

NEWS AND INFORMATION

VOL 18 NUMBER 3

HOUSE SENSE

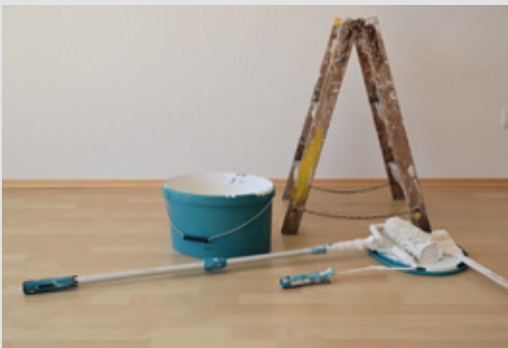
RENOVATION STRESS

A bit of planning in advance will help keep you sane during a renovation.

Careful planning will not only allow you to hold onto your sanity during the upheaval but will also ensure you get the best bang for your buck! Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- 1. No Surprises** - Make sure you agree (in writing) on a completion date but keep in mind that renovations can sometimes be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.
- 2. Be Flexible** - Accept from the start that you'll be dealing with a lack of privacy along with dust, noise, mess and disorganization but remember that it'll all be worth it in the end.
- 3. Kidding Around** - Set aside some toys and games for the kids and schedule some playdates and local outings so you can escape the construction zone chaos.
- 4. Plan Ahead** - Pre-prepare some freezer meals for quick and easy dinners. Also, take this opportunity to donate unwanted items to charity so your newly renovated home won't be full of clutter.
- 5. Stay in the Loop** - Misunderstandings between contractors and spouses are one of the biggest causes of stress during a renovation. Open communication is essential so schedule regular progress reports.

Watching your home transform into something new is a very exciting experience but it is also a major inconvenience. The secret to making sure everything goes smoothly is to remain calm throughout the process and plan ahead for surprises. If you keep that in mind, your dream home will be a reality before you know it!



MOTIVATION

POSITIVE STRESS

Imagine your life without stress. As ideal as it sounds, a stress-free life would be a life without change and boring indeed. One way of defining stress is simply any change to which we have to adapt.

If you have been juggling the complexities of working in or running a business, maintaining important relationships and trying to have some leisure time enjoyment, you are very familiar with the tug of war that stress plays in our daily routines. Because stress cannot be eliminated from our lives, it is useful to be aware of ways that we can use stress positively or reduce some of its negative impact. Here are some suggestions to begin the process.

You may want to start by making a personal appraisal of your stress level. Major life changes such as a move, job change or divorce are by nature stressful and often result in a sense of limited control over our time, our relationships and our personal priorities.

You probably already have many useful techniques at your disposal but here are some ideas that I have found personally helpful and which I recommend to those wanting to improve their stress coping skills.

- 1. Physical Activity.** While regular exercise helps to reduce the negative effects of stress, a short walk break during a harried day offers immense benefits as well.
 - 2. Removing yourself** from a stressful environment allows you to regroup both emotionally and mentally.
 - 3. Prioritize.** Write down and review what is most important each day. Check off and congratulate yourself on your accomplishments rather than berating yourself for what you were not able to do.
 - 4. Be Good to Yourself:** Get appropriate sleep and nutrition. Nurture yourself through your relationships with others and through your spiritual life.
 - 5. Laughter and fun** are great stress relievers.
 - 6. Allow yourself to share** your stress with others.
 - 7. Would You Rather Be Happy or Right?** Heated disagreements with others can raise our stress levels and accomplish little. Look for compromises, take a time-out from confrontations and recognize that things eventually do work out.
 - 8. Recognize** you can't handle every situation perfectly and may not have all of the answers.
- At times, the assistance of a mental health professional is useful when the changes in our lives are too overwhelming. **However, a few simple changes can often turn stress into a positive force in our lives.**





