



A special section of the Addison Independent

HOME

&



Garden

Thursday, May 16, 2024

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On the cover:

BUILDING SITE MANAGER James Needham, above, measures up the side of a home that Salamander Construction is building off Munger Street in Middlebury early this month. Left, violets have made themselves known in lawns and gardens around Addison County this month — enjoy them while they're here.



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Plan home chores for warm weather

VERMONT — With spring cleaning on everyone's agenda, Efficiency Vermont has some tips that can help you tidy up and plan ahead for warm weather. Taking steps now could even help reduce your energy bills and save money.

"Small changes can have a big impact on your home and on the environment," said Amanda Kolifrath, energy advisor with Efficiency Vermont. "Whether you own or rent your home, or whether you're trying to 'green up' your community or your kitchen, there are easy steps you can take during spring cleaning — with the added benefit of saving energy and usually a little money, too."

To green up your home and keep a little more green in your pocket, Efficiency Vermont suggests:

- Spring forward by investing in clean technology. Need to replace a major appliance? Check for energy-saving options at Efficiency Vermont's marketplace. Consider an air purifier to fight the pollen that's just around the corner, a dehumidifier to dry out from spring showers, or a smart thermostat to keep your home at the perfect temperature no matter the season.

- Work efficiency into your spring cleaning routine. Regularly cleaning common appliances and systems in your home can optimize their performance. That means they use less energy and save you money. Clean out dust from bathroom fan covers and from under your fridge. Sweep or vacuum near any vents, ducts, or registers. Clear out dust and grease from kitchen stove hoods and exhaust fans. Brush away lint and other debris from your clothes dryer's exhaust hose and filter, and any exterior vents for your dryer, heating system, or water heater. Keeping these systems clean with regular cleaning will maximize their efficiency.

- Plan ahead for big-picture savings. Ready to weatherize after an all-too-chilly winter? Or maybe you've heard how heat pumps are

all the rage — not just for heating, but also a summertime superstar because they can cool your home, too? No matter what your home needs, spring is the perfect time to think ahead. Start with a Virtual Home Energy Visit to get expert advice on improvements big and small for your living space. If your heating system is getting close to retirement, learn about how heat pumps could meet your home's heating needs — and bring the added benefits of air conditioning to your home at the same time.

- Schedule annual maintenance for your heating / AC system. You should have a professional clean and service both indoor and outdoor components of your home's heating, ventilation, or air conditioning (HVAC) system once a year. This can ensure your furnace, boiler, wood or pellet stove, or heat pump is working and ready for next winter (or the next chilly day). And because heat pumps also provide air conditioning, spring cleaning is key to getting them ready to keep you cool all summer.

- Spruce up the filters in the machines that keep you warm all winter. Spring cleaning is a great time to check on your heat pump, wood stove, furnace, or boiler. Replace or clean any filters on your heat pump, ductwork, air purifiers, and related systems to ensure they work well and efficiently. You should clean or replace these filters every few months (or more frequently if you have pets, if the machine is near your kitchen, if live on a dirt road, or if you use it frequently). You should also clean out any ductwork in your home, too. And if you have portable air purifiers, clean and consider replacing those filters, too.

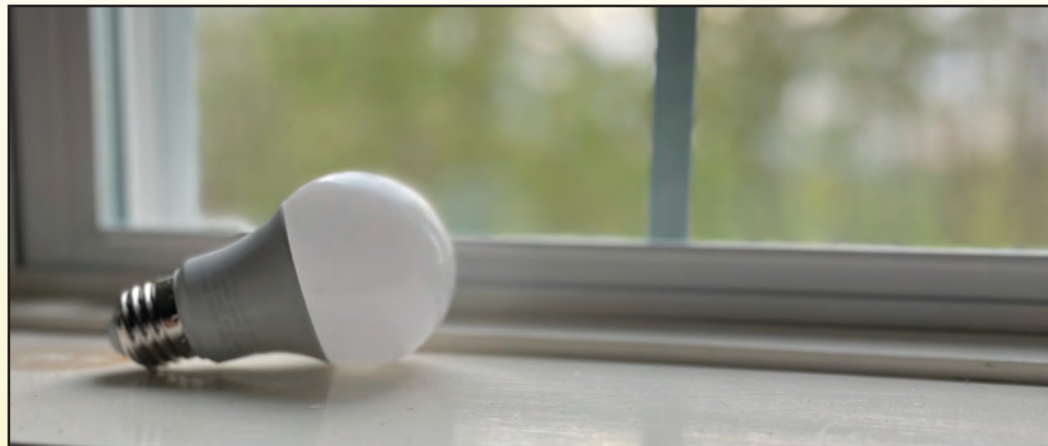
- Electrify your lawn care. Whether you're replacing old gas-powered tools or investing in new equipment for upcoming projects, battery-powered or plug-in lawn care tools like electric lawnmowers, leaf blowers, or trimmers are the way to go. They're quieter

and cheaper to operate — electricity costs less than gas — and charging a battery or plugging in is usually easier than keeping a gas can at hand. Electric tools are also much cleaner and greener compared to their gas-powered counterparts. According to the EPA, using a gasoline-powered lawnmower for one hour emits as much pollution as driving a car 45 miles! Keep in mind some electric lawn care rebates are available in Vermont.

- Manage your home's moisture. Moisture and water in your basement can be a serious hazard to the health of your home—and to the people living inside. It's best to take care of any dampness, condensation, or standing water sooner rather than later. Follow steps at tinyurl.com/manage-moisture to fix a wet, damp, or leaky basement. If you think you may already have mold, go to tinyurl.com/CDC-mold-recs for guidelines to clean it up. Addressing the underlying moisture problem will help save energy and money in the long run, and a dehumidifier can help remove any remaining moisture in your home. Make sure it's ENERGY STAR-certified and take advantage of Efficiency Vermont's rebate (with extra savings for renters).

- Swap your light bulbs for something greener. LED bulbs use a lot less energy than traditional incandescent light bulbs or even compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs. That can save you money over the bulb's lifetime. And speaking of lifetime, LEDs last a lot longer, too: the Department of Energy estimates an LED bulb can last for up to 50,000 hours, compared to 10,000 hours for CFLs and just 2,000 hours for incandescent bulbs.

Have any lingering clean-up questions? Get in touch! Contact Efficiency Vermont's Customer Support team with any questions about your energy use, and to get help taking control of your energy bills. Call (888) 921-5990, or send an email to info@efficiencyvermont.com.



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Rebates make heat pumps more affordable

WINOOSKI — Vermont households can save thousands of dollars on new heat pump water heaters, an ultra-efficient, all-electric system that uses heat pump technology to meet a home's hot water needs for cooking, bathing, laundry and more.

A new Efficiency Vermont offer (see tinyurl.com/efficiency-VT-rebates) covers up to 100% of costs for income-eligible households to buy and install new heat pump water heaters.

Low-income households can receive 100% of the equipment and installation costs of a new heat pump water heater, up to \$5,000. Moderate-income households can get 90% cash back, up to \$4,500.

