

The Building Inspector

Newsletter



www.Moirhomeinspections.com



Wintertime!!!



That wonderful time of year that most of us are tired of by now...

So to make it easier to get out of the house, we have some tips for clearing your driveway of snow and ice.

Hopefully you don't have any trouble with ice dams building up on your roof, but if you do, we have some help for you. Just remember that ice dam removal is very dangerous so you might want to hire a professional.

And of course we have included a few other interesting tips and ideas for you.

Issue 2, Volume 1

Page 1

Chimney Diagram
Mark Your Calendar

Page 2

Driveway Ice Removal
Helpful Hint
Homemade Bird Food

Page 3

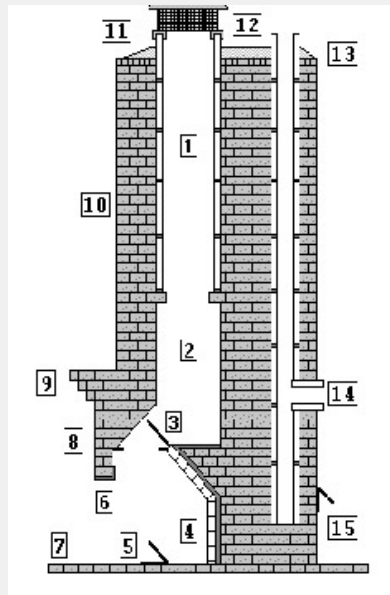
Ice Dam
Around The Yard

Page 4

Ice Dam (Cont'd)
Recipe

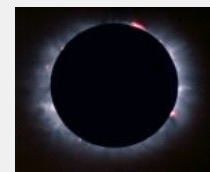
Have you ever wondered about the workings of your fireplace?
Below is a diagram showing just that!

1. Flue (shown with clay tile liners)
2. Smoke Chamber
3. Smoke Shelf
4. Fireplace, or Firebox
5. Ash Pit
6. Lintel
7. Hearth Extension
8. Face Wall
9. Mantel
10. Fireplace Chimney
11. Crown, or Wash
12. Chimney Cap
13. Chimney
14. Thimble, or Breech
15. Cleanout Door



Mark Your Calendar!

A total eclipse of the Moon occurs during the night of Wednesday, February 20/21, 2008.



On February 20th the eclipse will begin at 8:43PM. At 10:26PM the moon will be in total eclipse and at 12:09 February 21st, the event will be over. Yes, it is in the middle of the week, but if you happen to be awake, go out and treat yourself. Hopefully it will be a clear night!



(440) 892-8997

The Building Inspector
Moir Home Inspection Service, LLC

(740) 585-2911

De-ice Your Driveway

Did late storms take you by surprise last winter? Don't be caught unprepared! When it comes to removing snow and ice from your driveway many people turn to salt. But salt can damage soil and plants, contaminate groundwater, and corrode driveways, car bodies and even household floors. The most sustainable way to de-ice your driveway or sidewalk is to physically shovel or scrape the wintery mix away.



Some ice melting products can be harmful to the environment, children and pets, so be sure to read the label. Many of the pellets you put down on the driveway to melt the ice, such as Driveway Heat, contain chemicals that are considered to be non-toxic if used correctly but are still just as harmful as salt. Children and pets are especially at risk because these products heat up - some to 175 degrees - to break the ice away from the driveway. Pets can get the pellets stuck in their paws and end up burnt, or worse, ingesting them. The same is true for children. Anything you track onto your carpet can end up in children's eyes or mouths.

Some chemicals are less harmful to the environment and your family. Safe Paw makes an ice melting product that is specifically designed to keep children and pets safe. Cryotech E36 is acetate-based and is considered nontoxic. Calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) is a better alternative to salt, but can still be harmful to the environment.

Proper application of deicers can extend the longevity of concrete surfaces. The recommended application rate of ice melt typically is 2 to 4 ounces per square yard, but you should always follow the manufacturer's directions. Keep in mind that you should not apply ice melt to pre-cast concrete and concrete less than one year old.

It is important to use an effective deicer at no more than recommended rates, and to remove all slush and water as soon as possible.

Chipping and flaking are often blamed on the deicing chemicals. Concrete is porous and absorbs moisture, especially when it is new and has not finished curing, or if it is a poor-quality concrete. If concrete has absorbed water and temperatures then drop below freezing, the water within the concrete will freeze and expand, and chipping and flaking will result.

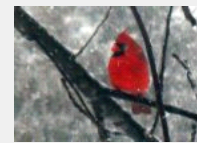
Helpful Tip

Ever find yourself with an icy windshield and your last drop of wiper fluid? Try this:



To help clear your windshield, fill windshield wiper reservoir with one part water and two parts vinegar or use water and rubbing alcohol. Then make sure your windshield wipers are in working condition.

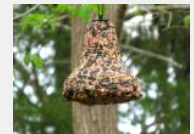
Brrrrr, it's cold outside!