REPLACEMENT COST QUIZ

Deck and Patio

Guess the average cost of the following:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1. Pressure Treated/Cedar Deck | <input type="checkbox"/> \$8-12/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15-30/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35-45/sq.ft. |
| 2. Custom Designed and Built Deck | <input type="checkbox"/> \$22-35/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$55-80/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$85-105/sq.ft. |
| 3. Concrete Patio | <input type="checkbox"/> \$8-15/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$16-25/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30-35sq.ft. |
| 4. Flagstone/Fieldstone Patio | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20-22/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$26-28/sq.ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30-32/sq.ft. |
| 5. Interlocking Brick or Stone Patio | <input type="checkbox"/> \$11-16/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$18-22/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24-28/sq. ft. |
| 6. Patio Stone | <input type="checkbox"/> \$3/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$6/sq. ft. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$9/sq. ft. |

1. \$15-30/sq. ft. 2. \$55-80/sq. ft. 3. \$16-25/sq. ft. 4. \$20-22/sq. ft. 5. \$11-16/sq. ft. 6. \$6/sq. ft.

Estimates reflect the average basic costs for supplies and installation of building materials. Costs may vary depending on regions, upgrades, complexity and disposal fees. It is our strong recommendation that you obtain three written quotes from reputable licensed contractors for validation.

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"RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING ESTIMATES".

STRANGE SOUNDS

Part of settling into a new home is figuring out what noises are normal. Most are nothing to worry about but some could signal a deeper issue. Here are a few that you should pay attention to:

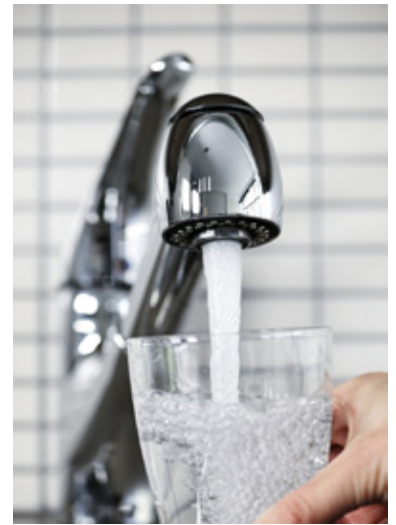
1. Furnace Noises - A humming noise is normal but loud pops, scraping, grinding or squealing sounds should be checked out professionally.

2. Running Water - Check for leaks and water damage around the home. If you can't figure it out quickly, call a plumber as it could mean a broken pipe.

3. Gurgling Toilet - Gurgling noises coming from the toilet could signal a blockage in the toilet or drain, a blockage in the vent stack or a main sewer drain.

4. Noisy Fridge - Some whirring and clicking is normal but if your fridge is cracking or popping, it could be a compressor or a temperature regulation issue.

You can expect to hear some noises coming from your home. Just keep an ear out for anything unusual and don't hesitate to call a professional if in doubt!



REFRESH THE SPACE

It's that time of year when homeowners are thinking about revamping and refreshing their space. Here are a few of the latest trends and styles that are gaining steam:

1. Ziggity-Zag - Geometric patterns are making a comeback! It could be as simple as adding a few accent pillows or for a bolder statement, consider some patterned wallpaper.

2. Sleep Easy - Embrace minimalist bedrooms this year with soothing neutrals and plain furniture pieces. Keeping the space simple will help you enjoy a restful night's sleep.

3. The Heart of the Home - Homeowners are injecting warmer, brighter tones on their kitchen walls and cabinets. Sinks made with materials like stone, copper, concrete or granite will also steal the spotlight in 2018.

If you're thinking about breathing some new life into your home with a makeover, be sure to take the latest trends into account during the planning stage. Hopefully these ideas have given you inspiration to inject some new style into your home.



SKYLIGHTS

People are drawn to areas with natural light. What's more, there is something special about natural light from above, bringing the sky indoors. Skylights can make a dark room bright, provide ventilation and add architectural appeal.