"Water heating is usually a home's second-highest energy cost. These water heaters use just a fraction of the energy of traditional models, which means installing a heat pump water heater saves money — and with Vermont's low-carbon electricity, they're also climate-friendly," said Peter Walke, managing director of Efficiency Vermont. "This offer makes the incredible efficiency of heat pump water heaters available to more Vermonters — a critical part of ensuring everyone can share the benefits of clean technology and a healthier planet."

Heat pump water heaters provide hot water for a home's kitchen, bathroom, and for clothes washing.

The benefits of heat pump water heaters include:

The same hot water, less energy: Electric heat pump water heaters are up to three times more efficient than standard electric

resistance units. That means you'll get the same amount of hot water for just a fraction of the energy — and a fraction of the cost.

An efficient and affordable solution: When it comes to replacing a water heater, electric heat pump water heaters typically offer the best balance of up-front cost, ease of installation, and savings over time.

Proven heat pump technology: Heat pumps use electricity and a refrigerant to move heat from one place to another, rather than burning fuel to generate heat. This means heat pump water heaters can use small amounts of energy to create big results—in this case, enough hot water for your entire home.

Added benefits of heat pumps: Heat pump water heaters bring the extra benefit of dehumidifying nearby spaces. They also cool their surroundings, making them ideal for basement installations.

An option no matter how you heat your home: It's possible to switch to a heat pump water heater whether your home currently heats with fossil fuels, wood, or electricity—and regardless of how your home currently generates hot water.

The heat pump water heater offer is possible through \$5 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The offer was launched early in September 2023 to support Efficiency Vermont's flood recovery rebates for low- and moderate-income households. Now partnerships with Burlington Electric Department (BED) and Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) will make this offer available to low- and moderate-income households statewide.

"Since our teams started installing heat pump water heaters in 2022, we've seen demand grow," said VGS President and CEO Neale Lunderville. "These appliances are super-efficient, help dehumidify spaces, and result in reduced carbon emissions. With the rollout of enhanced water heating incentives, there's never been a better time to make the switch to a heat pump water heater." VGS notes customers who opt for a heat

pump water heater will save money if they're currently using a standard tank-style water heater.

Heat pump water heaters are suitable for most homes, but have unique requirements to consider. They are larger than conventional water heaters and, due to the way heat pump technology works, they require adequate space for airflow and clearance around the unit. Because of their noise and their cooling effect on the surrounding air, they're best suited to basements or similar spaces not within a home's living spaces. An Efficiency Excellence Network (EEN) contractor can help identify whether heat pump water heaters are suitable for a given home.

Households whose income makes them ineligible for this offer can still access a \$600 rebate on heat pump water heaters, with additional savings from partner utilities including Washington Electric Co-op, municipalities served by VPPSA, and Burlington Electric. Efficiency Vermont's Home Energy Loan also offers low-interest financing for working with an EEN contractor on eligible home energy projects, including heat pump water heater installations. In addition to the \$600 rebate, rental property owners can get \$400 back on heat pump water heaters installed for rental units, either in the unit itself or in common areas like basements. For VPPSA member utilities, rental properties are eligible for an \$800 "Do More" bonus for four or more eligible products per rental unit or property.

In addition to Efficiency Vermont's offers, heat pump water heaters are eligible for federal Energy Efficiency Home Improvement tax credits. Homeowners can claim a 30 percent federal tax credit (up to \$2,000 per year) on the cost of a heat pump water heater, plus installation.

Rebates from Efficiency Vermont and utilities have helped Vermonters install more than 18,000 heat pump water heaters during the past decade. Vermont was among the first states to support retail and distributor programs for heat pump water heaters.



Watch out for signs of plumbing problems

The drip of a faucet, the bang of pipes and the visible signs of a leak under the sink are some notable indicators of plumbing problems. Other, potentially serious issues may not be so evident. How can homeowners tell if they have potential plumbing problems? The following are some sights and sounds that indicate it is time to call in a plumber.

Banging or clanking: Plumbers refer to these noises as water hammer. This is when a rush of water forces through the pipe and bumps into a closed valve, producing a metallic noise. Something is in the pipe that is restricting water flow. Over time, the flow of water meeting an obstacle could loosen pipe joints as the water tries to find an easier work-around.

Pipe discoloration: If there is any sign of discoloration on pipes, particularly rust, it could be a symptom of a dripping sink or drain line that is slowly leaking. A slow leak can eventually turn into a big mess if left unattended.

Sewer smells: Pipes need traps and vents. Traps are designed to prevent sewer gas from entering the home, while vents channel sewer odor up to the roof. If there are sewer smells, it could mean a trap has dried out or a vent line is cracked.

Low water pressure: If you turn on the faucet and the water pressure is poor, dripping could be the result of a clog or a leak somewhere in the system. Pipes that are improperly sized for a home also can affect pressure.

Sluggish drains: Clearing

drains is perhaps the only plumbing problem that homeowners should address themselves. More often than not, drains that fail to drain quickly have a blockage such as hair or other debris. If attempts to clear the drain do not work, it is best to bring in a professional plumber.

Shaking sounds: Water can cause occasional noises, but if the sounds are frequent, the pipes are not secured firmly enough. A plumber will need to tighten the mounting straps or even completely replace them.

Plumbing issues are nothing to take lightly, as small problems can quickly escalate and cause thousands of dollars in damage.

— Metro Creative



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Energy Incentive Calculator helps figure costs

MONTPELIER — As more Vermonters look to save money and cut planet-warming emissions, a new online tool launched last month.

The Vermont-specific “incentive calculator,” (tinyurl.com/VT-energy-incentives), built by national electrification nonprofit Rewiring America, gives households a personalized list of the many federal, state, and utility rebates and offers they can use for climate-friendly clean technologies and money-saving efficiency upgrades. The goal is to help Vermonters save money while improving efficiency and adopting clean technologies that use Vermont’s low-carbon electricity, rather than burning fossil fuels and emitting climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

Vermont is among the first to premiere a state-specific tool with features like:

- **Customized results:** Users can enter their ZIP code, household size, utility, and other information to see a personalized list of federal, state, and utility offers that meet their needs and goals — and related offers that can help them complete multiple projects at once.

- **Climate-friendly green technology:** The calculator

displays offers for emissions-free heating technologies like ultra-efficient heat pumps, plus other heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) options. The tool also includes offers to help Vermonters electrify their home with electric panel and wiring upgrades, electric vehicles, solar panels, and home battery storage.

- **Planning ahead for opportunities to go green:** The new tool helps households plan for projects like weatherization, heat pumps, or other green replacements for appliances like stoves and oven ranges, clothes dryers, water heaters, and more.

- **An open-source tool for everyone:** Rewiring America’s open source tool can be placed on other websites, allowing other organizations to share all the tool offers with their clients, customers, and members — at no cost.

Both U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., and U.S. Rep. Becca Balint, D-Vt., applauded the launch of the tool and the federal incentives the calculator helps people access. Both championed the simple way for Vermonters to see what incentives they are eligible for.

