

POSTNOTES

NEWS AND INFORMATION

VOL 9 NUMBER 2

SAFETY SENSE

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

After a long winter with the windows shut tight, things like pet dander, pollen, dust mites and smoke can linger in the air and inside your house – leaving you and your family vulnerable to scratchy throats, itchy eyes and more. Read on for some simple ways to improve your indoor air quality.

Vacuum these.

Your drapes and upholstery. A quick going-over will remove accumulated allergens. Then crack open a few windows everyday and enjoy the fresh air.

TIP: Now is also a great time to snap new filters into AC units in preparation for summer.

Clear vents.

Don't block heating and air conditioning vents with things like books, plants or furniture. When this happens, air can't flow normally. This reduces the supply of fresh air and circulation.

Prevent mold and dampness.

Since moisture promotes mould growth, dampness is one of the most common causes of poor indoor air quality in homes. Keep the air well circulated, use ceiling fans to keep air moving through parts of the house that may become damp or humid. Controlling the level of moisture is one of the best and easiest ways to improve indoor air quality and protect your health.

Sniff here.

In your basement and attic. A damp, musty smell could be mold. Using a flashlight, you or a home inspector can check for the telltale signs of water stains, discolored areas on the floor or walls, or dark patches of fuzz. Spot a problem? Mix one cup of bleach with a gallon of water and, wearing gloves, wipe it away. Note: if the area is larger than 10 feet, call a pro.

For added safety: Check the pilot lights on your stove and furnace, if the flames are yellow on top, they may be releasing too much carbon monoxide. Call your local gas company; most will send someone over for little or no cost.



MOTIVATION

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

In this hyper-connected information age people often point to the ready availability of content and information via the media (e.g., internet, TV, radio, etc.) as a key source of stress.

When you feel confident about what you know and are capable of there is usually no overload even in the face of a massive amount of information, because you are comfortable in your ability to filter and focus, make decisions, take action, and deal with the consequences.

On the other hand, it is easy to see how a lack of confidence can push you into overload. Without confidence, you endlessly seek more and more input and it can be difficult to filter and disregard some information to focus on what is important for you to take action.

How Can I Avoid Becoming Overwhelmed?

There are two key antidotes to the feeling of information overload caused by low self-confidence.

1. Value what you already know.

Look at the successes you have had so far in life. Did they come about because you uncovered that one unique gem of information that changed your life, your finances, or your relationships? Or did they come about because you applied and trusted yourself enough to make decisions, take action, and learn from the resulting feedback?

To allow yourself to value what you already know keep the following in mind:

- It is an almost universal human trait to devalue what you know and value what everyone else knows.
- We are trained from birth to believe that others know best – first our parents, then our teachers, then our employers.
- In most cases, you know a lot more than you give yourself credit for.
- Much of the information that is out there is not actually new.

2. Take action.

Value what you know and take action. Many people simply “collect” information and never use it or apply it. Many people who download eBooks off the web or buy self-help books never end up reading them! People attend seminars and never apply the principles that they learn. These people get stuck in the information search and collection mode.

Real growth is more often accumulated through your direct experience than from simply reading or hearing about a topic.

Rich Scheffren says: “Wisdom comes not from devouring information, but from filtering it through personal experience and taking action. It is the action or reaction, not the information itself, that makes us wise.”

Be comfortable in your ability to “find the answers” as the need arises. Commit to a course of action and then follow it.

When you value what you know, you gain the confidence necessary to identify, sort and filter relevant information and take action, and by taking action you can move forward step-by-step to build a solid foundation for the future.

Taken in this context, the wealth of information available today becomes helpful, reassuring and supportive, not stressful and overwhelming.

