

# HOME & Garden

<i>Choose perennials for your garden .....</i>	<i>3D</i>
<i>Leave the leaves in your yard.....</i>	<i>3D</i>
<i>Builder partners with Habitat for Humanity.....</i>	<i>5D</i>
<i>Make your yard a native plant haven.....</i>	<i>8D</i>
<i>Home repair check list.....</i>	<i>10D</i>
<i>Update on heat pump adoption.....</i>	<i>10D</i>
<i>Fix a damp basement.....</i>	<i>11D</i>
<i>Use home space wisely.....</i>	<i>12D</i>
<i>What to do with a popcorn ceiling.....</i>	<i>13D</i>
<i>Plan for a roof project.....</i>	<i>13D</i>
<i>Prepare outdoor spaces for Memorial Day.....</i>	<i>14D</i>
<i>Deal with garden pests humanely.....</i>	<i>15D</i>

**A SPECIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE ADDISON INDEPENDENT**

*Thursday, May 14, 2026*



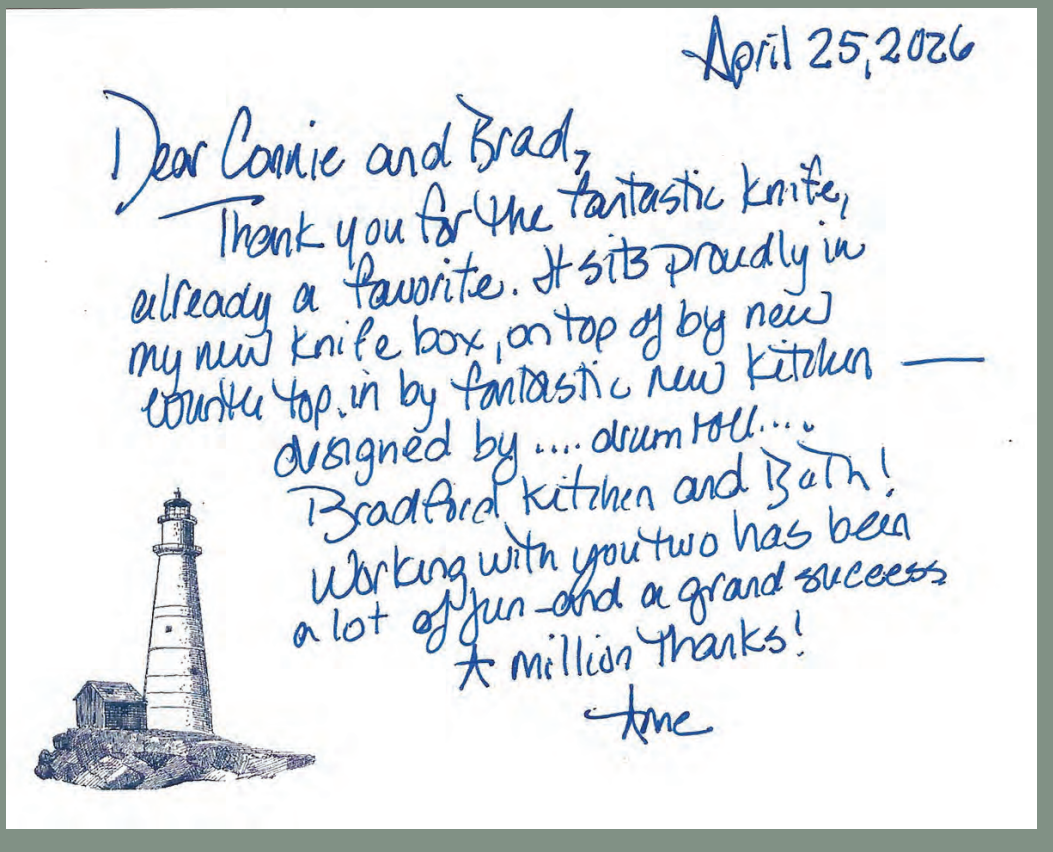
# TRULY CUSTOM CABINETS, FROM FLOOR TO CEILING.



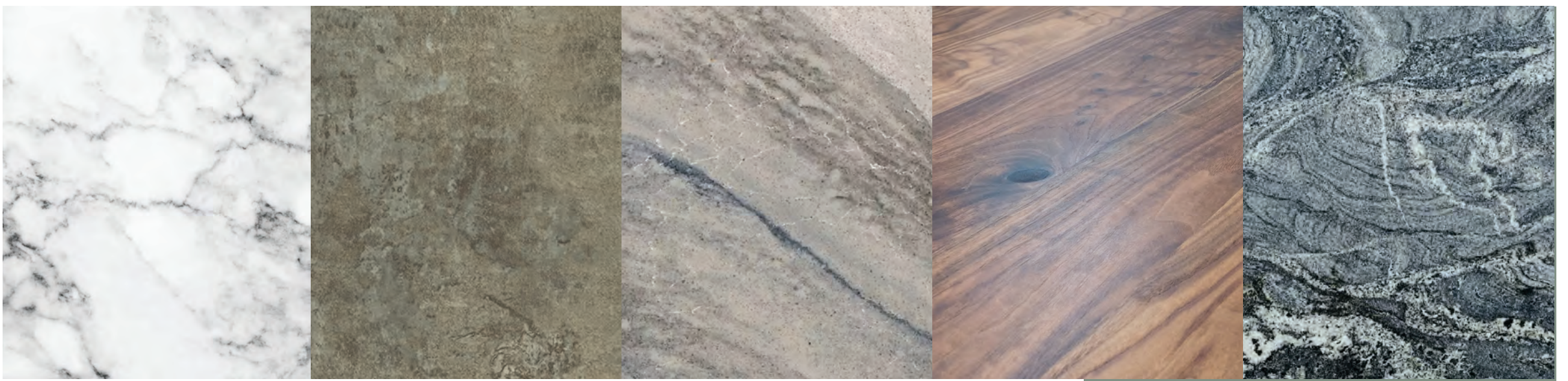
DAKOTA



**WOODHARBOR**  
CUSTOM CABINETRY



**YOUR LOCAL EXPERTS IN COUNTERTOPS, INSTALLED!**



MARBLE

LAMINATE

QUARTZ

WOOD

GRANITE



**CALL US TODAY!**

**(802) 458-8999**

- KITCHEN & BATH DESIGN
- CABINETRY & COUNTERTOPS
- PLUMBING FIXTURES
- HARDWARE & MORE!

MON-FRI 8-5, SAT 8-12 OR BY APPOINTMENT | 18 CREEK RD | MIDDLEBURY, VT  
**BRADFORDKITCHENANDBATH.COM**

# CONSIDER THESE PERENNIALS FOR YOUR GARDEN THIS YEAR

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that provides a great reason to get outdoors. Getting one's hands dirty in the garden often pays off with a colorful, awe-inspiring and aesthetically appealing finished product. Perennials are plants that live multiple years. Even though perennials may die back above ground each winter, their roots

remain alive, which is why the colorful blooms typically return anew once warm weather makes a comeback. Gardeners who want to capitalize on the hardiness of perennials can consider these plants for their gardens this season.

- Coreopsis: Coreopsis are perennials that thrive in a wide range of conditions, including various types of soil. So gardeners who find their soil is predominantly clay as well as those with sandy

soil may be able to successfully plant coreopsis on their properties. *Better Homes & Gardens* (BHG) notes coreopsis are native to the United States and produce colorful blooms that can withstand hot and dry weather throughout the summer.

- Russian sage: Russian sage produces purplish-blue flowers that BHG notes retain their color for weeks. Russian sage can be planted in a variety of the hardiness zones defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and many gardening experts recommend them to gardeners whose local climates tend to be especially hot and dry.

- Hellebore: BHG notes hellebore are ideal for gardeners who want some color in the early days of spring. Hellebore, sometimes referred to as "Lenten Roses," have an early flowering season, so their blooms, which can be pink, white, purple, yellow, green, rose, or purple, can be a welcome sign in spring.

- Baptisia: Gardening experts note these purple-blooming perennials thrive in sun. Gardeners who want perennials with particularly long life expectancies can consider baptisia, as experts note they can live for many decades. Baptisia are drought-tolerant, and they can grow in soil that may not be considered great for other plants.

- Coneflower: The unique look of coneflowers has generated many enthusiasts of these perennials that bloom from early summer to fall. Coneflowers are highly adaptable, making them capable of growing in various zones and soil types. Once established, coneflowers are considered very drought-tolerant.

Perennials can add aesthetic appeal to landscapes year after year. Gardeners are urged to speak to experts at local gardening centers to identify the perfect plants for their gardens.

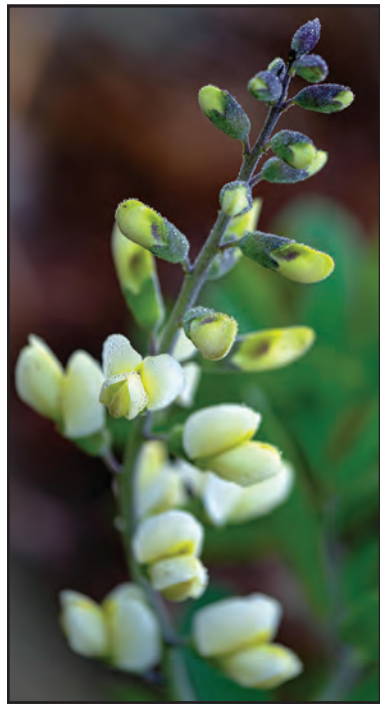
— Metro Creative



CONEFLOWER



COREOPSIS



BAPTISIA



RUSSIAN SAGE



HELLEBORE

## Do the bugs a favor, leave the leaves

By SUSAN HUMPHREY

To me, gardening feels like one big experiment. Every year I learn new things, and the research is always changing.

Ever since COVID, when I became more bonded to our property from spending so much time at home, I've been trying to garden more for the benefit of wildlife. I'm also aging, and I think now more about what kind of a world I'm leaving for the generations to come. Being a good steward feels important.

Every spring there seems to be this push to clean out the garden beds. I certainly don't want to put any landscape companies out of business, but I do want to mention the latest research on the value of leaving the leaves. Until recently, it was thought that a good time to clean up and remove leaves in our area was in mid-May, when the apple trees were in bloom. We were told that by then, most of the beneficial insects had emerged. Many folks could not wait even that long. They'd clean out their beds at the first stretch of 50 degree days.

However, new research suggests that the best time to get rid of the leaves is likely never! Because it

turns out insects are emerging at different times, right on into the summer. And leaves are an important year-round habitat for all manner of insects.

If interested, I invite you to google and read an interview with Max Ferlauto, the Maryland state entomologist who conducted the study along with Karin Burghardt. Their findings may change how you think about your yard and how you garden.

"When you remove your leaves, you reduce your butterfly and moth populations by about 45%."