The calculator brings together federal incentives and tax breaks from multiple sources, including

programs funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and federal tax credits through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The calculator will include any future customer-facing IRA opportunities that could become available in Vermont.

Efficiency Vermont Managing Director Peter Walke said the incentive calculator is one way Vermont is working toward a sustainable and equitable future.

“We need to make efficient solutions and clean technologies available to all Vermonters, especially those struggling with high energy burdens and aging heating systems,” he said. “This incentive calculator helps Vermont households see all of the support they can get. It’s just one part of a concentrated effort to ensure everyone can access these promising technologies and realize an affordable clean energy future.”

The tool launches with support from the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network, which works with partners and advocates working to help Vermont households transition to more affordable, resilient, and climate-friendly heating systems, appliances, and vehicles.

“The essential energy

THIS ONLINE CALCULATOR helps Vermonters find out what financial incentives are available to help them pay for energy upgrades to their home.

revolution will require hundreds of thousands of different kitchen table, conference room, and Town Hall conversations about how to access and afford cleaner energy solutions,” said Johanna Miller, energy and climate program director at the Vermont Natural Resources Council and Coordinator of the Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network. “I’m excited

that this tool will help make those conversations easier by giving people and communities a quick glimpse into how they can make the finances work to make investments that are good for them — and the planet.”

Rewiring America, the national nonprofit focused on the electrification of America’s homes, buildings, and communities,

built the open-source tool that premieres on Efficiency Vermont’s website, but can be embedded in other websites to promote clean energy technologies to Vermonters. Rewiring America estimates that, in addition to incentives and tax credits, U.S. households can save \$1,600 a year on their energy bills by electrifying, including switching their household driving to an EV.



Learn how to prevent electrical fires in your home

A person’s home should be a safe haven. Too often, however, there may be dangers lurking in a home that can compromise the safety of residents.

Electrical fires are no joke. The Hartford insurance company says electrical failure or malfunctions account for almost 34,000 home fires per year. The National Fire Protection Association says they can contribute to 440 deaths and \$1.3 billion in direct property damage annually.

Older homes may be most vulnerable to electrical fires, as such structures were not designed to handle the demands of modern living. The insurance experts say half of all homes in the United States have electrical systems that were installed before garage door openers, high-tech coffee makers, and many computers became must-have items. And the Electrical Safety Foundation International says homes built before 1973 with overloaded electrical systems pose a number of safety threats.

Overloaded circuits are not the only contributor to electrical fires. Damaged wiring characterized

by worn, frayed or loose wires can cause fires. Malfunctioning appliances or those improperly maintained also can create home fires. Another contributor is poorly installed extension cords and power strips, as well as faulty outlets and switches around homes.

Homeowners can take various steps to reduce the risk of electrical fires at home.

- Install arc fault circuit interrupters. AFCIs are special types of circuit breakers that help prevent fires caused by nicked or frayed wiring. An AFCI gets tripped and cuts off power when an electrical problem is detected before a fire can start. In 2022, the National Electric Code started requiring AFCIs in bedrooms, and by 2017 they have been mandated throughout homes.

- Conduct a home electrical inspection. All homes more than 40 years old should be inspected to ensure their electrical systems can handle modern demands. A qualified electrician can make recommendations regarding replacing breakers

and suggest other modifications to improve safety.

- Turn to automatic shut-offs. Homeowners can use appliances and additional devices that automatically shut off after a set period of time. This can reduce the risk of overheating.

- Rely on timers or smart devices. Timers and smart home devices can give homeowners control of electrical components like appliances or lights from a remote area. This enables users to turn an appliance on or off to reduce overheating or avoid additional risk factors for electrical fires.

- Don’t go DIY, unless you feel lucky. Choosing to work with a professional electrician rather than doing electrical work oneself can help reduce electrical fire risk considerably. Electricians know how to work on electrical systems safely to prevent damage to wires and components, and also safeguard themselves against shock.

Risk for electrical fires at home can be reduced with technology and other strategies.

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Year-Round Hazardous Waste Collection

The HazWaste Center at the District Transfer Station in Middlebury is open to residents from any of the District’s member towns.

Most items are accepted from residents free of charge.

Businesses must pay for disposal and must call 388-2333 for an appointment.

Common items include:

Acetone	Drainer opener/cleaner	Mercury thermometers	Primers or shellacs
Acids	Driveway sealer	Mercury thermostats	Rechargeable batteries
Adhesives	Dry cleaning solvents	Mineral spirits	Roach traps/poison
Algaecides	Flea & tick killer	Mothballs	Rug/upholstery cleaner
Aerosols	Fluorescent bulbs*	Motor oil	Solvent-based Glues
Antifreeze	Fly killer	Mouse/rat poison	Stains
Ant killer	Formaldehyde	Nail polish	Stump remover
Ammonia	Fuel additives	Nail polish remover	Tars or resins
Auto body filler	Fungicides	Naphtha	Transmission fluid
Automotive fluids	Furniture polish	Oil-based paint	Tub & tile cleaner
Chlorine bleach	Gasoline	Oily waste	Varnish
Brake fluid	Hair dyes	Oven cleaner	Weed killer/fertilizer
Bug spray	Kerosene	Paint thinner/turpentine	Wood preservative
Button cell batteries	Latex paint	Parts cleaner	
Contact cement	Lead paint chips	Pesticides/herbicides	
Deck sealer	Lead-acid batteries	Photographic chemicals	
Diesel fuel	Lime/rust remover	Pool chemicals	



Household hazardous waste includes any unused product that is poisonous, reactive, corrosive, or flammable.

You can easily identify hazardous products by reading packaging labels. Look for key words such as **Warning! Danger! Poison! Caution!**

Improper disposal of these products poses a risk to human health and the environment.

*All compact fluorescents (CFLs) are accepted at no cost; other types of general purpose fluorescent bulbs are free to recycle in quantities of 10 or fewer per day. A per-bulb nominal fee applies for more than 10.

Not accepted: laboratory chemicals, pharmaceuticals, fireworks, flares, explosives, smoke detectors, ammunition, and radioactive waste.



HazWaste Center Hours of Operation:
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Take advantage of two local weatherization workshops

MIDDLEBURY

A Vermont non-profit organization called ReSOURCE, which has offices in Burlington, Barre and Hyde Park, is bringing its six-week, hands-on “Weatherization 101” training to Middlebury this summer. This six-week training starts July 1.

The course provides:

- Hands-on experience with weatherization and construction tools and techniques.
- The opportunity to earn OSHA 10 certification.
- Full-time job placement in the weatherization and construction industry for work-ready candidates.

The goal of this program is to provide training and job placement to Vermonters ready for full-time employment in the trades. Tuition is free to trainees, who also earn \$500/week training stipend. The classes will meet Monday – Friday, 9 a.m.–4

p.m. Detailed information and an online application can be found at resourcevt.org/training-programs/weatherization-101.

What You’ll Learn

Weatherization:
Learn the principles of home-energy efficiency and building science.

The curriculum follows the Department of Energy’s Weatherization Installer/Technician guidelines.