Jake Herman

www.PersonalAndBusinessSuccess.com





COST EXPECTANCY QUIZ

WALL SYSTEM - EXTERIOR

Guess the average cost to replace the following components.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 1. Brick Repainting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2-\$5/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5-\$7/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$7-\$9/sq. ft. |
| 2. Cedar Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> \$3-\$6/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$6-\$9/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$9-\$12/sq. ft. |
| 3. Brick Veneer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1-9/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$9-21/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$21-30/sq. ft. |
| 4. Brick Cleaning (unpainted) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2+/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$4+/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$6+/sq. ft. |
| 5. Brick Cleaning (painted) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$3/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$7/sq. ft. |
| 6. Stucco | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5-7/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$7-9/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$9-11/sq. ft. |
| 7. Vinyl Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> \$4-5/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5-6/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$6-7/sq. ft. |
| 8. Aluminum Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> \$4-5/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5-6/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$6-7/sq. ft. |

1. \$5-\$7/sq. ft. 2. \$9-\$12/sq. ft. 3. \$9-\$21/sq. ft. 4. \$2+/sq. ft. 5. \$5/sq. ft. 6. \$9-\$11/sq. ft. 7. \$4-\$5/sq. ft. 8. \$4-\$5/sq. ft.

CONTACT YOUR HOME INSPECTOR FOR A FULL VERSION OF OUR "RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING ESTIMATES".

PLUMBING POINTERS

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to plumbing. Here are a few common questions with some simple steps to follow for a better flowing plumbing system.

1 Can you pour fats and oils down the drain?

Many don't realize that when grease cools and solidifies, it sticks to the inside of pipes. Overtime, it will build up and block the entire pipe. Rather than dumping grease into your plumbing system, pour it into a heat resistant container, let it solidify and then dispose of it in the garbage.

2 What are some tips for keeping drains from becoming clogged?

To keep your drains in top working order, pour a cup of baking soda followed by a cup of vinegar down the drains on a monthly basis. Using baking soda and vinegar is a natural way to keep your drains clear and free of hair and excess build up – it's also environmentally friendly.

3 If I fixed a leaky tap, approximately how much could be saved on the water bill?

A dripping tap can waste up to 150 gallons of water per day, which is the equivalent of about \$15.00+ additional dollars on the water bill per month. To avoid wasting this resource, make sure you turn taps off all the way or get a plumber in to fix any leaky tap. Investing in plumbing maintenance now will help save money in the long run.



SETTING THE STAGE

GREEN- CLEAN FLOORS

You lie on them, your kids play on them, but floors are one of your home's dirtiest surfaces. These three green ideas are the ones experts say work best (without harsh chemicals) – so you can save on cleaning products and save the planet.

Carpets

Just have your family kick off their shoes at the door. This simple switch immediately eliminates almost all of the dirt, mold, germs and pesticides that get tracked into your house. Since this outdoor grime accounts for 80% of the dirt that settles into carpets, you'll need to vacuum and shampoo much less frequently, saving time and money.

Wood and laminate floors.

A damp cloth is just as effective on wood floors as a more expensive type of cleaner and safer for the environment too. For laminates simply mix 1 cup white vinegar into 1 gallon warm water and mop. Why does it work? The acetic acid in vinegar cuts through the grease and grime leaving you with laminates that shine.

Tile and linoleum floors.

Disinfect them with this green solution: Mix 2 cups water with a squirt of liquid soap and 20 drops of tea tree oil (found at health food stores). The soap lifts dirt, while the tea tree oil is a natural antiseptic that kills germs, so your kitchen and bathroom floors are sparkling and safe.

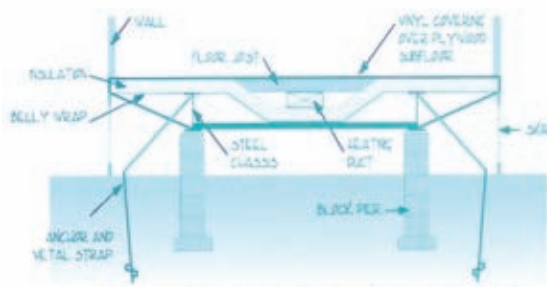


INSPECTION INSIGHTS

MANUFACTURED HOMES

Manufactured homes refer to dwellings that are built off-site in a factory and transported to a building lot where they are installed or assembled as opposed to site-built homes. In June of 1976 the U.S. Congress passed the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Act, which assured that all manufactured homes are built to a stringent national standard. By 1980 it approved changing the term “mobile homes” to “manufactured homes.” More commonly known as the HUD Code, this Act regulates the home’s design and construction, strength and durability, fire resistance, energy efficiency and more recently wind resistance.