As Lighting

A skylight can be a problem solver, bringing natural light where it would be difficult or impossible to add a window. Here are some examples:

- Inside wall area of a duplex (semi-detached) or a home on a zero lot line.
- Natural illumination of a stairway.
- Natural lighting where privacy is required such as a bathroom.
- Small lots where windows would be looking directly onto a neighbor's home.
- Where an attic has been renovated into a living area. Some skylights are manufactured to satisfy attic egress requirements of building codes as well.

As Ventilation

Skylights can be of fixed design or openable. The openable type can provide natural ventilation. There are also fixed skylights that have a venting option. In these, there is a vent flap that can be opened. Openable skylights are either manual or automatic.



Light Shaft

Skylights on cathedral ceilings bring light directly through the roof plane into the living area. Homes with an attic are a little more complicated. You have to punch a hole through a large area. The hole through the attic area is called the light shaft.

The simplest light shaft is a channel that extends straight down from the skylight above. This is the easiest to frame as it interferes the least with existing framing, but is also the least interesting architecturally and brings in the least amount of light. A more interesting design is to flare the light shaft out to bring in more light, but these can often be disruptive to the framing.

Heat

One of the most important things to consider for warm climates is that skylights will add considerably to the heat gain and thus the air conditioning load. In hot climates, care should be given to the orientation of the skylight.

Different orientations have different light characteristics as well. North facing skylights have steady light levels throughout the day and the light is very soft. East and west facing skylights have varying light levels throughout the day. South facing skylights gives the most light but the light is also very hot and harsh.

REDUCE HOME ALLERGENS



Allergy season is upon us. Here are a few ideas to reduce the negative effects and stay healthier.

- 1. Wipe surfaces.** Use a damp cloth to dust window sills, bookshelves and knickknacks. Any allergens will cling to the moist rag instead of spreading into the air.
- 2. Vacuum this.** When you strip your bed, run the vacuum over the top and sides of your mattress to remove any dust mites.
- 3. Check the dryer vent.** The dryer produces moist air that can cause mold to form. Make sure the vent is securely attached, sending the air outside and away from the house.
- 4. Shift furniture.** Moving furniture just an inch away from air vents will allow air to flow freely, stopping the buildup of dust particles.

PERSONAL INSIGHTS IF YOUR SOFA COULD TALK

The centerpiece of so much daily life, your sofa says a lot about you.

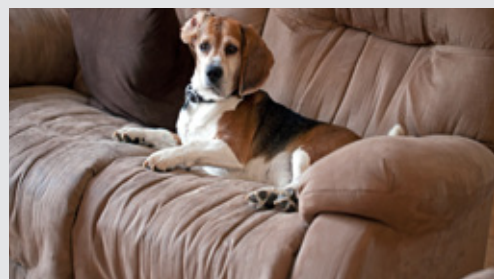
If you have a . . .

Sleeper Sofa: You can be counted on. You are always prepared and on top of things. Sleeper can be opened at a moment's notice for a friend to crash on. You can be counted on.

Love Seat: You're an authentic friend. You'd rather spend time with a few close friends than entertain a crowd. While you like comfort, you don't spend time lounging.

Recliner: You're an adaptable multi-tasker. You are flexible. On any given day, you are likely to be found on your recliner doing two things at once.

Sectional: You're warm and laid-back. Your sociability makes you an excellent host. Everyone knows there is plenty of room for them on your spacious sofa - warm and inviting.



HOUSEWATCH MAINTENANCE

SIGNS OF TROUBLE - SKYLIGHTS

Once a skylight is installed, it may be difficult to recognize if the original installation was done properly. Here are a few signs that there could be trouble.

- Mastic or sealant (roofing tar) has been used to seal the skylight. Good skylight flashing should shed water and does not require mastic. Mastic on the flashing is a sign of trouble.
- If a skylight is installed too close to a plumbing stack or some other roof penetration or intersection (less than 18 inches) it is very difficult to flash properly. Room is needed around the skylight for the flashing components.
- Moisture or stains on the inside could be evidence of a leak or could be condensation. Sometimes it's very hard to determine what you are looking at.



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MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES

"Shoot for the moon.
Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

Les Brown
American author & motivator.



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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