Carpentry & Construction:
Students will have hands-on experience with:

- The proper and safe use of construction hand and power tools.

- Common construction and weatherization vocabulary and job-site rules.

- Construction math, jobsite safety, construction drawings and blueprints.

- Each student will be equipped with the necessary tools of the trade, and will learn to work collaboratively with others accomplishing projects.

- Class time will be split between seminar-style training and hands-on building and weatherization projects.

Professional Development:

Working together with ReSOURCE’s employment counselor, students will:

- Explore careers in the weatherization and home-energy fields.
- Develop a weatherization-specific resume.
- Build job-searching and job-retention skills.

- Fine-tune their interviewing abilities.
- Meet with hiring weatherization employers.

OSHA 10 Jobsite Safety Certification:

Students have the opportunity to earn:

- OSHA-10 certification — an essential certification for anyone entering the profession and one valued by employers.

Work Experience and Job Placement:

For the final two weeks of the program, work-ready participants will be placed in on-the-job work experiences with hiring employers. The Employment Counselor works individually with students to find a job placement that meets their individual needs and professional goals.

STARKSBORO

Two energy education programs this weekend will present a workshop on insulation and air sealing with local partners who can help you weatherize your home.

The Home Heat Transfer workshop will take place at the Starksboro Public Library on Saturday, May 18, at 2 p.m. The library is at 2827 Route 116, right in the village.

Learn how to help keep your home cooler in the summer and warmer — while also saving money — in the winter at this free workshop. Alex Levin from Vermont Energy Education Program, or VEEP, will be leading. Experience hands-on learning and demonstrations showing the importance of air sealing and insulating your home.

Those attending will receive a \$20 grocery store gift certificate — thanks to the generosity of VEEP.

Pre-registration is required. To do so, email rwarren@vtc.edu or call 802-952-8903

The event is supported by the Starksboro Energy Committee, Starksboro Public Library, and New Community Project VT.

For more info head online to tinyurl.com/veepworkshop.



Inside

BRIGHT ORANGE CONDUIT sticking out of the cement floor is easy to spot in this home under construction off Plank Road in Bristol. Homeowner Shawn Russell is nearing completion of the exterior, but still has some work to do on the interior.

Independent photo/Steve James



Outside

BUILDING SITE MANAGER James Needham pulls electrical wire through the outside wall of a home that Salamander Construction is building off Munger Street in Middlebury.

Independent photo/Steve James



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Destructive worms threaten local gardens, forests

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — As warmer weather beckons Addison County residents outdoors this spring, there's an uninvited guest they should keep watch for in their gardens, lawns and fields: jumping worms.

The creepy-crawlies look similar to earthworms but are actually an invasive species originally from Asia that consumes and degrades soils, killing plants and setting off a cascading effect on the surrounding environment.

"The reason why many people are worried about jumping worms, at least ecologists, is because they change woodlands a lot," explained Josef Görres, professor of Ecological Soil Management at the University of Vermont.

Nearly 100 community members packed the Congregational Church of Middlebury on April 23 to hear from Görres and other experts about how to identify and combat jumping worms.

UVM postdoctoral researcher Maryam Nouri-Aiin and Emily Johnston, public outreach coordinator at the Addison County Solid Waste Management District, also spoke at the event. The presentation was sponsored by the Pollinator Pathway of Addison County, UVM Extension Master Gardener Program and Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife.

GET TO KNOW THE WORM

Asian jumping worms likely first wriggled their way into the United States at the beginning of the 20th century, Görres said.

How did they get here? "(The worms) probably came with trade with Japan," Görres said. "First of all, here on the east coast, (likely) cherry blossoms brought them over for the first time, and there have probably been many more introductions since then."

The arrival of jumping worms was not the first time non-native worms had wreaked havoc on U.S. soils. The earthworms many gardeners welcome today came to North America with European settlers during the 1600s,

infiltrating soil that was largely worm-free.

"They cause similar problems (to jumping worms) in that they change the soil properties and that changes many other things as well," Görres said.

Jumping worms have compounded the impact of their European counterparts by causing their own trouble in invaded soils.

They do so by devouring the upper organic layer of soil, altering its texture and composition.

"That organic layer goes with a whole bunch of other things, such as seed bank of the forests, mycorrhizal (essentially symbiotic) connections to the roots, the roots themselves could be in there," Görres said. "That's where a lot of the fertility of the soil is, so once that goes away, things change."

Jumping worms consume the top layer of healthy, spongy soil and replace it with a granular soil with worm castings. This modified soil resembles large coffee grounds and lacks the nutrients certain plants, animals and other organisms need to survive.

That structure also makes invaded soils more vulnerable to erosion, which can lead to further loss of nutrients.

"Forest soils are not supposed to erode, even in big storms," Görres said. "That organic layer is really holding things together very well, but once you have this modification by the Asiatic worms you have continuous erosion."

The alteration of soils has a ripple effect on the surrounding environment as it changes the soil composition and chemistry that many plants and animals rely on. As a result, a jumping worm invasion can result in loss of biodiversity.

The worms can have a negative impact in and around agricultural fields, as they create burrows that allow nutrients to flow into nearby waterways more easily and for carbon dioxide to release into the atmosphere.

Jumping worms also pose a threat to a key plant in Vermont: sugar maple trees. The

worms significantly hinder the regeneration of maple trees by consuming the layer of leaf litter on forest floors, which leaves the trees more susceptible to insects and diseases.

"So, buy a lot of maple syrup and put it in your cellar in case one day we run out," Görres joked.

SLOWING THE SPREAD

The effect of jumping worms on their surrounding environment is significant, but Görres said there's hope for slowing their spread and managing invasions.

The first step is knowing how to identify jumping worms, which can resemble other earthworms like nightcrawlers. Unlike those worms, adult jumping worms have a smooth, milky-white collar known as a clitellum close to their head that wraps around their entire body.

Adult jumping worms can also be distinguished by their thrashing movements. When disturbed, the worms flail or jump wildly from side to side, a characteristic that gives them their name.

Knowing how to spot a jumping worm is a key part of preventing the spread of the invasive species, along with remaining vigilant about the use of soil, mulch and potted plants.

"The best time to intervene in any kind of invasion is before the invasion happens," Görres said. "Prevention is the cheapest way of dealing with the problem."

Görres said one way humans unknowingly spread jumping worms is through leaf mulch.

"So, you rake your leaves, put them in a bag and take them somewhere else, and then someone else comes up and says, 'Can I have some of that leaf mulch,' and they take the leaf mulch and the worms with them," he explained.

Limiting the use of your leaf mulch to your own property is one way to prevent the spread of jumping worms. Other tips for preventing invasion include:

- Checking the soil and roots of potted plants and trees for signs of jumping worms before planting



ASIAN JUMPING WORMS, shown here as juveniles at a recent talk in Middlebury, can pose a significant threat to gardens, lawns and forests. The creatures consume a key layer of organic matter in soil, which has a ripple effect on the surrounding environment.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

them in your yard.

- Cleaning equipment and tools of compost, soil and other debris before moving from one site to another.

