

HOME & GARDEN

MARCH 2023



SEVERNA PARK VOICE

HOW TO DECIDE WHICH FRONT DOOR IS RIGHT FOR YOUR HOME

Page 10 With many options, it may seem a bit overwhelming to choose.

TOP 10 REASONS TO PAINT YOUR HOUSE INSIDE AND OUT

Page 18 Painting has many benefits beyond making your house look nicer.

BUILD A PERFECT KITCHEN OR BATHROOM WITH TILE

Page 21 Porcelain tile has an expected lifespan of 40 to 60 years.



HOMESTEAD GARDENS

PAGE 16 Each Homestead Gardens store is meant to offer various goods while inspiring every guest who walks through the door.

Outdoor Living Trends

Elizabeth Elliott
Himmel's
Landscape and Garden
Center



Our slogan at Himmel's is "get outside" — and we live in a great place for it. As the weather warms and schedules become crammed with sports activities, concerts, picnics and other school and social events, it's natural to long for some quiet space to relax and unwind. That space could be in your own backyard.

Check out the latest outdoor living trends for 2023 and gather inspiration for creating the tranquil backyard oasis of your dreams.

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Outstanding outdoor kitchens on statement stone patios set the standard for modern outdoor living. Tuck in a few herb containers on the patio or install an elevated stone kitchen garden for easy access to fresh ingredients to throw on the grill. Carefully designed sitting areas bring the comfort of indoor living to the outdoors, whether it's a book and coffee nook for two, an outdoor bar for a few, or a bench and firepit combo for your whole crew. Fire and water elements add a touch of zen-like tranquility to your quiet space. Or, if you like the idea of neighborhood festivities in your backyard, get creative and add a life-size chess board, horseshoe pitch or bocce ball court.

Formal Gardens with Classically Inspired Architectural Elements

Carefully manicured landscapes in cool shades of

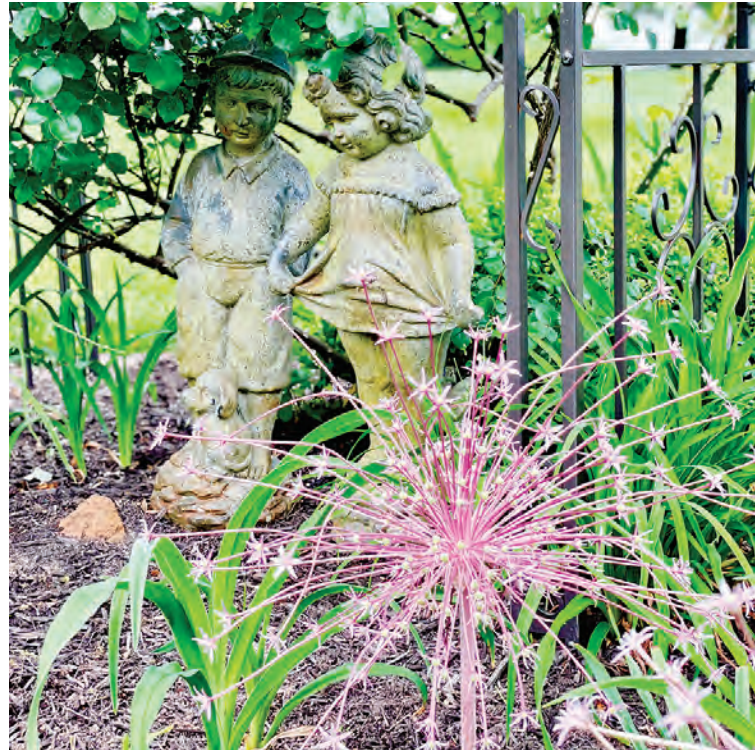
green and white can bring a sense of peace and elegance to your surroundings, separating your space from the hectic outside world. Crisp hedges create privacy, while a few well-placed topiaries or carefully pruned trees add a three-dimensional quality that draws the eye. Stone paths and thoughtfully selected statuary add architectural interest. Columns, pillars and urns in marble tones are timeless elements. The whole effect is enhanced by a few touches of whimsy — either with pops of perennial color in shades of purple and pink, a small water feature or an ornate mirror or sundial as a focal point. Even the smallest spaces can benefit from the classic elements of a formal garden.

Native Plants to Attract Pollinators

The native trend is no longer a trend. It's here to stay. Native plants benefit the environment by creating food and habitat for beautiful birds, precious pollinators and local wildlife. The many varieties of native trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials create four-season interest, featuring outstanding flowers and fragrance, ever-green interest, edible berries, gorgeous fall color and more. Even a small patio planter full of flowering native perennials can benefit bees and butterflies. Enhance your outdoor space with a few native selections and draw nature into your oasis.

Make it Happen

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Roof Storm Damage and the Insurance Process Made Easy by Landmark Roofing!