Mobile/Manufactured homes - These homes are built on a non-removable steel frame or chassis, transported to a site (on their own wheels), placed on piers and anchored to the ground with metal straps (or on a permanent foundation). A two story home is built as single- or double-width, or single-width over double-width.



CROSS SECTION OF A TYPICAL 'SINGLE-WIDE' MANUFACTURED HOME

A similar approach is to manufacture and deliver single-story boxes and stack the second-story unit on the first-story unit on site. Many homes now come with up to a 5:12 roof pitch which is swung into place on site.

The following types are more closely related to site-built homes. Unlike manufactured homes: i) permanent chassis are not required, ii) are built to state or local codes as opposed to the HUD Code, iii) placed on lands owned by the purchaser, and iv) require more on-site labor to construct or assemble.

Modular homes - Multi-sections of the home are built in a factory, transported to a permanent site and assembled like building blocks. More and more modular homes have full basements and attached garages making them indistinguishable from conventional homes built on site.

Panelized homes - Factory build housing panels such as walls and floors containing doors, windows, wiring, and plumbing are transported and assembled on site.

Pre-cut homes - The most basic of all manufactured homes. Basic building components are factory cut, transported to and assembled on site (log, kit, dome). They require the most on-site labor to assemble.

About 19 million people live in over 8 million manufactured homes in the U.S. About 90% of all manufactured homes are placed on permanent foundations on private land. In fact, manufactured homes account for nearly one-third of all new single-family homes built. Typically costing 25% to 30% less to build than conventional homes; they come in many styles from Cape Cods to Southwest.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM PILLAR TO POST® HOME INFORMATION SERIES. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HOME INSPECTOR FOR A FULL VERSION.



COMMUNICATION

ATTRACT MORE GOOD LUCK

Hunches aren't all in your head. They're actually based on information you subconsciously pick up such as subtle facial shifts or minute mood swings. These gut feelings can attract good fortune by helping you make better choices, such as which job to accept or which friend to confide in. Try:

Doodling
It turns on the right side of your brain, where intuitive flashes come from.

Listening.
The nagging voice telling you to call an old friend or send out your resume is your intuition trying to send you a message.

Trusting yourself.
Don't overanalyze a hunch. Going with the flow lets more on-target messages to get through.



A WINDOW TO REALITY

NEW USES FOR OLD LEFTOVERS



Don't toss these leftovers – give them new life as household helpers. Some smart ways to reuse that refuse are:

Lemons - When cooking hands you lemons, turn them into a cleaning powerhouse. Toss the rinds from those squeezed-out citrus fruits into your garbage disposal, give it a whirl and you'll have a fresh smelling sink in seconds.

Onion Halves - It's easy to get your indoor grill sparkling with the cut side of an onion. Simply stick a fork in one end and rub the onion on the still warm grate. It contains chemicals that scrub off stuck on bits.

Coffee Grounds - Make fireplace cleanup easy. Sprinkle still-damp coffee grounds over ashes before you scoop them up – you'll prevent dust from getting everywhere.



HOUSEWATCH MAINTENANCE

HOW TO RECOGNIZE MANUFACTURED HOMES

- Look for the metal certifying plate on the exterior (a red and silver label certifying that it was built and inspected in compliance with the HUD Code).
- Look for the data plate near or inside the electrical panel box or in cabinets under sinks.
- Look under the floor assembly for a non-removable steel frame or chassis.
- Look for the 'tongue' and where the wheels were attached (used to tow the unit to the site).
- Look for a trim piece that indicated where two segments have been pieced together.
- Look for hinges at roof or attic (a roof greater than 3:12 may have been swung in place on site).



PILLAR TO POST®
HOME INFORMATION SERIES

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MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES

“Sometimes being pushed to the wall gives you the momentum necessary to get over it!”

PETER DE JAGER

WHY PILLAR TO POST®?

Pillar To Post® is North America's leading home inspection company. We are committed to quality in the service we provide to real estate professionals, home buyers and sellers. Our training, reporting and professionalism are second to none in the industry.

WE WORK WITH YOU

Our goal is to enable you to have confidence in the home buying decision and transaction process. The inspection provides an excellent opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about the home. During the inspection, we will point out and discuss areas of concern regarding the property. We then provide a detailed, unbiased report with all this information.

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