- Rinsing soil from the roots of seedlings and small plants before sharing or moving them.

Johnston also cautioned residents to check the worms they purchase online or elsewhere to ensure they're getting red wiggler or other earthworms and not their jumpy counterpart.

"If it seems like a sketchy site or you get the worms and they look nothing like red wiggler worms, it's a safe bet that they might not be red wigglers," she said. "Err on the side of caution. It's a lot about knowing your source because we do not want to spread this material."

Gardeners can also "solarize" their mulch or soil to try to eliminate jumping worms before use. Soil solarization consists of

placing a clear plastic tarp over to heat up the soil underneath.

Jumping worms can't survive in temperatures of more than 150 degrees Fahrenheit, so solarizing can help kill both cocoons and adult worms.

"Sterile is never 100% sterile, so there's always something that survives, but at least you get the numbers down," Görres said.

As for those who find jumping worms on their property, there are some steps available to manage the invasion, such as hand plucking the worms from infiltrated soil.

"If you have a routine of weeding, weed the worms as well. Put the worms into a bucket of soapy water and that will kill the worms and then you can put them on your compost pile safely," Görres said.

Görres noted there's currently no registered vermicide available to combat jumping worms, though Nouri-Aiin is currently

experimenting with the use of the mycoinsecticide BotaniGard to control the species.

Nouri-Aiin emphasized those experiments have thus far only taken place inside a greenhouse environment and that its use or that of pesticides presents things to consider.

"There's always tradeoffs," she said. "Sometimes it may be better to adapt to the worms. Maybe to use solarization, collect the leaves that might have juveniles and heat those. There are ways; it doesn't have to be just pouring chemicals."

As community members wrestle with jumping worms and await further solutions, Görres encouraged residents to not let the creatures get the best of them.

"Let's not leave this room without hope," he said. "It's really important to me that we get rid of some of that anxiety that goes with jumping worms."

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Empty nest?

Time to repurpose that empty bedroom

It can be bittersweet when adult children decide the time has come to move out of the family home. Parents perhaps get their first trial run of this scenario when their children go off to college or enlist in the military. Rooms are left empty, if only for a certain period of time. Eventually, those rooms will remain empty as adult children move out of the house for good.

Converting a child's bedroom into an area for adults may take some planning. It can be exciting to regain space, but at the same time, it can be disheartening to convert a child's bedroom once and for all. When the time comes and homeowners are emotionally ready to tackle bedroom conversions, these tips can help the process go smoothly.

- Repurpose the space for them. Give a childhood bedroom an adult spin without changing too much. If furniture is in good shape, replace the bedding, change the flooring, swap out artwork, and remove "youthful" items like toys, trophies and other collectibles. When the child comes home to visit, he or she will still feel comfortable in the space.
- Create extra storage. The bedroom can be transformed into a walk-in closet or dressing space. According to the design experts at Houzz, many clients request this type of dressing room situation. There's a bonus if the layout allows the space to connect to the owner's suite or bathroom. This is a major overhaul, so homeowners should enlist a professional contractor.
- Make a fitness center. A bedroom can be turned into a home gym to make working out more convenient. Homeowners should take inventory of equipment they may have and then figure out where existing and new equipment will go. They may need to consult a structural engineer to ensure that the flooring can bear the weight of additional equipment.
- Create a workspace. One of the best ways to transform adult children's bedrooms is to convert the spaces into home offices. Those who have been setting up "desks" at dining room tables or elsewhere may be excited about the prospects of finally having a private, dedicated space to work from home.
- Turn it into a craft room. The bedroom can be converted into a space to explore hobbies and various other interests. A dedicated craft space, a reading nook, a place to store photography equipment, or another function can serve as a useful way to repurpose an empty bedroom.

Empty nesters have many possibilities when it comes to converting their children's old bedrooms into adult spaces.

— Metro Creative





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Up it goes

JAMES NEEDHAM AND Jeremiah Tinker are part of the team from Salamander Construction that are building a new home off Munger Street in Middlebury. Early this month we see, clockwise from right, Needham, the site manager, secures some electrical wire through a hole in the joist, Needham and Tinker, a carpenter, lay out some boards they will add to the house that day, Needham sizes up the framework for the sheathing on the outside of the abode, the site manager makes sure the temporary railing is secure.

Independent photos/Steve James



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The details

BEFORE THIS WOODEN plank is trimmed and installed in a new home being constructed off Munger Street in Middlebury, carpenter Jeremiah Tinker of Salamander Construction smooths it out with a hand sander early this month.

Independent photos/Steve James

Dandelions: foe or friend?

By DEBORAH J. BENOIT
UVM Extension Master Gardener

It's that time of year again. Sunny yellow blossoms pop up all over the landscape, bringing smiles to children's faces—and frowns to those who favor manicured lawns. Love 'em, hate 'em or don't pay them much attention, there's a lot to be said about dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*).

Its common name comes from the French "dent de lion," meaning lion's teeth, a reference to the appearance of its leaves. Native to Eurasia, dandelions were introduced to North America in the 1600s by colonists who grew them for medicine and food.

Dandelions return year after year, producing the familiar yellow flowers from spring into summer. Popular advice says to let them continue to grow in spring as an early nectar source. Indeed, if there's little else in bloom in the area, dandelions will provide a welcome food source for bees and other insects, and their seeds will provide food as well as nesting material for birds.

Historically, people have consumed dandelions as both food and drink. The tender young leaves or a sprinkling of petals

make a tasty addition to salads. More mature leaves can be eaten like spinach, boiled or steamed.

You've probably heard of dandelion wine, but did you know roasted dandelion root can be steeped and served as a coffee substitute? The roots, leaves and flowers are edible and can be used to brew an herbal tea. You can find more information at go.uvm.edu/dandelions.

A word of caution: If you do decide to nibble on a dandelion flower, make a salad with dandelion leaves or brew a cup of dandelion tea, harvest only from areas that are free of contaminants, such as road salts, pesticides or lawn treatments, be sure to rinse them well and be certain you've positively identified the plant.

Dandelions contain Vitamin C and beta carotene (an antioxidant that the body converts to Vitamin A) and other important vitamins and minerals. They've historically played a part in folk medicine, and some people have used dandelions as health remedies. However, you should always consult with your doctor before trying any such remedy.

Once their flowers pass, dandelions produce a round head of seeds adorned with white fluff that flies easily on the breeze or

a puff of breath. Those seedheads have amused children of all ages, but if you're concerned about a dandelion invasion, be sure to remove the flowers before they go to seed or you may find a field of dandelions in bloom next spring.

There are a number of ways to deal with unwanted dandelions in your garden. They have a long taproot, so trying to pull them by hand can be a chore. If you don't remove the entire root, the plant can grow back.

Fortunately, there are a variety of tools that work well to remove dandelions. They include specialty hand weeders and long-handled, clawed weeders, which remove dandelions with a simple twist.

If you opt to use an herbicide for removal, be sure to select one intended for dandelions and apply according to the label's directions.