This year, along with planting more native plants, I am planning to leave the leaves permanently. Besides providing important habitat, they will mulch the beds, add nutrients to the soil and suppress weeds. Hopefully the plants will thrive, and the birds and other wildlife will be happy too!

Editor's note: Susan Humphrey resides and gardens in Weybridge.



Looking for help around the house and property?

**Look no further!**

For ten years, we have been "The Extra Hand" for our Addison County clients, offering a wide variety of customized property services. They turn to us for regular and thorough house checks and rely on us to follow up with problems as they occur.

In short, we look after our clients' properties as if they were our own. We have over sixty years of combined construction and hospitality experience and have a wide network of tradespeople to turn to for excellent service, fair pricing, and first-class workmanship.

Feel free to contact us through our website to learn about what we do and how we do it.

- Geoff Conrad and Tim Hollander

chipmanhillpropertyservices.com

## MAKE YOUR HOME BLOOMING BEAUTIFUL

### Our Greenhouse Flourishes with NEW ARRIVALS DAILY

Large variety of annual flower and vegetable plants & herbs.

Huge selection of healthy nursery stock  
Shrubs • Perennials • Roses

Bagged Mulch & Soils

## Yard & Garden

Bulk Mulches Pine, Natural Cedar & Hemlock

Bulk Compost & Top Soil

Delivery available on all bagged and bulk products.

**AGWAY Middlebury Agway Coupon**  
**NURSERY CUSTOMER BUCKS**  
 The more you buy, the more you save!  
 \$5 off any \$50 Nursery Purchase  
 \$15 off any \$100 Nursery Purchase  
 \$25 off any \$150 Nursery Purchase  
Combined nursery purchases include Trees, Shrubs, Annuals, Herbs, Perennials. Cannot be combined with any other sale or offer. One coupon per visit. Valid at Middlebury Agway only. Valid 5/14/26-5/31/26

**AGWAY Middlebury Agway Coupon**  
**SUMMER CLOTHING FOR MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN**  
**20% off CARHARTT CLOTHING PURCHASE**  
Carhartt makes great clothing for all seasons! Pants, Jeans, shorts, T's, overalls, hats and much more! Cannot be combined with any other sale or offer. Coupon good for in-stock items only and while supplies last. 5/14/26-5/31/26

**PET SERVICES**  
 Our beautiful SELF-SERVICE Dog Wash is OPEN EVERYDAY!  
 Washing your pet has never been easier! Enjoy the pleasant atmosphere in our beautiful spa-like space.  
**We also make PET I.D. TAGS**  
 Custom engraved while you wait. Choose from a variety of styles. Beautiful brass Equine & Stable Plates, too.  
**PET FOOD**  
 Wide variety of premium, quality brands. Join our Pet Club and earn rewards for your purchases.  
 Toys & treats, accessories, grooming & supplies. Plus, products for birds and small animals.

**weber**  
**Weber Grills are here!**  
 Many Weber Gas & Charcoal Models Available in Colors!  
 Also Available with Stainless Steel Upgrades.  
**FREE assembly and FREE propane fill up makes Agway the best deal on Weber you'll find anywhere!**

**FREE Propane fill up w/gas grill purchase**

**Concrete Pavers • Edging • Step Stones • Wall Stones • Natural Field Stones • Slate for patios, edging and stone walls!**

**MIDDLEBURY AGWAY FARM & GARDEN**  
 338 Exchange St., Middlebury, VT • 802-388-4937  
 Monday - Friday 8-6, Sat. 8-5, Sun. 9-4  
 YOUR YARD, GARDEN and PET PLACE™ [www.MiddleburyAgway.com](http://www.MiddleburyAgway.com)

# Energy Navigators

Help to plan & execute projects: Weatherization, Financing Options, Heating/Cooling, Water Heaters, Solar & More!

**FREE HOME ENERGY SUPPORT**

(802) 587-2550 [energynavigators.org](http://energynavigators.org)  
 hello@energynavigators.org

# 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          |
| Antifreeze            | Fly killer             | Mouse/rat poison         | Glues                  |
| Ant killer            | Formaldehyde           | Nail polish              | Stains                 |
| Ammonia               | Fuel additives         | Nail polish remover      | Stump remover          |
| Auto body filler      | Fungicides             | Naphtha                  | Tars or resins         |
| Automotive fluids     | Furniture polish       | Oil-based paint          | Transmission fluid     |
| Chlorine bleach       | Gasoline               | Oily waste               | Tub & tile cleaner     |
| Brake fluid           | Hair dyes              | Oven cleaner             | Varnish                |
| Bug spray             | Kerosene               | Paint thinner/turpentine | Weed killer/fertilizer |
| Button cell batteries | Latex paint            | Parts cleaner            | Wood preservative      |
| 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:**  
Mon-Fri, 8am to 2pm, and Sat, 8am to 1pm



**Addison County**  
Solid Waste Management District

[www.AddisonCountyRecycles.org](http://www.AddisonCountyRecycles.org) 802-388-2333



10% off with mention of this ad!



Vermont Window Treatments LLC  
Over 20 years experience!



Free  
in-home  
consultations!

## Open Your Home To Beauty

• Shades • Blinds • Window Film • Retractable Screen

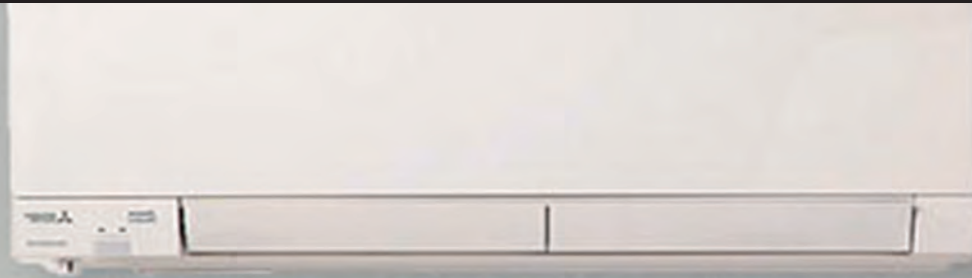
Your local source for window treatments from popular brands like:

Grabber, Alta, Norman, RM COCO, and Carole Fabrics.

Retractable screens from Mirage Screen Systems.

Window film by Johnson Window Films.

802-989-1531 | 3333 Case Street, Middlebury  
[vermontwindowtreatments.com](http://vermontwindowtreatments.com)  
[VermontWindowTreatments@gmail.com](mailto:VermontWindowTreatments@gmail.com)



[dennis@newtonerac.com](mailto:dennis@newtonerac.com) • 802-388-1431  
[www.newtonerac.com](http://www.newtonerac.com)

We are your local Mitsubishi heat pump installation and service team.



# LOCAL BUILDER MAKES HABITAT HOME A LIGHTER LIFT



*Silver Maple Construction and Habitat for Humanity join forces to benefit those in need of affordable housing*

**By JOHN FLOWERS**

MIDDLEBURY — A legendary nonprofit and a top name in the local building industry have joined forces to build a new home that will be made available to a low-income family at a fraction of what it would fetch in Middlebury's current real estate market.

We're talking about a collaboration between Habitat for Humanity of Addison County and Silver Maple Construction, which this week raised the walls and roof on the third of what will be a four-home subdivision off Gorham Lane in Middlebury.

The partnership will expedite construction of the 1,200-square-foot, three-bedroom home and spare what is a senior Habitat volunteer work crew a lot of wear and tear and anxiety.

"It's huge, I can't overstate it," Habitat volunteer Richard McKerr said Monday afternoon of the importance of Silver Maple's help while he was taking a gander at the new homesite. "It's going to save us at least two months of volunteer effort."

Silver Maple has had a congenial relationship with Habitat for a while. It started around three years ago with an assist on cabinetry and labor in the two earlier Habitat builds in the Gorham Lane

subdivision. The nonprofit has also periodically gotten carpentry and building advice from Silver Maple officials, including company President Sean Flynn.

Most of the Addison County Habitat volunteers are dogged and knowledgeable about building basics, and some have previously worked in the construction industry. But virtually all are now retirees in their 70s and are no longer cut out for framing walls and hoisting them into place.

No worries. Silver Maple officials this past winter decided to ratchet up the company's partnership with Habitat to make the nonprofit's latest home a lighter lift — literally. The colder months are a slower time in the construction industry and Silver Maple has ample warehouse space at 227 Pond Lane in Middlebury.

Tim Steele, director of Silver Maple's woodworks, originally proposed allowing Addison County Habitat volunteers use the warehouse to do the framing work during the winter.

Flynn not only endorsed Steele's offer, he sweetened it.

"Sean was eager to grow it into something more. Pretty soon it was Silver Maple framing and erecting the shell of the (home), because that was one of (Habitat's) major

pinch points," Steele recalled.

So, as the lumber came in, the Silver Maple woodworks crew mixed in the framing work for the Gorham Lane home.

Per Habitat's high energy efficiency standards, the new abode's walls will exceed industry standards. It's actually a double-wall system, Steele explained. Picture two layers of two-by-four framing, married across a single two-by-12 plane. This provides more room for insulation and a greater buffer against winter weather.

Plans called for the new home's walls to be erected, linked and sheathed by the end of this week, with a "Silver Maple volunteer weekend" planned for May 16-17 to get a lot of the roof work done.

The wall panels already include openings for the future windows to be set. Habitat volunteers will take on that job and other work that falls in their sweet spot, according to McKerr — including drywall, interior finishes, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, trim, siding, etc. The Habitat crew — which will include future residents of the home — will have enough work to stay busy through the hoped completion date of (appropriately enough) Thanksgiving.

**GIVING BACK**

The news gets even better. Flynn wants Silver Maple to assist Habitat with at least one home build per year. A lot of that will of course depend on land availability and other factors. Middlebury College donated the land for the Gorham Lane subdivision.