**Rob
Calhan**



**Artie
Hendricks**



We are soon coming to the end of the winter season and all of the freezing rain, ice, snow and wind that can wreak havoc on your home's roof. We know that the spring season is just around the corner and how the transition of seasons can bring heavy thunderstorms to the area as well as harsh weather with winds, rain, hail and sometimes high winds and even tornadoes. All of these types of weather can cause potential damage to your roof.

What's the best thing that a homeowner can do to ensure your largest investment is taken care of? It is highly recommended that you start with a FREE roof inspection. A free inspection costs you nothing and will bring you peace of mind. Sure, roofs have a guarantee on material manufacturing defects etc. but harsh weather conditions can cause damage that you cannot see. Even to a new roof. Homeowners Insurance can assist with the costs of repairs or replacement of storm damaged roofs. A free roof inspection done by a licensed and insured roofing company starts the process. Make sure you work with a qualified roofing company that totally understands the insurance process and how it can save you money.

Landmark Roofing are experts in dealing with insurance companies and claims processing. In fact, Landmark Roofing employs former insurance adjusters who will come out and identify the roofing problem to see if you are even eligible for an insurance claim. They know you and the insurance companies are busy and your time is



“It was very easy dealing with a company that knows how to deal with the insurance company. The people on staff were experienced. They made sure it was getting done right.”

— **JEFF GAUGES, SEVERNA PARK RESIDENT**

valuable, so they will inspect the roof and give an honest, professional opinion of your roofing needs before recommending filing a claim. If filing an insurance claim is recommended, Landmark Roofing will become an advocate for you and work with the insurance adjusters. Landmark will meet the insurance adjuster at your property to confirm the damage and will continue to work with the insurance company until the repairs or full roof replacement are completed. Landmark will also work with the adjuster to agree on the scope of work and pricing of the necessary repairs or replacement. They also submit and follow up on all paperwork to ensure payment is released on your behalf. Landmark Roofing has a great reputation in working with area adjusters from all insurance companies to make the necessary repairs to your home. Landmark Roofing are experts in the process and work hard to make it easy and uncomplicated. Lukas Esop, Landmark's Insurance Sales Supervisor stated, "I know that managing a large project like a roof replacement while also dealing with the specific requirements of an insurance claim can be overwhelming, so we have created a process that makes it easy for the homeowner. We handle everything so the homeowner is inconvenienced as little as possible while delivering an excellent product and personal service, start to finish."

Jeff Gauges, a Severna Park, MD resident who recently contracted with Landmark Roofing for a damaged roof from storm damage knows firsthand how Landmark Roofing helped him. "It was very easy dealing with a company that knows how to deal with the insurance company. The people on staff were experienced. They made sure it was getting done right."



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Rob Calhan, Landmark Roofing co-owner and president of sales added, "You don't need missing shingles to have storm damage and most damage is not visible from the ground. We will inspect your roof and provide an honest assessment of its condition."

A resource that can be very helpful to you is the Storm Damage page on the Landmark Roofing website that can be found at <https://roofingbylandmark.com/storm-damage>. There, you will find helpful information and what you should do if you suspect storm damage to your home and other critical information that will help you navigate storm damage to your home.

Remember, it is OK to contact your insurance company with the support and advocacy of Landmark Roofing. You do not hesitate to contact your car insurance company if you are in an auto accident. The same principal applies if you have storm damage to your roof and home. You may find that the insurance company will pick up the entire cost of the roof repairs or full roof replacement and you will only be responsible for your deductible. Your rates may not go up and if they do it's generally a minimal increase. You would want to do business with a company that is staffed with vast knowledge and substantial understanding of insurance claims handling to be your advocate throughout the entire insurance claim process from start to finish.

For more information on the Insurance Process, contact Landmark Roofing at 443-274-5778 or visit their website at www.roofingbylandmark.com.

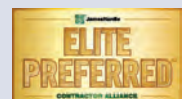
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Finding Your Home Ally



Phil Savard
Ace Handyman Services

Finding someone you can trust to work on repairs and projects in your home can be frustrating. Every homeowner needs an ally they can trust for the care and upkeep of their home. Ace Handyman Services offers the following tips to help you find yours.

Licensed, Bonded and Insured

Choose a company that is licensed, bonded and insured. In Maryland, licenses are issued by the Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC). All companies and individuals providing home improvements are required to have this license.

Continued on page 24



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The House Is Broken — How Do You Fix It?

Christopher Boyd, AIA
boydarc
architects



Whether it's lackluster curb appeal, an outdated kitchen, or that odd space or feature that nobody can quite figure out the purpose of, the house needs help. Where to start?

As with any worthwhile endeavor, your home improvement project should begin with a clear and honest assessment of the problem. If you're lucky and it's just one item, you're a winner — skip ahead a couple of paragraphs. If you're like most folks, though, you will have identified multiple problems with your house. List each in one of two categories: the needs that absolutely must be corrected, and the wants that would be nice but aren't essential.

Be clear and specific so you can better illustrate what you hope to achieve, targeting specifics aimed at those issues. "New kitchen" may reveal itself under scrutiny as "I wish my kitchen were more open for socializing and extra helpers during holiday meal prepara-

tion." Once you have that clarity, talk to anyone you know who has done a similar project to find out what advice, tips and contact information they can pass along to give you a head start.