If you don't see the need for a pristine, monoculture carpet of green for your lawn, let dandelions grow and simply mow them with the grass. Why? Because those long taproots that make them so difficult to remove benefit your lawn by aerating compacted soil.

The next time you see a dandelion's yellow flower, remember, it's so much more than just a weed.



WHILE MOST PEOPLE think of dandelions as a weed and struggle mightily to get them out of their lawns and gardens, the plant has many benefits, including as an early nectar source for bees and other insects. For human beings dandelions are a good source of Vitamin C, beta carotene and other important vitamins and minerals when consumed in salads, tea or other foods and drink.

Independent photo/John S. McCright



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Here's what to know about reseeding or replanting your lawn

Spring marks the return of flowering plants and warm weather. And homeowners know that spring also ushers in the return of home renovation season.

Homeowners undoubtedly have an extensive list of projects on their to-do list this spring, and that may include helping their lawns and gardens recover after a long winter. Unpredictable weather, which can include drought and excessive rainfall and everything in between, can take its toll on a lawn. In certain instances, the best solution may be planting new grass. But homeowners can consider these tips before they begin the process of reseeding or replanting their lawns.

- Scarify the lawn. Scarifying a lawn can help to create a clean slate, but the timing must be right. Various lawn and garden experts, including those at BBC Gardeners' World Magazine, recommend scarifying in spring or early autumn. But don't jump the gun when scarifying in spring by scarifying before the lawn has started to grow after a dormant winter. Scarify when the soil is a little wet and the grass is once again actively growing. Scarifying can remove any lingering weeds from last season and also pull up any moss that might have taken hold over the winter. Without weeds and moss to contend with, freshly planted seeds are in better position to thrive.

- Work with a landscaping professional. Homeowners with manageable lawns can likely scarify their own lawns with a relatively inexpensive plug-in scarifier. However, scarifying can be a strenuous physical activity, particularly for homeowners with large lawns. In such instances, homeowners can benefit from working

with a qualified landscaping professional. Such a professional can scarify the lawn and subsequently reseed or replant new grass. The latter task is not so simple, as lawn care experts note that choosing the correct seed is a vital part of reseeding or replanting a lawn. Choosing seed may sound simple, but it's a potentially complex decision that requires knowledge of the existing grass, including when to plant it. Certain grasses are best planted in spring or early fall, while others are best planted in summer. A qualified landscaping professional can identify the existing grass and plan the seeding or planting around this important detail.

- Prepare to water the lawn. Watering is vital to the long-term success and health of freshly planted grass seed. Scotts® urges homeowners to keep the top inch of soil consistently moist, but not soggy. That requires a daily commitment, and setting a multi-function hose nozzle or sprinkler to the mist setting once per day or more if it's hot outside can increase the chances grass will grow in thick and strong. Some experts recommend keeping the top two inches of the soil moist until the new grass reaches a mowing height of roughly three inches. Once that benchmark has been reached, watering frequency can be cut back to about twice per week, but now the soil should be deeply soaked instead of misted. The soaking will help roots grow deep into the soil.

Spring is a great time for homeowners in various regions to reseed or replant their lawns. With the right approach, homeowners can enjoy a full and lush lawn throughout summer.

— Metro Creative



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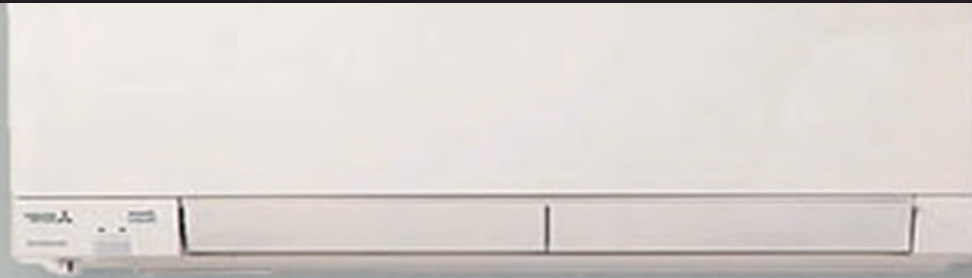
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How to hire a home improvement contractor

As the ground thaws and weather warms, many Vermonters will be planning their outdoor and home improvement projects. My Consumer Assistance Program is here to help with tips and resources for homeowners and residential contractors. For most of us, our homes are the single largest investment we will ever make. Taking care of them is important to ensure the health, safety, and comfort of our families. For these home improvement projects, we rely on our valued residential contractors. Here are six steps to take to protect yourself and your investment:

1. **Use Vermont's residential contractor registries to make informed decisions.** Contractors registered with the Secretary of State agree to meet Vermont professional standards, whereas those on the Home Improvement Fraud Registry have been convicted of criminal home improvement fraud.

2. **Ask for recommendations from your community** – friends, neighbors, family, and coworkers.

3. **Once you identify a contractor you are considering for your project, do more research.** Look up complaint history online, using the name of the contractor and “scam” or “complaint” in your search. Contact my Consumer Assistance Program and ask if they have complaints filed against the contractor you are considering. Review the Beter Business Bureau's complaint history.

4. **Ask the contractor to show you their active registration and insurance policy.**

5. **Get quotes from 2-3 other reputable contractors and ask for references.** Quotes should include the expected payment timeline (ideally with a deposit of no more than 10-30%).

6. **Make sure all project expectations are in writing.** Request a written contract or estimate and do not sign anything you do not agree with. DO NOT pay all at once! Request an invoice and offer to pay at completion, by installment, or with a reasonable down payment for labor and

materials.

Once hired, keep track of all invoices, bills and communication between you and your contractor.

In a perfect world, homeowners and contractors work hand in hand to complete projects on time and on budget, adding value to homes and local economies. Unfortunately, sometimes things don't go as planned. That's where my office can help. The Vermont Attorney General's Office Consumer Assistance Program now has a Home Improvement Specialist available to help avoid problems in the first place, and to work out problems when they happen. You can contact our office with any type of home improvement complaint. Most of the time we can help reach a fair

and reasonable resolution for both the homeowner and contractor. In

just six months on the job, our specialist has already returned or saved Vermonters more than \$400,000.

We are also a resource for contractors. Our Small Business Advocate along with our Home Improvement Specialist help prevent and resolve disputes. If you are a contractor and would like assistance with the new registration requirements in Vermont law, you may call our Consumer Assistance Program at 800-649-2424, or email ago.homerepair@vermont.gov.

This spring, let my Consumer Assistance Program be your trusted partner in home improvement!



Community Forum

This week's Community Forum is by Vermont Attorney General Charity R. Clark



Create a bathroom retreat

Homeowners want to view their homes as a respite from all that goes on outside their doors. Indeed, turning a home into a residents-only retreat can ensure everyone looks forward to walking through the front door at the end of the day.

One of the more popular ways to turn a home into one's own personal retreat is to upgrade the bathroom. A renovated bathroom can completely transform how individuals feel about their homes. The following are some features to consider when remodeling a bathroom with relaxation in mind.