Silver Maple last week marked its 20th year, during which it's married great building services (See *Collaboration*, Page 7D)

*"Pretty soon it was Silver Maple framing and erecting the shell of the (home), because that was one of (Habitat's) major pinch points."*  
— Tim Steele



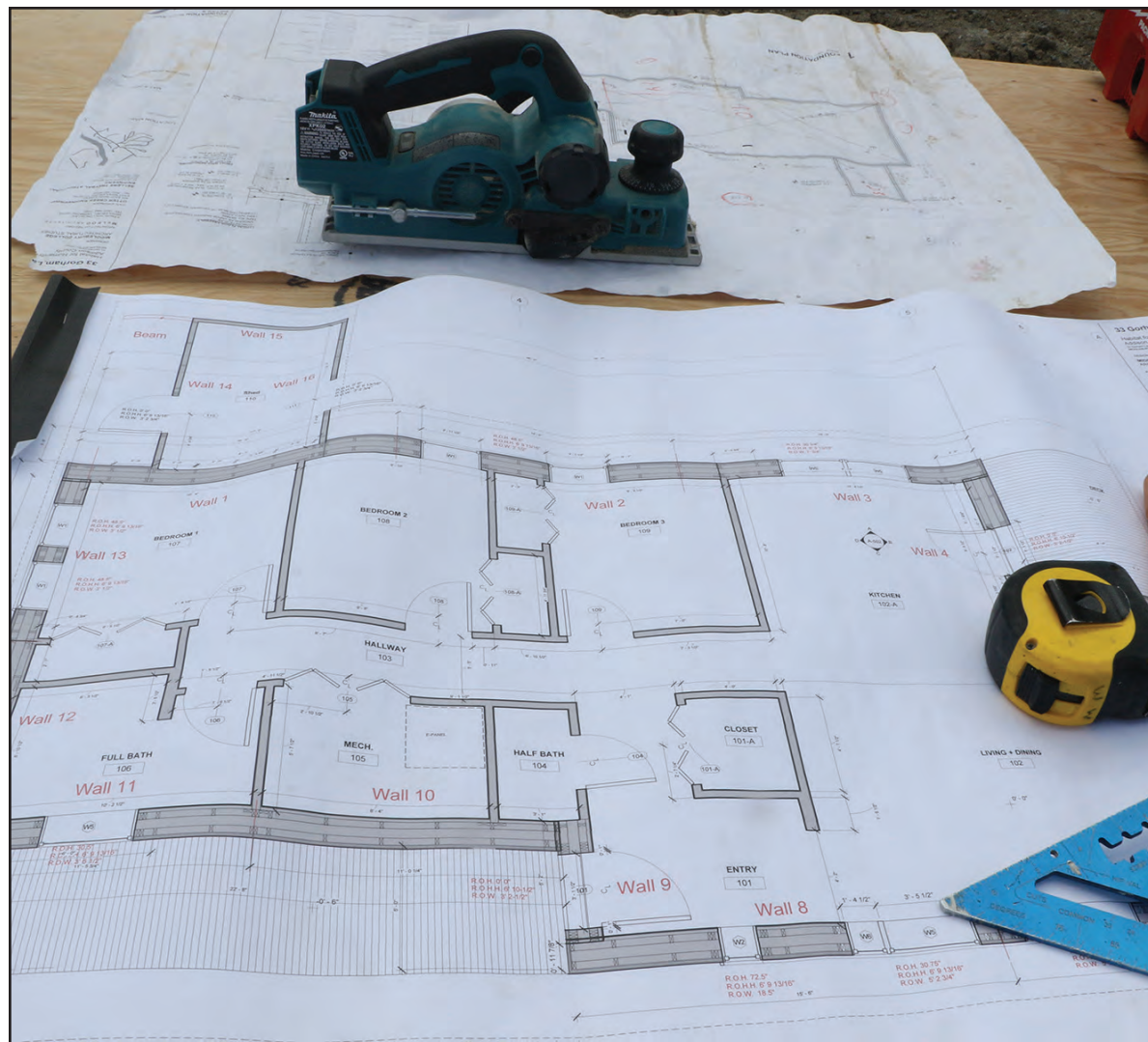
**TIM STEELE, DIRECTOR** of Silver Maple Construction's woodworks division (left), and Sean Flynn, the company's president, stand next to a stack of wall panels that will form the shell of a new Habitat for Humanity of Addison County home that's being built off Gorham Lane in Middlebury. Silver Maple's provision of the wall panels has been a huge assist to Habitat volunteers.

Independent photo/John Flowers



**TRUSSES SIT AT** the worksite early this week waiting for installation of Silver Maple's preconstructed wall panels. Once that's done, the site will host a "Silver Maple volunteer weekend" when a lot of the roof work will be done.

Independent photo/Steve James



**BUILDER'S PLANS AT** the Gorham Lane worksite help volunteers put together the 1,200-square-foot, three-bedroom home that Habitat for Humanity is raising at the site.

Independent photo/Steve James



The Paquette family shares over 100 years of expertise in awning manufacturing, installation and maintenance.

Our locally owned and operated family business will deliver the highest quality, with neighborly service.

**Free consultation with Rene on site!**  
**Professionally installed**

Custom Awnings & Solar Shades, Residential & Commercial

**INTEGRITY AWNINGS**

802-771-5892  
integrityawnings.com

scan for more info!

**CO-OPERATIVE INSURANCE COMPANIES**

As a member-focused insurer, we offer financial security and trusted protection through personal, commercial, and farm insurance—delivering on our promise with integrity and care.

**HOME • BUSINESS • AUTO • FARM**  
Middlebury, Vermont • 802-388-7917 • co-opinsurance.com

**Committed to our MEMBERS, protecting what matters most.**



**Relax...  
Let us do the work.**

Call Plouffe's Boiler & Mechanical Service Inc. to help install and repair the central air conditioning or heat pump in your home or business. We also offer routine maintenance, parts replacement, and more, to ensure that we catch the potential problems early before they become big problems.

With over 20 years of experience, you can rely on us for the best service and the use of the highest quality products available.

And with our 24-hour emergency services, you can count on us to arrive quickly to get your systems back on track.

**Call us today!**

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL  
**PLOUFFE'S**  
BOILER & MECHANICAL SERVICE

Heating • Plumbing • Air Conditioning  
Heat Pump Installation  
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

24/7 Pager Service  
M-F 7am - 3pm

24 Hour Emergency  
Repair Service

 Find us on  
**Facebook**

1786 Route 7 South • Middlebury, VT • 802- 388-2296

## The Ultimate Wood Heat.

Set the thermostat where you want for a more comfortable home.



The Classic Edge HDX is U.S. EPA Certified

- **More Comfort** - Thermostatically controlled wood heat.
- **Peace of Mind** - Keep the fire outside and eliminate the dangers associated with indoor wood heating.
- **Save Money** - Wood is a renewable, inexpensive and often free energy source.
- **Durability** - Long-lasting, stainless steel firebox.



**CLASSIC  
EDGE**  
TITANIUM HDX  
Outdoor Wood Furnace

### RIVERSIDE SERVICES

Rochester, Vermont

802-565-0322

riversideservicesvt.com

VIDEO: How It Works  
CentralBoiler.com ~  
Explore > How It Works

CentralBoiler.com  
20-0801



**Locally owned  
Family owned**

- Sales • Service
- Delivery • Installation
- Financing Available



TRULY THERAPEUTIC TUBS!



**(802) 282-7398**

1967 Route 4, Killington  
killingtonhottubs.com

**Roof looking rough? Call the pros on top!**



  
**FRIEND  
CONSTRUCTION**

## Residential & Commercial Roofing

~ Specializing in Asphalt Shingles ~  
Free Estimates ~ Fully Insured

100% Satisfaction Guaranteed

References Available

**(802) 453-2255 ~ www.friendconstructionvt.com**

**Your roof's best "friend" is just a call away!**

# Collaboration

(Continued from Page 5D) Silver Maple now counts with philanthropy. “We’ve been given a lot for a long time,” Flynn said. “This has been a great community, and we want to give back.”

And Habitat has emerged as one of Silver Maple’s favorite causes. Both entities are in the business on building abodes, and Habitat makes homeownership more attainable for young families who can’t afford a market-rate home. “I’m a strong believer in the growth of this state. A population of 644,000 — and dwindling — is not awesome when you’re a builder,” Flynn said. Vermont’s stagnant population has been one of the reasons Silver Maple also does business in other states.

“It’s huge... It’s going to save us at least two months of volunteer effort.”  
— Richard McKerr

Silver Maple now counts roughly 85 full- and part-time workers and is looking to add more — including carpenters and project managers. Many hands make light work, as Habitat stakeholders are finding. Middlebury College students have also played a role in designing Habitat for Humanity homes, of which there are now 15 sprinkled in Middlebury, Cornwall, Vergennes and Bristol.

By providing free labor and working with vendors to get materials at a substantial discount or at cost, Habitat is able to give qualifying homeowners a manageable mortgage.

A prospective Habitat homeowner family can’t make more than 80% of the median income for Addison County, which in 2025 was \$92,900. Other criteria require the family to have a stable employment history, proven evidence of responsible money management, the ability to make monthly house payments of around \$850, to have lived and worked in Addison County for one year before applying, and a contribution of 200 hours of “sweat equity” in the construction of the new home.

Steele said it’s been a pleasure working with Habitat during the past few years and he’s looking forward to more collaborations. “It’s really nice, as part of my job, to do something that’s for the local community. We do so much beautiful, high-end work, it’s nice to be able to contribute something to local families and individuals,” he said. “And it’s fun.”

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



MOST OF THE construction volunteers for Habitat for Humanity of Addison County are knowledgeable about building basics, so this Gorham Lane worksite will seem familiar to them. Independent photo/Steve James



## GARDEN STARTERS

THE PUBLIC IS invited to fill up their gardens with plants from Orwell Free Library’s plant sale later this month. “This event is absolutely bonkers for our little community,” says librarian Kate Hunter. “The school is running a car wash fundraiser beginning at 10 a.m. on the same day. Should be fun!” The Library’s 19th Annual Plant, Book & Bake Sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 23, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at 473 Main St. in Orwell. There will be annuals, perennials, organic veggie starts and more in a sale that benefits the library. More info online at orwellfreelibrary.org.



**SALAMANDER CONSTRUCTION**  
EST. 2004

**SPECIALIZING IN**  
Custom Homes,  
Renovations, Additions,  
Decks, and Outbuildings

802-989-1177 | www.salamanderconstruction.com | Middlebury, VT

ASK ABOUT FREE APPRAISALS FOR FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS!



**National Bank of Middlebury**

LOCAL LENDERS.  
LOCAL DECISIONS.

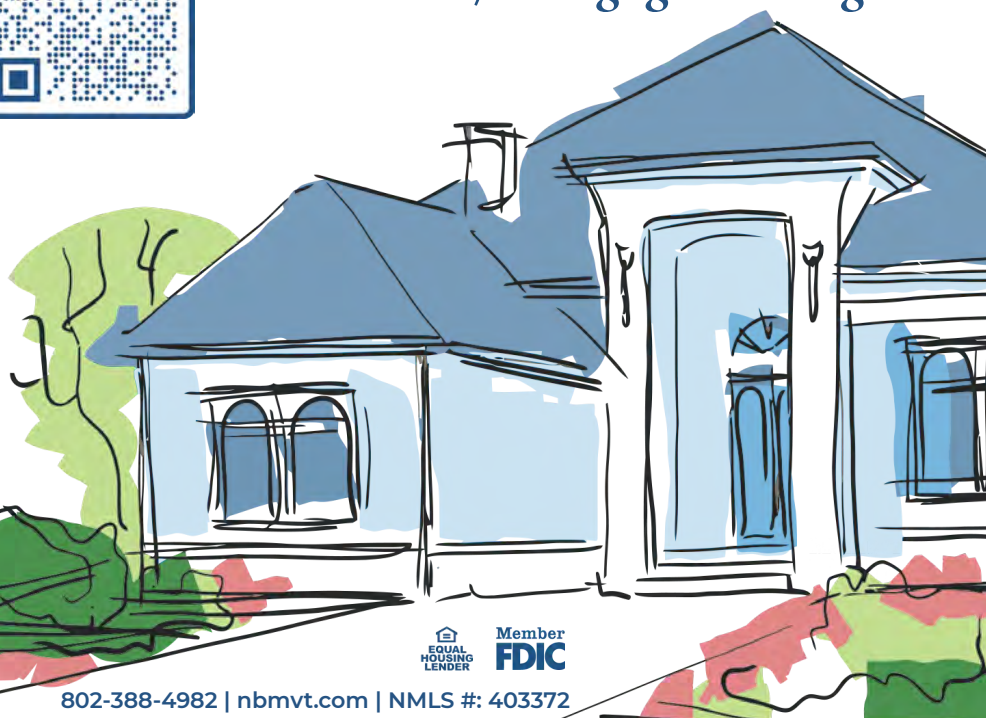
HELPING VERMONTERS FIND THE  
RIGHT HOME FINANCING SINCE 1831.