How about gathering the children and making a treat for the birds. It's very simple!

You will need:

- 2 cups shortening or drippings
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup oatmeal
- 1 cup birdseed



Melt the shortening and peanut butter in a large saucepan, then remove it from the heat and add the oatmeal and birdseed and mix well. Pour into a muffin pan and let set overnight. It will keep for 6 months. Try grains, nuts, flour and cornmeal in your suet, too.

Ice Damming

Ah, those beautiful icicles! On the outside. But on the inside, they are a sign of a serious problem known as Ice Damming. Ice dams usually occur after a heavy snowfall and several days of freezing temperatures. Warm air inside your home leaks into the attic and will warm the underside of the roof causing snow and ice on the roof to melt. The melted water will drain along the roof, under the snow, until it reaches the cold overhang. The overhang tends to be at the same temperature as the outdoors and the melted water will refreeze and form an ice dam and icicles. The ice dam can cause damage to the roof, which will result in water leaks to the inside.



The first and most obvious solution is to be sure your attic is well insulated. Even with good insulation, a certain amount of heat is still lost into the attic, so once it's there you need to get rid of it. The most effective way of doing that, just like in the summer, is through good attic ventilation.

WARNING! Performing ice dam removal is risking severe personal injury and damage to the roof if not done properly. Never walk on a snow covered roof and make sure if you're using a ladder you follow the proper safety procedures. I highly suggest contacting professionals with the proper equipment and roofing experience to carry out this job.

(Continued on Page 4)

Around The Yard

Test buds of peaches and other sensitive



fruits for freeze damage.

Bring in a few twigs cut from the trees and place them in a vase of water. If the twigs bloom in a week or two, expect blossoms in the spring and a crop next summer and fall.

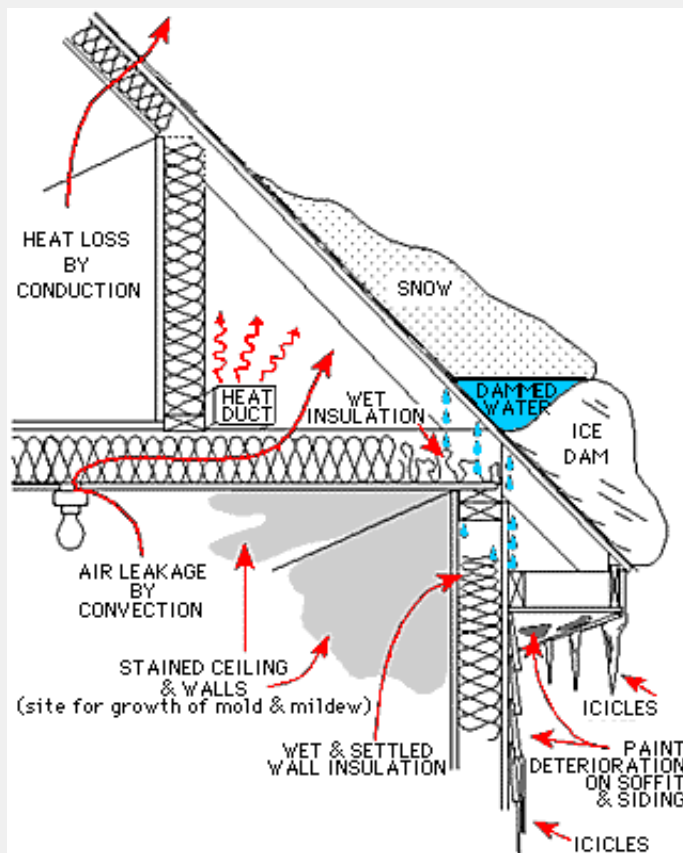
Keep this in mind while pruning: Fruit usually grows on the horizontal branches, rather than the vertical ones. Vertical branches may be trained to become horizontal by weighting them down for a few weeks.



Ice Damming (Continued)

If you do decide to tackle the problem yourself, here are some tips: Using a roof rake and push broom (not water) remove the snow by carefully pulling it down the slope of the roof line. Never pull snow across the roof or it may break off the shingles and other damages. Then carefully chip away a channel through the ice dam so the water will be able to flow through, just make sure you stop when you get close to the roofing. It's not necessary to remove all of the ice in the gutters or the ice dam itself if you have removed the snow from the roof, it will melt when the temperatures rise.

But remember an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Properly ventilating and insulating the attic is usually the best way to prevent ice dams.



Crab Dip

Entertaining during Lent?
Try this delicious and easy to make dip.

You'll need:

- 8 oz. crab meat (or imitation crab meat) chopped
- 1-1/2 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Old Bay (or any seasoning mix)
- 1 Tbs. chopped green onion
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise

Mix in the order that the ingredients appear. Chill for at least one hour and service with your favorite crackers.



Wondering if your internet service is up to speed? Click on the link below to find out:

www.internetfrog.com