• **Open shower:** An open shower is a visually stunning addition to any bathroom. Such showers give a bathroom a more open look, thanks in part to the fact that these modern features do not feature a door or require the use of a shower curtain. The result is a clean look that many people associate with a luxury hotel. When speaking with a contractor about an open shower install, homeowners can ask about a half-wall to safeguard against water splashing out of the shower. In addition, a heat lamp can help ensure residents stay warm until they're ready to leave the bathroom.

• **Heated features:** Additional features to keep everyone calm and warm can be considered when upgrading the bathroom. Radiant flooring can ensure everyone's toes remain toasty, and the installation of such a feature can eliminate the

need for floor mats and bath mats that some homeowners may not like. Commit further to the heat theme with a heated towel rack, which is another feature associated with luxury hotels that can be just as enjoyable at home.

• **Soaking tub:** An open shower creates an instant feeling of luxury, but few things are more suggestive of relaxation than a soaking tub. A long day at school or the office or a day when winter winds are howling outside is made much better with a good soak. The National Kitchen & Bath Association notes that luxury bathrooms featuring soaking tubs are wildly popular, and that vaunted status is undoubtedly due to the relaxing benefits of a good soak.

• **Skylight:** Even if the goal of a luxury bathroom is to leave the outside world outside, allowing some natural light inside is a great way to add a little extra calm to the room. Floor-to-ceiling windows may seem appealing in brochures or advertisements, but such features do not create the sense of privacy many people prefer in their bathrooms. One or two skylights can create that sense of privacy and still allow for natural light to enter the room, making this an option that provides the best of both worlds.

These features and more can help homeowners transform their bathrooms into luxurious, relaxing respites from the outside world.

— Metro Creative

Give your living room a new vibe

An “out with the old, in with the new” mentality can extend to people's visions for their homes. A home in need of repair or renovation can serve as a catalyst

to take inventory of personal style and help make interior spaces reflect one's unique vibe.

A living room can grow stale over time and often serves as a

catch-call for clothing, blankets, gadgets, and other items. Upon recognizing a living room has seen better days, individuals may decide it's time to give the space

a new vibe. That transformation can start with these strategies.

ORGANIZE FIRST

Clutter frequently is the culprit behind a living room that may not give off the vibe individuals desire. As families grow and people add belongings, space may be at a premium. Less is more has never been a more important concept. Remove extraneous items before purchasing new furniture or transitioning to a new design. You may even want to remove everything and start from scratch before reintroducing desirable elements to the space.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Some people are adept at decorating and designing spaces. But just as you wouldn't perform your own medical procedures, you should leave jobs like interior design and renovations to the professionals. Hiring a

(See *Vibe*, Page 14C)



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Things wear out. Here's how to recognize when it's time to replace

It's time for those windows to go

Windows are a major component of a home. Window installation professionals will tell homeowners that the average life span of residential windows is between 15 and 30 years. Most well-maintained products can last 20 years, so homeowners who have windows approaching that age may want to schedule a window assessment and possible replacement.

Replacing windows is a job that requires advanced skill, and this is not a do-it-yourself project. There are many qualified professional window installation companies that will work with homeowners to measure, order and install windows that will fit with the style of a home and local weather, all while providing features the homeowner desires.

For those wondering when to replace windows, window manufacturers offer these guidelines.

- Difficulty opening and closing windows. A window that does not operate as it should can aggravate homeowners. If windows are sticking shut or cannot be securely closed, it's probably time for something new.

- There's apparent window damage. Accidents happen, and if a rock is kicked up from a lawnmower and cracks a window or if spring baseball practice or summer soccer has gone awry with an errant throw or kick, windows may require replacement.

- Drafts in the window are common. If heating

and cooling systems are working overtime, drafty, poorly insulated windows could be to blame. Various agencies can perform energy efficiency tests in a home. Windows that are determined to be the weak spots should be replaced.

- Dated windows are present in the home. Older windows may pose safety hazards, especially those in older homes. A larger window may be needed to comply with fire safety codes allowing for window egress. Dated windows also may simply look "old" and compromise the aesthetics of a home.

- Outdoor noises are noticed quite readily. Newer windows can help reduce noise transmission. So those leaf blowers, airplanes, barking dogs, and kids playing basketball up the street won't disturb homeowners as they try to enjoy some peace and quiet indoors.

- Fading indoors is noted. Windows that do not feature low-emissivity (Low-E) glass coatings will not block UV rays. Those rays can cause fading to wood floors and furniture or pretty much anything the sunlight touches. Replacing existing windows with Low-E coating alternatives can safeguard belongings and improve window efficiency.

Window replacement may be necessary when existing windows are showing signs of aging or damage.

— Metro Creative



Forget swabbing, this deck has had it

Spring is a season of rejuvenation that compels millions across the globe to quit hibernating and get back to enjoying the great outdoors. Spring also marks a great time to assess a home's exterior, namely those areas like a deck where people will spend a lot of time in the warmer months to come.

Assessing a deck after winter can be eye-opening. Harsh winter weather can take its toll on a deck, and the following are some telltale signs that a deck could be in need of repair or replacement.

- Wobbly underfoot and in hand: Wobbly planks and railings are one sign of a deteriorating deck homeowners won't recognize as they hide from winter weather indoors. But these tend to reveal themselves rather quickly when examining a deck after winter. Wobbly planks in the middle of the deck can be inconvenient, but wobbly steps and railings can be dangerous. According to the home improvement resource Angi, wobbly railings can be a byproduct of rot. A local decking professional can assess the extent of the rot in railings and elsewhere and determine the best course of action. If the rot is isolated to an area or two, a simple repair may be all that's necessary. Extensive rot may require a full replacement of the existing deck.

- Faded paint: Many homeowners paint their wood decks, and that paint will not last forever. Faded paint can turn an otherwise lovely deck into an eyesore, and paint can fade over the winter. Thankfully, a local painter can address a faded deck

and may recommend some additional strategies to safeguard the deck against fading next winter and beyond.

- Holes in the wood: Many a homeowner has encountered curious-looking holes in their deck. This could be a sign of insect infestation. Termites, carpenter ants and carpenter bees are among the various types of insects that can bore holes through wood. Homeowners who notice holes throughout their deck are urged to call a deck professional and/or pest control firm to assess the holes and offer a solution. Though small issues may be addressed with repairs, a deck littered with holes caused by insects may need a full replacement.

- Rust: Wood decks may be made of wood, but they can still exhibit signs of rust, namely in the nails and metal connectors that hold the deck together. If screws have rusted to the point where they are no longer holding the deck together, a full-scale replacement could be in the cards, as the deck could have substantial structural damage. Like other issues that can reveal themselves during a springtime inspection of the deck, rust necessitates a thorough examination by an experienced decking professional.

Many people do not use their decks during winter, which only underscores the significance of a full deck inspection in spring.