When you get a mortgage from National Bank of Middlebury, you work with the same local lender from your first conversation through closing.

Your lender lives here, knows the local market, and is part of the decision-making team.



Scan to learn more:  
[nbmvt.com/mortgage-lending](http://nbmvt.com/mortgage-lending)



Member FDIC  
EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

802-388-4982 | nbmvt.com | NMLS #: 403372



**If a dog can do it...  
imagine what you can do.**

Home improvement just got a whole lot easier. With Kubota premium compact tractors and equipment, tough projects around your property become simple, efficient, and even a little fun. So easy, in fact, that a dog can take the controls.\*

Because that’s the power of Kubota—engineered for performance, built for everyday homeowners, and designed to make big jobs feel small.

Kubota. Premium equipment for people who expect more—no matter who’s doing the driving.

Big enough to keep you running, small enough to know your name.

\*Dogs cannot actually operate machinery. Mostly because they don’t have thumbs.

Middlebury, VT  
453 Exchange St.  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 388-4967



Visit Our Website!





**DIGGER WASPS ENJOY** swamp milkweed in the yard of state botanist Grace Glynn. Photo courtesy of Grace Glynn



**JOE PYE WEED, native goldenrods, and bee balm** thrive in the yard of state botanist Grace Glynn. Photo courtesy of Grace Glynn

## HOW TO BUILD A HAVEN FOR NATIVE PLANTS IN YOUR YARD

*A national movement encourages homeowners to rip up their lawns to cultivate ecological diversity.*

By **ERIN PETENKO**  
VTDigger.org

Grace Glynn said she's still haunted by the barberry hedges she ripped out when she moved into her current Vermont home. Years after the massive undertaking to remove them, she keeps finding more of their roots. Yet Glynn has both a personal and a professional grudge against the ornamental shrub, which is not native to Vermont. As the state botanist for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, she's passionate about turning lawns into havens for native plants.

Conventional lawns are typically dominated by a single species of grass, like Kentucky bluegrass, which provides little sustenance for local pollinators and wildlife, Glynn said. The practice of "No Mow May" suggests letting lawns grow shaggy for a month, on the theory that bees and other pollinators will find food there. But a national movement is encouraging homeowners to go

farther and rip up their lawns, or at least supplement them with native species.

Glynn gave the example of the oak tree, native to Vermont, which can meet the food and shelter needs of more than 550 species of butterflies and moths alone. A ginkgo tree, native to East Asia, can support only five.

Here's a starter kit on how you can introduce native plants to your yard.

### FINDING NATIVE PLANTS

Amid a budding interest in native plants, online nurseries have cropped up to offer items labeled "native wildflower seed mixes" and similar fare. Glynn cautioned that while that trend may be well-meaning, many of those sources are actually offering seeds that aren't native species or local varieties that wildlife needs.

She suggested starting by understanding what's around you. Apps like "Seek" can help Vermonters identify what's already growing in their yard or nearby natural areas. Sites like Go Botany

can help you figure out whether a given species is native to your area.

Glynn said the Wild Seed Project, although based in Maine, is a reputable source for native New England seeds.

The Vermont Pollinator Working Group has put together a list of nurseries that specialize in native plants, although some are open only seasonally or provide plants only wholesale.

Full Circle Gardens in Essex is one such nursery. Owner Sarah Salatino said she became interested in offering native plants after attending a conference about the dire situation for pollinators nationwide.

Some pollinator insects, particularly bees, have dropped in

numbers in recent years. Experts say that's due to a combination of several threats: habitat loss, climate change and pesticide usage among them. That has later effects on other plants and animals in the

ecosystem and on agriculture, which relies on pollination for its produce.

Salatino said she asked herself, "What if I grew a balance, and people can still have their peonies or their hostas or whatever, but taking some natives here and there to help our pollinator populations?"

And that's how I started growing more and more natives."

Salatino said potential planters should consider a diverse mix of species, and at least five plants per species, so foraging insects and

other animals can have enough to eat when they come to your yard. "If you're going to be riding your bike around to try and go to a restaurant," she said by way of analogy, "you don't want to have to ride your bike very far."

Glynn said a few key species to consider are oaks, native grasses like switch grass and blue stem, willows, goldenrods, cherries, dogwoods, sweet fern and New England aster.

### HOW TO PLANT NATIVE PLANTS

Fostering new life might start with death — that is, of the turf grass taking up space in your yard. Glynn said there are a few ways to get rid of grass, including simply ripping it up or turning the sod over and covering it with cardboard to prevent weeds from coming in.

Solarizing, or covering grass with plastic to kill it, is hands-off but can introduce plastics into the soil, she said.

The methods to integrate native plants vary by species. Salatino said many can be propagated

simply by spreading seed in winter, but her nursery also offers seedlings in pots, some of which can be planted directly in the ground in spring.

The next step takes patience, and a certain level of acceptance of whatever comes up. Salatino said she sometimes hears pushback from people who think that native gardens look overgrown.

Glynn said she once got a comment from a neighbor that the previous homeowner's garden looked pretty and tidy — which she took as a dig at her own messier-looking garden. Some homeowners have even taken to putting up signs letting their neighbors know the purpose of their garden's wild appearance.

Salatino said her typical response is to simply suggest that people try planting native species in just a patch, or in part of their yard, and see what insects and other animals (See *Native Plants*, Page 9D)

*"Those early flowering plants are really important for early emerging insects and early emerging native bees."  
— Grace Glynn*

## MCKERNON

DESIGN • BUILD



*Quality Construction, Lasting Value*  
mckernongroup.com • 802-247-8500

## J.D. FULLER

### PLUMBING & HEATING INC

- Repairs, renovations and new construction
- Heating systems installed, cleaned and serviced
- Water heaters and filtration systems sold, installed, and repaired
- Kitchen, bath fixtures, and faucets sold and installed

John D. Fuller  
Master Plumber

802-388-2019

Serving Addison  
County since 1989

## Kittredge Land Surveying, PLLC

Seth W. Kittredge, L.S.

Formed in 2012, by Seth W. Kittredge, L.S., Kittredge Land Surveying, PLLC is a professional land-surveying firm located in Vergennes. Kittredge Land Surveying is large enough to accommodate any size project, yet small enough to stay intimately involved and focused on each project to meet your specific needs. Contact Kittredge Land Surveying for a consultation and free estimate.



- Boundary Retracement
- Subdivisions
- Boundary Line Adjustments
- FEMA Flood Certifications
- Replacement of Missing Corner Monuments
- Vermont Land Records Research
- Topographic/Site Surveys

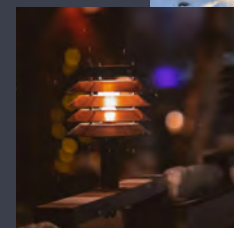
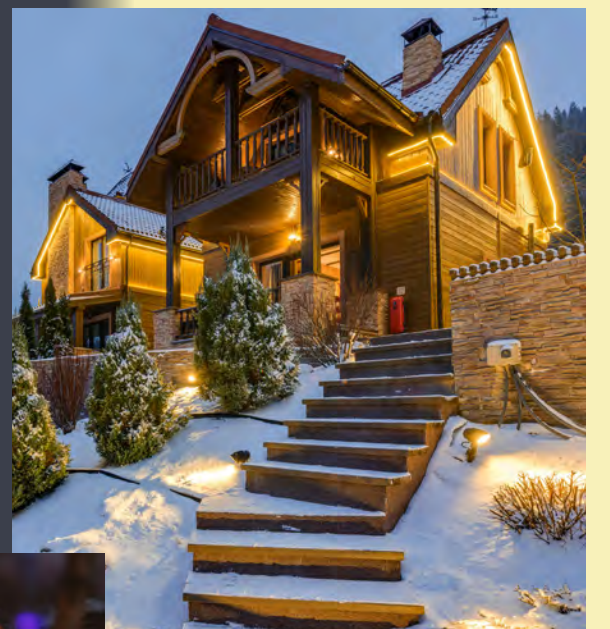
28 Thomas Circle, Vergennes, VT 05491

802-870-7028 • 802-989-1625 (cell) • info@kittredgelandsurveying.com

**KITTREDGELANDSURVEYING.COM**

## Don't lose your landscape to the night!

- Low-voltage lighting
- Multi-colored displays
- Multiple Control Options including Bluetooth



**Rainbow Acres Landscaping**  
4708 Vt Rt 17 W Addison, VT 05491  
(802) 759-2225  
Cell (802) 373-5758 call or text

*Bring your landscape into a whole new light.*

# Native plants

(Continued from Page 8D)  
 come in as a result of those new species. Even integrating native species in between non-native ones can have benefits for local pollinators.

And there are additional benefits to a native garden for the landowner. Glynn said native plants typically require less watering and often require less soil augmentation, meaning fewer chemicals in your yard.

Salatino said natives are “so easy” to grow, because they’re adapted to the local environment they’ll be planted in. “(They) hate being fussed over,” she said.

She also loves to observe the wildlife that arrives to take advantage of newfound habitat. Just recently, she saw giant swallowtail caterpillars, odd-looking mottled creatures, grow into beautiful massive butterflies.

What about “No Mow May”? Glynn said that the effort to protect pollinators by skipping a month of mowing is better than nothing, but it often works against pollinators by encouraging dandelions, which do not support local insect species.

She said one benefit is that you might even find some native species coming up that had been suppressed by close-trimmed grass.

“I’ve had a ton of purple violets



STATE BOTANIST GRACE GLYNN

and Philadelphia fleabane, which is a really pretty little aster that has just burst up all across my lawn,” she said. “Those early flowering plants are really important for early emerging insects and early emerging native bees. So there can definitely be benefits to No Mow May, but it doesn’t fix the fact that a lot of these lawns are just monocultures of non-native species.”

### BEYOND BACKYARDS

Private homeowners are not the only people who have grown more interested in helping pollinators. Mike Kiernan is the leader of Bee the Change, a nonprofit that has helped plant native fields in the spaces around solar panels in solar farms.

