a General Home Inspection! *This offer is also available if you have already had your home inspected by us!*

Educate your family and friends about the health risks of Radon and encourage them to have their home tested.

We use Radalink Radon Monitors. All data is reviewed for any sign of suspected tampering by the professional team at Radalink. Clients are provided with their test results within one hour of completing and downloading the test

Call now to schedule:
Cleveland Area - (440) 892-8997
Mid-Ohio Valley - (740) 585-2911

Due to the extreme adverse weather conditions this month, we will be extending this offer to February 28th, 2008.

Protect Your Loved Ones. Test for Radon. (Valentine's Day)

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For more Radon information
click on a link below::

http://www.moirhomeinspections.com/Radon_Test

<http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/hmbyguid.html>
for the EPA's "Homebuyer's
and Seller's Guide to Radon"

<http://www.radalink.com/>



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10 Ways to Save on Your Gas Bills

Just follow these simple guidelines and enjoy lower gas bills this season.

1. Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter. For each degree you raise your thermostat setting, your fuel bill climbs 3 percent. So dress accordingly, consider slipping into a sweater before you crank up the temperature.
2. Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as needed. A simple task like this and those in No. 3 could improve your systems' energy efficiency by 10 percent.
3. Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators as needed; make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.
4. Bleed trapped air from hot-water radiators once or twice a season; if in doubt about how to perform this task, call a professional.
5. Place heat-resistant radiator reflectors between exterior walls and the radiators.
6. Use kitchen, bath, and other ventilating fans wisely; in just 1 hour, these fans can pull out a houseful of warmed air. Turn fans off as soon as they have done the job. Try to keep the humidity level between 30 percent and 60 percent.
7. During the heating season, keep the draperies and shades on your south-facing windows open during the day to allow sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows. During the cooling season, keep the window coverings closed during the day to prevent solar gain.
8. Close an unoccupied room that is isolated from the rest of the house, such as in a corner, and turn down the thermostat or turn off the heating for that room or zone. Some programmable thermostats now come with temperature zoning options. Don't turn the heating off if it adversely affects the rest of your system. For example, if you heat your house with a heat pump, do not close the vents; closing the vents could harm the heat pump.
9. Consider installing double-pane windows with protective coating that reflects heat back into your home during winter. If such a retrofit is not in your budget, cover your windows with clear plastic film. At a typical cost of \$4 to \$6 per window, the film creates an insulating air pocket between the plastic and the window, reducing heat loss through windows by between 25 percent and 50 percent.
10. Caulk and weather strip around exterior seams, cracks and openings. Pay extra attention around windows and at points where various exterior materials like wood, brick and vinyl siding meet. And on the inside, caulk and weather-strip around windows and door frames will cut down on drafts.



This is an online place to give away and find things for free. With the struggles many are facing financially and the desire to consume less, this "give and take" philosophy has become increasingly popular. We all have things to get rid of or things we need, but don't necessarily want to spend money on. Sellers are often cleaning out and then there are buyers that need things for their new home. So if you want to give away or find something just check out the website : freecycle.org and look for your state, then your area. This is countrywide, so feel free to pass it along to all your friends and family!



Avert Disaster: 10 Signs That There Could Be A Problem...

Your water bill suddenly increases for no obvious reason: If you haven't left the hose running for a few days by mistake, you may have a water leak someplace underground where it can't be seen. To confirm, shut off everything in the house and check the water meter reading over an hour. If the flow continues, you have a leak.

Slow flushing toilets and sluggish drains: Because toilets dump a lot of water down waste lines quickly they are usually the first to exhibit signs that there is a clog or trouble with a septic system. If other drains are slow too, you can be sure that it is the whole system that is not working properly and not just one cranky fixture. Untreated clogs can become a big, smelly mess.

Rusty nails, dark wall stains and musty odors, but no leaks: Water damage does not need a leaky pipe or roof to occur. In many homes, problems with poor ventilation can cause water damage that is every bit as bad as a leak from a burst pipe. In fact, it can be worse because it often goes undetected longer and can cause health problems.

Doors and windows that will not close or keep opening, and mysterious cracks that keep getting larger: Sure your house could be haunted, but it's more likely that your home is settling unevenly. Small expansion cracks in concrete or plaster are usually nothing to worry about but if there are more problems you should call a structural engineer.