— Metro Creative



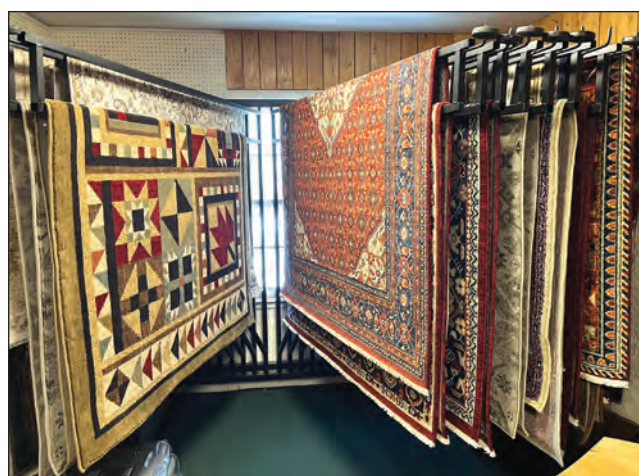
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All rugs on sale!



Vibe

(Continued from Page 12C)
 professional interior designer and contractors can really bring a living room together in ways homeowners may have never imagined. These pros can build off of your ideas and truly create a space that may be worthy of a magazine spread.

PROMOTE WELLNESS

You may want to consider adding natural materials in the design to promote well-being. Eco-friendly furnishings, raw fibers and organic textures will create an environment from sustainable choices. Plenty of plants also can create a welcoming environment that helps you surround yourself with positive energy and the items you love.

LIGHT IT UP

One of the easiest ways to transform a room's vibe is to use lighting. Change draperies to allow more natural light to shine in. Consider additional windows or skylights if yours is a particularly

dark home. If you desire to create a more vivid or cozy ambiance, use a combination of accent, task and supplemental lighting in the space so there are no dim corners.

CREATE AN INDUSTRIAL OR URBAN VIBE

Industrial-chic design celebrates the bones of a building. It's what makes city lofts so appealing, with their exposed beams and brick. Even those who live in suburbia or out in the country can give a living room this look with subtle nods to the style. Unadorned windows, clean lines on furniture, oversized, gallery-style art, and metal accents can add touches of this popular look to your home.

Revamping a living room doesn't have to be difficult. With an idea in place and some professional touches, an entirely new vibe can be achieved.

— Metro Creative



Buildin' in Bristol

THE FIRST HOME in a multi-lot subdivision going up off Plank Road near Jay Drive in Bristol looks like it's nearing completion from the outside as owner Shawn Russell, right, finishes up the siding early this month. Inside the unfinished steps down to the basement of the four-bedroom home, above, show that there was still work to be done.

Independent photos/Steve James



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PUZZLES

CONSTRUCTION WORD SEARCH

T L T C B W T E T E R C N O C B S E C A
 K M S S N G A Y A D M I W S G O L B S A
 R A S U E T G P I N A N D P A E K K P K M
 O E S U E B I N C H A N G E O R D E R W
 W B U R A A P S T H S L O D U Y B M W N
 E R L S O S U W E K I U I E R Y T Y L I
 S B I T B E N S P D N T T E N O O E R Y
 A K A R I M C A P T C S E O K W P T O H
 C R H L D E H U A D G L L I C N N Y N U R
 L T U M S N L L A O G T Y I T A D A G A
 W A M N W T I C A K C T L C T A G C H T
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 L N U H R W R T P I O Y R G T I I U O M
 P Y U I P Y S O A S W E T R K L R P M I
 A Y C L W N R R T G G P O L O U T P T S
 C H N A O P P G H A I P U I K B N O H R
 I T L C Y P O G T H E A B B M U G R A U
 U L O A A R L E U R C S D Y E G M T A T
 K S W Y P T C B S P H A Y D R K N Y I K

WORDS

- AGGREGATE
- APPRAISAL
- ARCHITECT
- BASEMENT
- BEAM
- BID
- BUILD
- CASEWORK
- CAULKING
- CHANGE ORDER
- CONCRETE
- CONSTRUCTION
- COST
- DESIGN
- DRYWALL
- LABOR
- LOAD
- MORTAR
- PROPERTY
- PUNCHLIST
- REPORT
- ROUGH-IN
- SLAB
- SUPPORT

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Building Addison County Community, one project at a time.



WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to home improvement.

LBUDI

□ □ □ □ □

Answer: Build

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to building.

AHMREM

□ □ □ □ □ □

Answer: Hammer

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to home improvement.

AISNL

□ □ □ □ □

Answer: Nails

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to home improvement.

RPIRAE

□ □ □ □ □ □

Answer: Repair



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- A/C Install & Service
- Generac Generator Dealer, Installation, & Service
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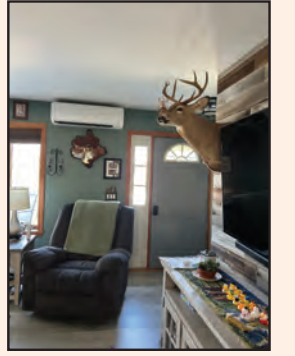
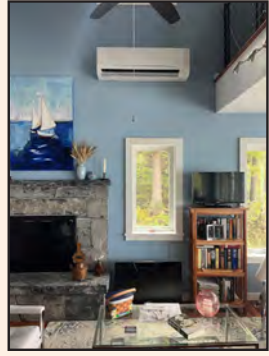
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Homeowners Recommendations



We received quotes from Bristol Electronics and another well-known Vermont solar company, and were pleasantly surprised that Bristol had the better price, and we preferred Bristol's microinverter approach. Additionally, we were very pleased to learn that the panels and racking system were made in the USA with some components manufactured by a Vermont company. On top of this, the folks at Bristol were such a pleasure to work with. We can't remember a more pleasant experience when making a major investment.

We had a variety of questions which they happily addressed. Their knowledgeable staff was well versed with applicable regulations and requirements, building codes and even wind loading concerns. They truly went out of their way to make sure we were educated on the system and pleased with the installation.

This was a very rewarding experience which began with a goal of wanting to make our home fully renewably powered by working with a local team and culminated with meeting great members of our community, keeping our dollars local while also supporting other American renewable technology manufacturers. We found kindred spirits at BE and we can't recommend them highly enough!

Megan Nedzinski and Joshua Faulkner – South Starksboro, VT

"We are loving our new heat pump - it's like our house suddenly got bigger! The room has been warm even on recent cold nights - very impressive."

-Viveka Fox
and
Peter Macfarlane,
Addison, VT



"Bristol Electronics makes it easy for you to go solar. From the detailed, patient explanations, to the rebates, estimates and permits, Bristol Electronics takes care of it all. I obtained several quotes from various companies but it was Bristol Electronics who ultimately won my business with their friendly, approachable attitude and superior knowledge of the technology. When I began this project I was uneducated and apprehensive. Now I find myself encouraging my friends and family to call Bristol Electronics for a free quote and explanation because I truly believe in their product and company. They are highly skilled and professional in every respect.

Stephen and his crew encouraged my children's curiosity and made learning fun for them. Little things like making handprints in the cement of our solar system sparked talks about reducing your carbon footprint and how everyone can help, even children. The whole experience could not have been easier or better. Seeing the power meter run backwards is just icing on the cake."

Heather Shepard – Bristol