A few years ago, the group set a new goal: to plant pollinator habitats in every town in Vermont. So far, they’ve reached 70 habitats in four states, most of them in Vermont.

He said lawns are a visual demonstration of humanity’s power over the landscape. “But it’s time to examine how we use those spaces,” he said.

Our footprint is “crowding other species out,” Kiernan said. “If we’re having other species disappear at a rate that is accelerating,” because of climate change, habitat loss and other environmental issues, “we have to address it.”

He’s also gotten good feedback from members of the public about the impact of native species on the surrounding area.

“On the boundaries of the fence lines of one of the fields in Hinesburg, a farmer said, ‘I haven’t had apples like this since I was a kid,’” he said.



FORKED BLUECURLS AND flax-leaved aster populate the yard of state botanist Grace Glynn.

Photo courtesy of Grace Glynn



Celebrating 20 years of building in this community.

www.SilverMaple.com



# The Ultimate Protection for Outdoor Beauty



**\$10 OFF** One Gallon Benjamin Moore Woodlux Stain  
 Coupon valid through 7/31/26



1396 Rte 7 South  
 Middlebury, VT  
 next to 7 South Sandwiches



802-388-2500  
 M-F 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.,  
 Sat. 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

# HOME REPAIR HOW-TO CHECKLIST

- Use Vermont **contractor registries** to make an informed decision.
  - **Home improvement professionals registered as a contractor with the Secretary of State** agree to meet Vermont professional standards. Check out the link at [tinyurl.com/RegContractors](http://tinyurl.com/RegContractors).
  - Contractors on the **Home Improvement Fraud Registry** have been convicted of home improvement fraud. Check out the link at [tinyurl.com/HomeFraud](http://tinyurl.com/HomeFraud).
- Ask for **recommendations** from your community — friends, neighbors, family, co-workers.
- Once you identify a contractor you are considering for your project, do more **research**.
  - Lookup complaint history online, using the name of the contractor and “scam” or “complaint” in your search.
  - Contact the **Consumer Assistance Program, or CAP**, and ask if they have complaints filed against the contractor you are considering, the timeframe and the nature of the complaints. Check out the link at [ago.vermont.gov/cap](http://ago.vermont.gov/cap).
  - Review **Better Business Bureau** complaint history. Check out the link at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).
- Ask the contractor to show you their **active registration and insurance policy**.
- Get quotes** from 2-3 other reputable contractors. Quotes should include the expected payment timeline (ideally with a deposit of no more than 10-30%) and ask for references from prior jobs.
- 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.

You can always reach out to Gabriel Taylor-Marsh at the Attorney General’s Consumer Assistance Program directly with any questions you have: [ago.vermont.gov/home-improvement-specialist-bio](http://ago.vermont.gov/home-improvement-specialist-bio).

— This list was created by Gabriel Taylor-Marsh, Home Improvement Specialist at the Vermont Attorney General’s Consumer Assistance Program.



**CODY STEPHENSON, A contractor with Vermont Energy, installs a heat pump in a Vermont home a few years back.**  
Photo courtesy of Efficiency Vermont

## VERMONT IS STRUGGLING TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF HEAT PUMPS

By **ZACHARY MOSS**

Heat pumps could help Vermont reach its climate goals, but several factors are making it hard to take full advantage of their potential, according to the 2026 Annual Energy Report by the Vermont Department of Public Service.

Problem number one: Federal tax credits for heat pumps ended in December as part of President Trump’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Home weatherization is a second challenge. A well-insulated home allows heat pumps to operate more effectively and efficiently, but Vermont has some of the country’s oldest housing stock and lacks enough weatherization workers.

Finally, people aren’t using their systems as efficiently as they could. Heat pumps are used at higher than expected rates in summer, but people are quick to shut them off in winter, instead relying on traditional fossil fuel systems, the report says.

“This is a long process, taking years and years of education and outreach to really see the behavior change,” said Matthew Smith, a spokesperson for Efficiency Vermont.

Due to these headwinds, heat pump adoption is anticipated to grow at a slower rate than previously projected, according to the report. But experts, including those at energy utility Efficiency Vermont, say they’ll continue to

*Customer behavior and workforce issues create challenges for cleaner residential heat.*

push technology to reduce the state’s reliance on fossil fuels.

Heat pump adoption is predicted to continue to grow, but at a slower pace. The chart below shows multiple scenarios for potential growth. Source: 2026 Annual Energy Report, Vermont Department of Public Service

### A trio of issues

Cold-climate heat pumps are among the least expensive sources of heat for homes, cheaper on average than propane or heating oil. And because they’re powered by electricity, they’re a way to reduce household carbon emissions.

But even in the current moment, heat pumps are not reaching their full potential to save money and energy. According to the report, heat pumps are not only used less but are saving less than state officials expected.

Part of the problem is Vermont’s cold climate. During bouts of cold weather, some customers turn off their heat pumps, the report says, to rely on other fuels. This is due to the systems being pushed to their limit, sometimes leading to unexpected increases in electric bills.

“In single-digit temperatures, heat pumps still work, but

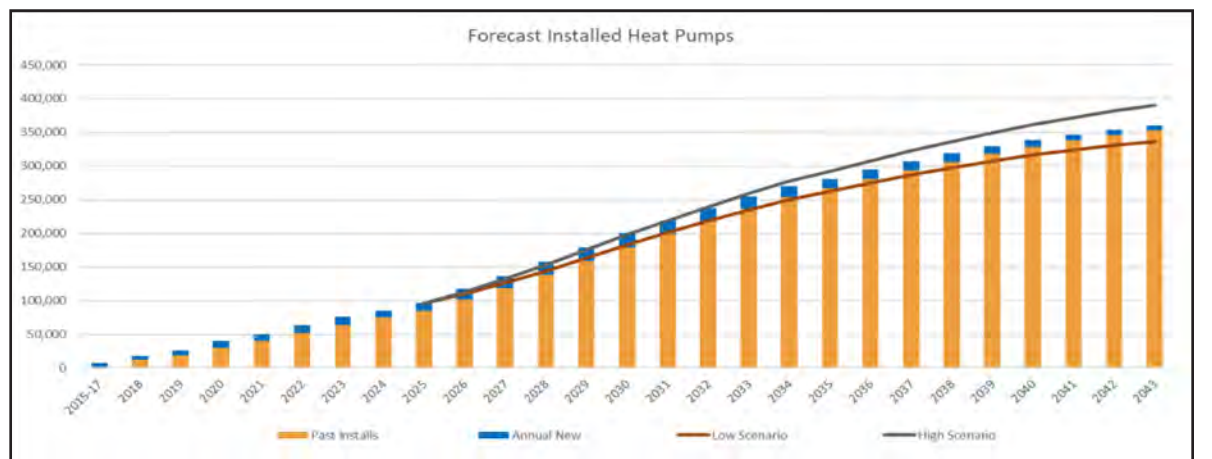
efficiency and output drop, operating costs rise and poorly weatherized homes often require expensive backup heat to stay comfortable,” said Michael Touchette, general manager of Vermont Energy, a heat pump dealer.

But the report argues that the technology alone isn’t to blame, noting that consumer education and behavior are part of the issue. Smith says homeowners need to become more familiar with heat pumps and their limitations before installing them, including that having a weatherized home would help them operate more effectively.

Vermont’s housing stock, however, was “built before there were anything resembling weatherization standards,” Smith said.

Efficiency Vermont, which offers homeowners a wide variety of efficiency-related rebates, also works to inform Vermonters about the importance of weatherization. Smith stressed the importance of “complementary actions” when installing heat pumps, including improved insulation and air-sealing.

To weatherize 120,000 homes (See *Heat pumps*, Page 15D)



**HEAT PUMP ADOPTION** is predicted to continue to grow, but at a slower pace. The chart above shows multiple scenarios for potential growth. Source: 2026 Annual Energy Report, Vermont Department of Public Service

## JACKMAN FUELS, INC.

Family-owned Local Business

**Summer is on the way! It’s a great time to schedule a cleaning or service your equipment.**

Offering our customers:

- LP Gas, Diesel, Ultra-Low Sulfur Heating Oil & Kerosene
- Sales, Service & Installation of Heat Pumps,
- Home heating equipment & Water heaters
- Oil tank inspections and upgrades

24 Hour emergency service available

Pre-buy and budget programs

Serving Addison and Chittenden Counties since 1945

**1 Main St. Verg. • 802-877-2661 • [jackmanfuels.com](http://jackmanfuels.com)**

Providing Addison County with dependable, high-quality general contracting services for over three decades.

Mark Raymond • [raymondrenovationvt.com](http://raymondrenovationvt.com) • Middlebury, VT • 802-388-0742

Retain your home’s original architectural details

VERMONT CUSTOM MOLDINGS  
[www.vermontcustommoldings.com](http://www.vermontcustommoldings.com)

Mark Raymond | 802-388-0742 | [mark@vermontcustommoldings.com](mailto:mark@vermontcustommoldings.com)

Saves on energy costs all seasons

Create a draft free environment

## URETHANE FOAM OPERATIONS

### Cellulose and Spray Insulation

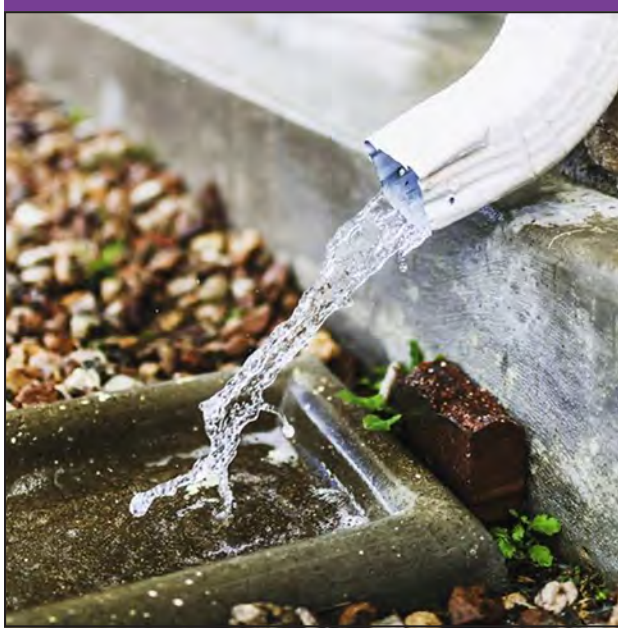
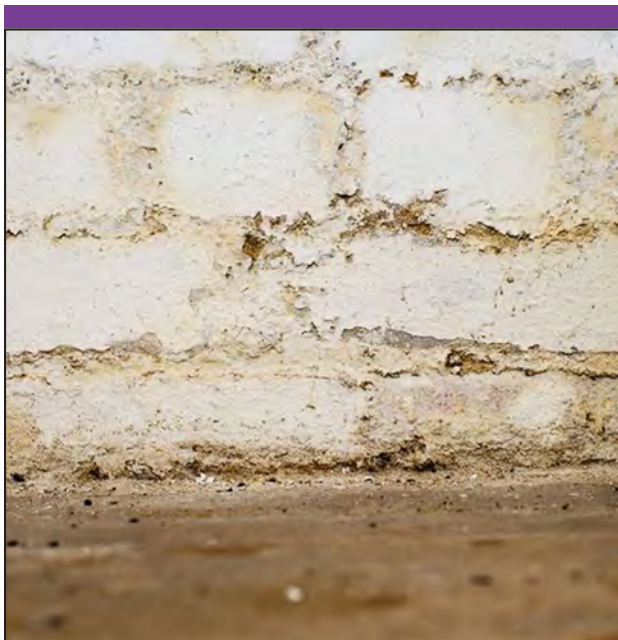
- Stops drafts
- Saves energy
- Seals out moisture
- Blocks air pollutants

Brandon, Vermont  
(802) 247-5050  
[info@mckernongroup.com](mailto:info@mckernongroup.com)

Certified Installers

# HOW TO FIX A WET, DAMP, OR DOWNRIGHT LEAKY BASEMENT

## Divert water runoff, fix leaks, eliminate condensation & cover damp floors



Winters are long in Vermont, so it's a relief when spring finally arrives. But snowmelt and rainfall can spell trouble for a basement: leaks, dampness, condensation, even standing water. Assuming you haven't had a bona fide flood, Efficiency Vermont reminds us that there's plenty you can do yourself to dry out your basement. Fixing the issue will also help you ready your home for energy efficiency upgrades like air sealing and insulation.