You continually have to relight a pilot light on an appliance: The thermocouple is probably bad. (This is the safety device that shuts off the gas to an appliance when it senses that the pilot light is no longer burning.) A thermocouple is a "fail safe" device-that is, when it goes bad it performs its intended function regardless of need. So although your pilot may be on, the wayward thermocouple will still shut it and the gas off.

Your clothes come out of the dryer too hot or still damp: Often lint will clog dryer vents that are too long or kinked. In some cases this will even lead to fires. To solve the problem dryer vents should be kept as short as possible and cleaned at least once a year

Flu and allergy like symptoms whenever you are at home: Dirty air filters and dirty ducts in your home's heating/cooling system can fill your home with sickening mold and bacteria. Other causes may include adhesives and chemicals in furniture and rugs and a lack of fresh air circulating into your home.

Hot switches and plugs, sizzling electric boxes, dimming lights and tripping breakers: These are symptoms of a seriously overburdened electrical system. Switches and plugs that get hot when you use them, sizzles and buzzes in electric boxes, lights that dim when you turn on other appliances and breakers and fuses that continually need to be reset or replaced are red flags saying you need to upgrade your electrical system. Unchecked, this problem could escalate into a fire hazard.

Continued . . .

Avert Disaster Continued . . .

Small holes in wood surfaces, mud tunnels along foundations, and sawdust: Sounds like termites are taking over. These pests are a problem everywhere, but especially in southern states. Because termites do most of their damage where it cannot be seen-inside the wood-you should always be on the lookout for warning signs. Have your home inspected if you suspect these monsters are present.

Small piles of sand around roof drains and gutters: Just like sand in an hourglass, when an asphalt composite (tar paper) roof starts to go bad, the little grains of sand stuck to the paper start to fall off and flow down. When enough grains have fallen off that you see bare patches, it's time for a new roof.

Hey! Did you know that
February is:
National Return Shopping
Carts to the Supermarket
Month



and January is:
National Egg Month and to
celebrate along with the
Presidential Inauguration
we have a special recipe for
you on Page 4!



Drywall Danger!

Chinese-made drywall imported during the height of the housing boom is suspected of being responsible for the corrosion and failure of metal components, as well as foul odors. Although primarily used in Southern Florida, it is unknown if the drywall was used in other areas of the country. State and federal health officials are trying to determine whether gases emitted by the drywall are hazardous to humans.

State officials and builders said one manufacturer of the Chinese drywall was Knauf, a German-based company, which made the product at its subsidiary's plant in China. Knauf Plasterboard (Tianjin) Co. Ltd. has made plasterboard for almost a decade in Tianjin, China.

Any Lennar homeowner with questions or concerns can contact Division President Darin McMurray at (239) 278-1177.

Could you have Chinese drywall?

- Does your home have a strong smell (a sulfur or rotten egg-type smell)
- Do you have corroded copper coils in your air conditioner or are the coils black?
- Do you have KNAUF written on the back of your drywall? Go to your attic and look at the back side of the drywall for Knauf. This is the manufacturer's ID, which identifies it as the drywall in question. Chinese drywall is thinner and lighter than typical drywall



For more information check out this link:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28356420>

Barbara Bush's Mushroom Quiche

Recipe courtesy First Ladies' Cookbook

Ingredients

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 1/4 pounds mushrooms, sliced
3 green onions, minced
1 garlic clove, minced
3 shallots, minced
1 3/4 teaspoons oregano
1 3/4 teaspoons basil
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
3/4 teaspoon marjoram
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
4 eggs
3/4 cup skim or whole milk
1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust

Directions

Position rack in lower 1/3 of oven and preheat to 375 degrees. Melt butter in large skillet over medium-high heat. Saute the mushrooms, onions, garlic, and shallots together. Stir in seasonings and cook 2 minutes until liquid is evaporated. Let cool 5 minutes. In a medium bowl combine eggs with milk or cream and beat well. Stir in mushroom mixture and pour into pie crust. Bake until filling is puffed, set and starting to brown—about 35 to 45 minutes.

You can use just about any ingredients in a Quiche so go ahead and experiment to satisfy your family!