First, pinpoint the location and severity of the problem: is water everywhere or seeping in at just one corner? If it's running water, is it a trickle or a rushing river? Next, identify the type of water issue you have. Most fall under one of three categories.

### 1. Runoff or surface water

Does your basement get wet only when you have a serious storm or snowmelt event? Then you've got a runoff problem, and the place to start is outside. If you fix the issue at the source, then there's a good chance you won't have to do much inside your basement.

**Gutters:** these can make a big difference for some houses, but they have to be maintained and can sometimes suffer damage from ice or snow. If you have gutters, clean them regularly and be sure the downspouts lead well away from the building.

**Grading:** if water tends to pool against your foundation, then consider having a landscaper increase the slope of the grade away from your house. If you don't have enough space to do this (for example, if you're too close to your neighbor's house), the next measure can be just as effective.

**Underground "overhang":** dig out or excavate a band (about 1 foot deep, 3-4 feet wide) right up against the length of your foundation. Slope the band away from the house, place a membrane such as poly sheeting against the house and over the band, then backfill with stone or another material. Once it's in place, this solution is maintenance free.

### 2. Condensation

Two things cause condensation: cold surface temperatures and elevated air humidity. So to reduce it, you have to warm up your basement or dry out the air.

**Cold water pipes:** especially in summer, this is a classic location for

excess basement condensation. If you take the time to wrap cold water pipes with foam pipe insulation, most if not all of the condensation will go away.

**Dryer vents:** if you have a clothes dryer in your basement, it must be vented to the exterior of the building. Check vent pipes for leaks or clogs, as these can contribute significant levels of unwanted indoor moisture.

**Windows and wood:** it may seem counter-intuitive on a hot August day, but you should keep basement windows closed. Opening them will increase the air's humidity level. And we don't recommend storing your winter firewood supply in the basement; unless the wood is seasoned to less than 20 percent moisture content, it will release stored water into the air.

### 3. Subsurface water

So far, we've covered ways to keep out surface runoff (rain, snowmelt) and reduce interior humidity and condensation. But if those don't work and you still have water seeping in below grade, then you'll have to deal with the water where it is — inside. In this scenario, solutions can get more complex and may require assistance from a pro.

**French drains:** sounds fancy, but it's simply a slender trench resting right up against the inside of the foundation wall. When water gets in, it drops into the trench and is channeled to a covered sump pump or "drain to daylight." A sump pump can work well, but needs regular monitoring to ensure it's working properly. It may also increase your monthly electric bill.

**Cover your floors:** in conjunction with a French drain, it often makes sense to install a high-grade vapor barrier over the entire floor. This barrier covers the French drain and sump pump, and runs right up the exterior wall to a point above where the water comes in.

**Crawlspaces:** even if your main basement floor is concrete, you might have a dirt crawlspace under a portion of your house. Don't ignore it, because this may well be where moisture is getting in. To fix, try covering the ground with thick poly sheeting, overlapping and taping the seams.

### What about insulation?

To fully realize the benefits of air sealing and insulating your home, Efficiency Vermont recommends you

deal with any sources of moisture or water in your basement first. Once you've done that, applying foam insulation and sealing windows and cracks will make a huge difference in warming up and drying out your basement, which will also eliminate most condensation issues. In Vermont, foundations are typically made of fieldstone or concrete (either poured or blocks). Which type you have dictates what insulation material you or your contractor use.

**Fieldstone foundation:** irregular fieldstone surfaces are treated with spray foam insulation, which requires professional installation. Because most of the basement's heat loss is at the top of the wall, your installer will want to cover at least the first couple of feet below grade. The more you can cover, the more energy efficient your house will be.

**Concrete blocks and poured concrete:** you can use spray foam on these foundation types, too. Or you can install sheets of rigid foam insulation, since the application surfaces are flat. Foam sheets cost less than spray foam and can be a DIY install job, depending on your skill and comfort level.

**Important to know:** any foam insulation you use, whether spray foam or sheets, requires a fire-protective paint coating or other approved covering according to safety code. And regardless of material, it's essential that the insulation be continuous (no breaks or gaps) and cover the band joint all the way up to the underside of the subfloor.

### The bottom line

Moisture and water in the basement can be a serious hazard to the health of a building and its occupants. So take care of it sooner rather than later. If you suspect you already have mold, the Environmental Protection Agency has some useful guidelines for dealing with mold online at [tinyurl.com/WhatAboutMold](http://tinyurl.com/WhatAboutMold).

provided by Efficiency Vermont, the nation's first Energy Efficiency Utility. It has helped Vermont save \$3.7 billion in lifetime savings and avoid more than 14.8 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions since 2000. Learn more at [www.efficiencyvermont.com](http://www.efficiencyvermont.com).

## Can't I just run a dehumidifier?

Dehumidifiers can be effective at removing moisture from basement air, but they can't fix underlying issues. They can also make for a high electric bill. Consider, too, that they don't work as well at lower temperatures — so you can't expect them to do much in a cold, damp winter basement. In the long run you'll save energy and money by preventing water from getting into your basement in the first place. If you do buy a new dehumidifier, however, make it an Energy Star certified model and check the availability of a rebate on the Efficiency Vermont website.



Editor's note: This story was



a tidy place

Embracing the art of letting go.

15% OFF YOUR FIRST IN-HOME SESSION  
Must be booked prior to July 31, 2026

802-496-4944  
[atidyplacevt.com](http://atidyplacevt.com)

Serving Addison County for over 20 years.  
Come build with us!



[smithmclain.com](http://smithmclain.com)

Philo.   
Surveying  
LLC

Serving all of Vermont!

ALTA Surveys • Full Boundary Surveys and Plat  
Commercial and Residential Subdivisions  
Light Boundary Work and Boundary Line Staking  
Easement Surveys • Elevation Certificates  
LOMA Surveys • Topographic Surveys



Jason Burt  
24 Years Experience

(802) 782-9273  
Philo Surveying LLC • Charlotte, VT  
[Philosurveying.com](http://Philosurveying.com) • References available

# REPURPOSE ROOMS IN YOUR HOUSE AND BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO A HOME

Homeowners do not need to get hung up on room labels as they explore ways to reinvent their spaces. Just because a floor plan labels a space as a formal dining room doesn't mean the area has to remain that way.

Repurposing rooms in a home comes down to aligning the space a person has with their lifestyle needs. Here are a few ways to rethink interior spaces and make a switch to improve utility.

- Identify unused or under-used rooms. Take note of spaces that are cleaned but rarely used. For many people, this is a dining room or a guest suite. Either of these rooms can be transformed into something new.

- Invest in multipurpose furniture. Even people short on space can transform their homes. Replacing a traditional bed with a murphy bed or a daybed can make a room more suitable for a home office or yoga studio, but still provide a space for the occasional houseguest to sleep. A pull-down shelf desk in a bedroom or even a walk-in closet can turn an area into a compact home workstation.

- Claim dead space. The area under the stairs or another small spot often is used to collect junk. Instead, it can be turned into a built-in wine rack, a reading nook for kids or even a pet sanctuary with just a few modifications. Analyze areas around the home that seem like they don't serve a purpose, and then

figure out a way to make them more functional.

- Establish room zones. Some people simply cannot transform an entire room into something else. Visual partitioning makes it possible to create rooms within rooms. An area rug can be used to define a border of a space. Open bookshelves can serve as a wall to separate a sleeping area from a lounging spot. Lighting can add dimension to areas in a space. A pendant light over a crafting or worktable can be used to define the space.

- Look at utility areas. Unless you are a do-it-yourselfer or have a hobby that takes up much of the garage or basement, utility areas are major spots in a home to consider repurposing. A garage can be turned into a home gym, kids' play area or even a hobby shop. Modular flooring and insulated walls can make the room comfortable. Attic lofts are the ultimate quiet zones, and can be serene spots for reading, meditating or doing homework. An unfinished basement can be converted into a finished space to serve many different purposes. From media rooms to a teen lounge to a hobby cave, the opportunities are endless.

A good rule of thumb before converting any room is to give it a test run. Move in a piece of furniture and test how it works with its intended function. Assess lighting, noise and foot traffic for a week, and then move ahead with changes if the result is positive.

— Metro Creative



## Vantage Point Homes All aspects of home renovations

Kitchen • Bath • Flooring • Roofing • Decks • Additions

**Vantage  
Point  
Homes**



New construction featuring  
Design/Build Services

Salisbury, VT | 802-989-3974



## HOME REPAIR WORD SEARCH



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

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

### Circle these words

BACKSPASH  
BUILDING  
CASING  
CIRCUIT  
CONTRACTOR  
CURB APPEAL  
DRAIN  
FLASHING  
GROUT  
JOIST  
LOAD  
MOLDING

OUTLET  
PERMIT  
PIPES  
ROUGH-IN  
SHIM  
SIDING  
SILL  
SOFFIT  
SUBFLOOR  
VALVE  
VENEER  
WALLS



Answers on Page 15D



GENERAL CONTRACTING | CUSTOM HOME BUILDING

MIAXLLC.COM  
ROCHESTER, VERMONT

MIAX LLC is a design & build firm based in Rochester, VT.

With 20 years of experience in construction, our team will bring your next renovation or new build to life.



Now collaborating with Backcountry Hut Company

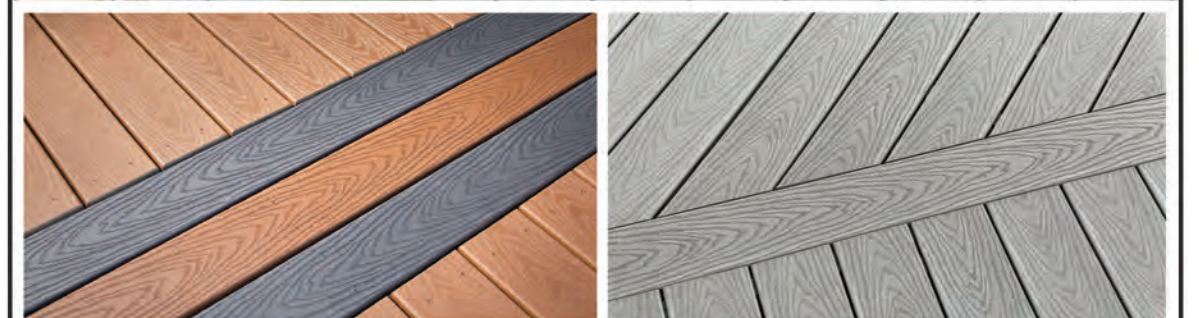
Compact modernist recreational structures, crafted to rigorous standards, designed to leave a minimal impact on our environment.



Contact MIAX to start the journey

802-349-8409 | miaxllc.com

THE PERFECT PAIRING OF PRICE AND MINIMAL MAINTENANCE.



Relax at home this summer on your new deck from Trex. Composite decking with the look of wood - without the hassle.

SINCE 1940  
**rk MILES**

BUILDING MATERIALS SUPPLIER



88 Exchange Street • Middlebury, Vermont  
802 388 2721 • rk miles.com

## WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN REPLACING A ROOF

No two home renovation projects are the same. Some projects are highly detailed undertakings that take months if not years from start to finish, while others can be tackled by skilled do-it-yourselfers over the course of a single weekend. Though each project is different, categorizing renovations as needs or wants can help homeowners determine when the time is right to go forward.

Roof replacement projects typically fall into the “need” category. A decaying roof can jeopardize the safety and security of a home and lead to additional issues, like water damage. It’s unwise to delay roof replacement projects when signs of a decaying roof start to appear. Homeowners who are starting to see such indicators can look to this rundown of roof replacement projects as they begin the process of replacing their roof.

### Cost

Roof replacement costs vary considerably depending on a host of variables. Materials, location and the cost of labor, dimensions of the roof, and even choice of contractor all affect the cost of the project. The home renovation experts at Angi indicate the average roof replacement project costs \$9,500. Asphalt is among the more affordable roofing materials, costing an average of \$1 to \$1.20 per square foot, according to Nerdwallet. Slate roofs will be more expensive, costing anywhere from \$10 to \$30 per square foot.

### Life expectancy

Homeowners may blanch at the cost of a roof replacement project, particularly if they choose a

more expensive material. However, it’s important to keep life expectancy in mind when receiving roof estimates. Many homeowners never replace a roof twice, making this a potentially costly but ultimately one-time expense. Though slate roofs are expensive, homeowners may find it reassuring that estimates from various roofing resources indicate slate roofs come with a life expectancy ranging from 50 to 200 years. By contrast, Nerdwallet estimates an asphalt roof lasts around 10 to 20 years, while others suggest such roofs can last as long as 30 years.

### Materials

Choice of materials is arguably the most significant decision homeowners will make when replacing a roof. The experts at This Old House report that materials typically account for 55 to 65 percent of the overall cost of a roof replacement project. Decisions regarding roof materials will be affected by budget, local climate (certain materials are better suited to particular climates than others), aesthetic appeal, and required maintenance. It’s also important that homeowners consider the material warranty of each roofing product. Some materials offer longer warranties than others, which can provide a measure of security to homeowners investing so much in the project.

A roof replacement project is not a renovation that can be delayed when signs the roof is fading start to appear. Homeowners are urged to consider a wide range of variables before committing to a project.

— Metro Creative



### Man the spray bottles — full scrape ahead

SOME PEOPLE THINK that “popcorn” ceilings are pretty great. But the number of those folks seems to be getting smaller and smaller. This Middlebury homeowner had had enough of the rough, white, spray-on texture in her circa-1977 house, so last year she and her husband began to remove the acoustic texture ceilings themselves. Here’s how it’s done:

- After testing for asbestos (it was banned in 1963 and replaced with styrofoam), move the furniture and all treatments out of the room, cover the floors and shelving with tarps and take down ceiling fans and light fixtures.

- Don a dust mask or respirator and goggles, plus clothing that you don’t mind getting filthy.

- Use a spray bottle to spritz plain water on a 4’x4’ area of ceiling.

- Standing on staging or a solid old chair, use a four-inch-wide putty knife tilted at an angle to scrape off the old ceiling

- Take care not to soak the drywall underneath, and don’t gouge the drywall because marks will be more obvious without the popcorn texture.

- Let the ceiling dry (shouldn’t take long), prime it, then paint it any color you desire.

— John S. McCright



A locally owned company working for the community for 96 years

We are committed to providing high quality service and high quality products to suit your needs.

24 Hour Service  
Propane Fill Station  
Plumbing  
Full HVAC Work  
Heating  
BBQ Tank Exchange  
Oil Burner Service  
Propane Service  
Wood Pellets

Mitsubishi Heat Pump Diamond Dealer  
A/C Install & Service  
Generac Generator Dealer, Installation, & Service  
On-Road & Off-Road Diesel Pumps  
Kerosene Pumps  
Natural Gas Certified Installation & Service  
Pellet Stove Installation & Service  
Residential & Commercial Propane Delivery  
Samsung Preferred Heat Pump Dealer

## SOME BELIEVE IN MAGIC, OTHERS LIVE IN IT



## OTHERS LIVE IN IT

New Home Construction, Additions, Renovations, General Contracting, & More



**HJL inc.**  
H.J. LeBoeuf & Son, Inc.

Established in 1888, HJ LeBoeuf & Son, Inc. specializes in building and renovating fine homes. We are a general contractor who also does light commercial work and historic restorations and cater to clients in Central and Northern Vermont.

hjleboeuf.com | P.O.Box 351 Vergennes, VT 05491 | (802) 877-3098

**802-453-2381**

We’re proud of the peace of mind we can offer as a local company offering an 802 rather than an 800 number to call in times of emergency.



64 Jackman Drive • Bristol, VT 05443

mary@jackmansinc.com • melanie@jackmansinc.com • tim@jackmansinc.com

802-453-2381 or www.JackmansInc.com

Make your ad

# POP!

Interested in an ongoing, cost-effective Business & Service Directory ad? **Contact us!**

Plus, add color to your B&S ad for just

## \$50\*

Email [advertising@addisonindependent.com](mailto:advertising@addisonindependent.com) or call 802-388-4944 to get started!

\* Per 13-week campaign

### ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Serving Addison County, Vt., Since 1946

## PREPARE OUTDOOR SPACES FOR MEMORIAL DAY ENTERTAINING

entertaining opportunity of the year, which is certainly something to look forward to.

As outdoor entertaining season begins, homeowners can take these steps to prepare their outdoor living spaces for the first big backyard get-together of the year.

- Break out the power washer. Pressure washing is an important component of spring home cleanup. The warmer temperatures of spring allow water from power washing to dry more quickly, which can decrease the chances that mold and mildew will grow on surfaces like siding. A freshly power washed home also makes for a welcoming entertaining space. A power washer also can be used on outdoor entertaining spaces to remove dirt and debris that built up over the winter. Just make sure to read manufacturer instructions before using a power washer to clean paving stones, decks and outdoor furniture.

- Inspect outdoor furniture. Now is a good time to inspect outdoor furniture if the task was not performed in late fall or early winter before items were moved into the garage or placed in storage. Check to make sure furnishings are still safe to use, addressing any issues before guests come over for a Memorial Day weekend gathering. Wash cushions for outdoor furniture and replace any that might be showing their age.

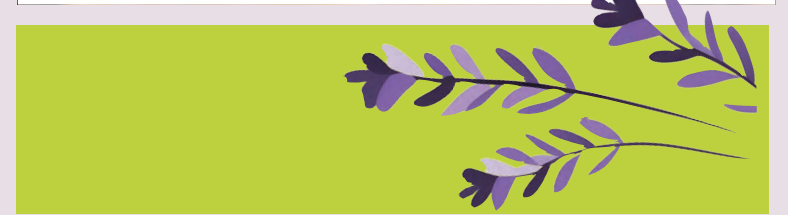
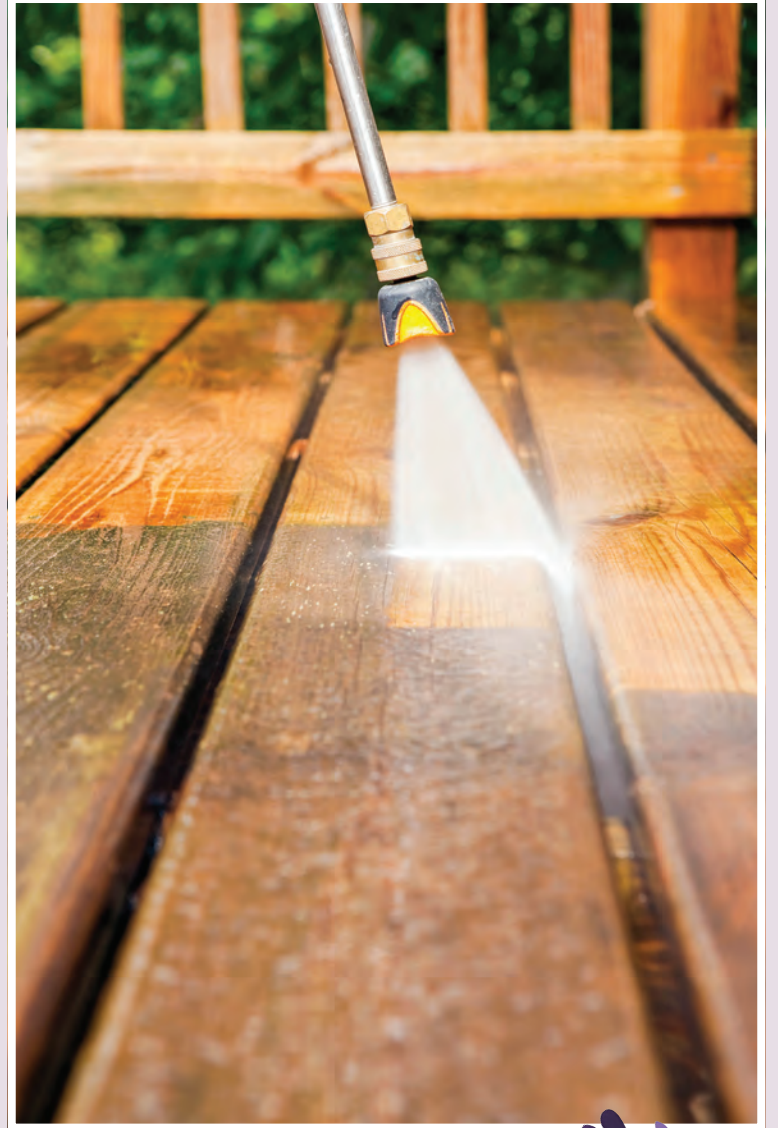
- Clean the grill. A thorough cleaning of the grill also is in order prior to summer entertaining season. Many homeowners do little or no grilling during winter, so now is the time to give grilling surfaces and the interior of the grill a deep cleaning. Check for leaks if using a gas grill, and scrub the interior of any grease that accumulated last season. Many grilling experts advise lighting a grill and letting it burn for roughly 20 minutes prior to putting any foods on the grates for the first time. Such a strategy allows residual fluids like soap,

vinegar and de-greasing products used when cleaning the grill to burn off before food is placed on the grates.

- Inspect the landscaping, too. It's not just seating areas like patios and decks that need some investigation prior to outdoor entertaining season. Take a walk around the landscape and make sure there's no potentially dangerous spots where people could be injured when playing backyard games. Fill in any holes with soil and fresh grass seed, and inspect trees to see if any branches need to be pruned.

Summer entertaining season begins each Memorial Day weekend. Homeowners can take various steps to ensure their outdoor entertaining spaces are comfortable and safe.

— Metro Creative

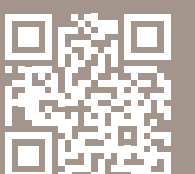


# Heat pump & energy solutions that work for you.

Your home.  
Your comfort.  
Our expertise.



## clover ENERGY BY VGS



## ADDRESS UNINVITED GARDEN GUESTS HUMANELY

A beautiful garden is a wonder to behold. After a homeowner toils in the yard amending the soil and planting, it's imperative that a garden be given the best chance to thrive. However, the natural wildlife that shares the space might see that newly cultivated land as the perfect place to enjoy an easy meal or gather nesting materials.

Every gardener likely has a tale about chipmunks, squirrels, woodchucks, and rabbits making nuisances of themselves in the garden. Many of these animals seem to have a taste for bulbs and other plants, which can wreak havoc on what gardeners carefully plan and plant. Finding balance so everyone can get along may require patience and some well-crafted deterrents.

- Provide food elsewhere. Try luring the animals away to another area of the yard where the meal is even easier to come by. Squirrels and chipmunks love to dig and bury their caches, so a far-off corner with freshly tilled soil along with some berries, nuts and additional treats might attract them to that area instead of a newly established garden.

- Install fencing. While chipmunks and squirrels can scale fences easily, such acrobatics may be more challenging for lumbering groundhogs or rabbits. Make digging more difficult by

laying chicken wire fencing on top of the soil and stake it down in some areas.

- Use a scent deterrent. Some animals are put off by the smell of other animals or aromas they find unpleasant. The capsaicin in red pepper and cayenne can be off-putting to these animals, so sprinkling it around the garden may ward off pests but not harm the plants. Just reapply after each rain. Similarly, some people have had luck using peppermint. Plant mint around where you do not want the squirrels and chipmunks. Since mint can grow fast and become invasive, it's best to plant in containers and move accordingly.

- Use water or movement. Animals can be scared away if they are sprayed with water, so a well-aimed water gun can chase away the animals when a gardener is able to stand watch. It may be easier to set up pinwheels that blow in the wind, or hang aluminum pie plates or old compact discs from strings near the garden, which may deter animals from getting too close.

- Build a greenhouse. When dealing with tenacious squirrels and chipmunks, the only solution may be to block off all access. Why not try an enclosed greenhouse for the garden, which will keep animals out and even extend the growing season.

Many animals can become nuisances in a yard, particularly in and around gardens. Some humane solutions could remedy the situation.

— Metro Creative

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

to

## Heat pumps

(Continued from Page 10D)  
 by 2030 — a goal set by the state in the Comprehensive Energy Plan in 2022 — Vermont would need to grow its weatherization contracting workforce from roughly 800, as estimated in 2022, to around 6,000.

“Available workforce, long-term funding and organizational capacity remain insufficient to meet that aspirational target,” the report says.

Even when installers recommend that homes be weatherized, some homeowners fail to prioritize it.

“Without adequate weatherization, much of that

investment is simply lost,” Touchette said.

Builders also aren't always following state rules designed to make homes more energy efficient, state Rep. Scott Campbell, D-St. Johnsbury, said.

Campbell has a background in construction and is a member of the state's Building Energy Code Working Group, which was formed in 2024 to recommend strategies for increasing compliance with residential building energy

standards. Consumers and builders alike “aren't aware that we have these mandatory energy codes,” he said.

When competing against other builders, code requirements can get ignored. If the rules go unenforced, systems can be installed improperly, which Campbell said can lead to insulation and moisture concerns.

“We've sort of let builders off the hook,” Campbell said. “Nobody's checking.”

Campbell's working group recommended reforming the enforcement of energy codes by creating effective, yet achievable standards.

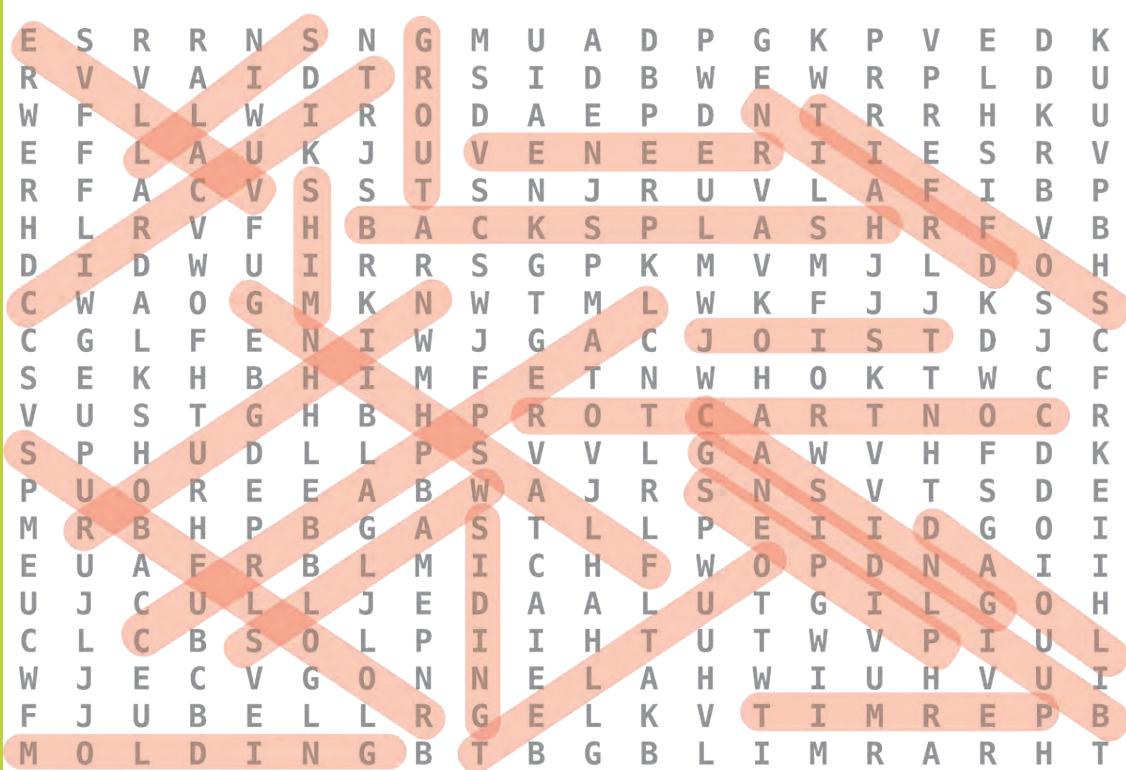
Meantime, Smith said Efficiency Vermont will continue finding ways to promote heat pumps and educate users on strategies to optimize their efficiency.

The organization, he said, is “troubleshooting at every level.”

Zachary Moss is a reporter with the Community News Service, part of the University of Vermont's Reporting & Documentary Storytelling program.



## Word Search Answers



MAKE YOUR HOME  
**NET-ZERO**  
 WITH SOLAR ENERGY  
 AND COLD CLIMATE  
 HEAT PUMPS



Providing Vermonters  
 with clean, local solar  
 power while reducing  
 their carbon footprint.

We serve both residential and  
 commercial customers.

Green Earth Energy is a division of McKernon Group.  
 MCKERNON DESIGN • BUILD U-ECO

THERE'S NEVER BEEN A  
 BETTER TIME TO GO SOLAR  
 Enjoy years of renewable energy

Free On-Site Visit  
 802-247-1200  
 WWW.GREENEARTHENERGYVT.COM  
 381 NEW ROAD, BRANDON, VT 05733

# SMALL TOWN SERVICE BIG TIME KNOW-HOW



Kitchen & Bath Design ▪ Custom Millwork ▪ Windows & Doors  
 Free Delivery ▪ Jobsite Support ▪ Expert Advice

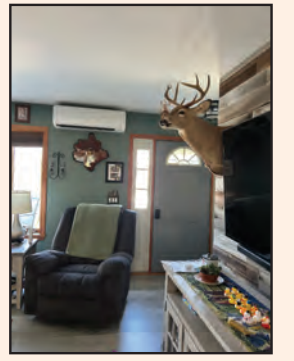
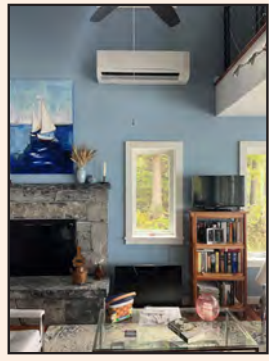
## Lumber Yard

388 East Main Street  
 E. Middlebury, VT 05740  
 388-4915



## Kitchen & Bath

3255 Route 7 South  
 Middlebury, VT 05753  
 388-0209



**FREE ON-SITE EVALUATIONS**



**802 . 453 . 2500 • [BristolElectronicsVT.com](http://BristolElectronicsVT.com)**

If you have been considering solar, heat pumps, or whole house batteries,  
please give us a call to discuss your options.

**Elderly Services  
Recommends Bristol Electronics**

“When we embarked on a major renovation to our building, including the installation of 193 solar panels and the addition of a large pavilion at our center, we chose Bristol Electronics. We couldn’t be more delighted with the careful, timely work they did and how they partnered with us at every step of the way. They listened to what we needed, promptly got us information, and gave us updates on progress and challenges. Their work was excellent and their customer service was exceptional as well. Even more, their kindness to our staff and participants made them fit right in. We have now cut our electric bill in half through our solar panels, and have a gorgeous new space for our activities, thanks to Bristol Electronics.”

Kristin Bolton  
Executive Director, Elderly Services  
Middlebury, VT