If all you need is a simple freshen-up or update, you may be able to tackle it yourself — repainting, light trim carpentry work or even re-tiling are tasks you can tackle yourself over a weekend with some inexpensive tools and a healthy dose of YouTube. This will save a lot of

money on labor, fill you with pride and remind you why professional tradespeople charge what they do.

If you're looking for a quick makeover and want to choose your own finishes, a trip to a kitchen and bath or flooring showroom may be a great place to start. Showroom personnel and interior decorators can help with color schemes and material selections to renew your existing spaces.

If you want to take things a step further, interior designers may be able to step in. They are educated and certified to look at the bigger picture, which allows them to work with non-structural walls

Continued on page 28



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Christopher Boyd, AIA Christina Boyd
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Plants That Help To Repel Mosquitoes

By Mosquito Squad

Mosquitoes have been a nuisance since they swarmed amongst dinosaurs. While they might be ancient, they have their likes and dislikes, similar to any other living creature. As a result, there are some plants that could help repel this ancient pest.

Since landscaping conditions vary by region, we always recommend asking your local greenhouse or landscaper which plants work best for repelling mosquitoes (and other pests) in your area. However, there are some common plants that aid in keeping pests at bay.

If you have pets, please note that some plants might be effective at repelling insects, but they could be toxic to pets if eaten. For example, while citronella can help repel mosquitoes, it can also prove deadly to dogs if enough is ingested. Make sure to ask your local nursery and consult with your veterinarian about geraniums, certain varieties of marigolds, and garlic plants as potentially harmful to pets if eaten. These

are all great plants that are natural pest repellents, but they should be used with caution around pets.

Plants that help keep mosquitoes away

These plants are like your secret weapon: beautiful, fragrant and repulsive to mosquitoes. One shopping trip at the local nursery could save you time and money on candles while Mother Nature packs a punch against mosquitoes. If you have trouble with mosquitoes getting into your home, make sure to place some plants by doorways and windows to keep them from congregating there and slipping inside.

Here are some of the most effective insect repellent houseplants



Lavender: This plant's beautiful fragrance comes from essential oils that gather on the

leaves of the plant, making its scent enjoyable to humans but potent to pests.



Camphor: This tree species originated in China but is common-place in the south-eastern United States.



Lemon balm: This ancient plant has been used throughout the centuries for a variety of culinary and medical uses.



Rosemary: This plant is especially useful as a mosquito repellent when burned, so consider it during your next barbecue.



Catnip: Named for its extreme appeal with cats and birds, this plant is also a strong

Continued on page 26



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Nicole Bailey
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Outdoor renovations are a

Continued on page 26

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Making An Entrance: How To Decide Which Front Door Is Right For Your Home

Rick Miller
Zeskind's
Door, Window
& Millwork
Showroom



down the choices to the best door for your home.

Is your door protected by an overhang?

This is not just a small extension of your roofline but a deep front porch, portico or awning of some kind that fully protects your door from direct exposure to sunlight and the elements. Most wood doors on the market require a significant overhang to be covered by the manufacturer's warranty. If necessary, there are expensive, treated wood doors that are covered by

Continued on page 30

Swapping out a front entry door can be one of the most impactful statements on your home. With the vast number of manufacturers, materials and door designs available on the market, it may seem a bit overwhelming. By working through the considerations in the order below you can easily narrow

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For most people, the spring season is a time to clean out closets and garages, power-wash the house, get rid of clutter in and around the home and more. Spring is a time for renewal — cleaning carpets, doing ductwork and painting that room that you’ve wanted to paint for a while. Bottom line, spring is a great time for getting your home in order.

But what about the tasks that you need to do but don’t have the expertise, confidence or time to tackle on your own? Especially repairs

that need to be made or upgrades that you want done that deal with electrical components in and around your home. That outdoor lighting project that you have wanted for a while, a tripping breaker, the switch that doesn’t work anymore. Maybe you want to build out office space in your home, finish your basement, or you need to install a new pump or LED pool lights that are not working properly.

The answer to electrical work that needs to be done around your home is to hire a competent electrical contractor and have all tasks done by a professional. Having a licensed and insured electrical contractor will provide you with the confidence that the job is done right, safely and to code. When considering hiring an electrical contrac-



tor, you should consider the following questions. Are they fully licensed and insured? Do they do quality work? Can you trust them in your

home? Do they have any eye for detail?

You also want to hire a contractor who has decades

Continued on page 26



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How To Keep Your Floors Clean For Health

Nick Whittles
SERVPRO of
Annapolis/
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Cleaning for appearance is often what motivates home or business owners to schedule with a carpet or duct cleaning professional. While the appearance of your space matters, it is critical to clean for health, whether surface cleaning or improving indoor air quality. In a post-pandemic era, there is a growing concern for indoor air quality for home and business owners.

Your floor is the largest horizontal space in your home or building, making it a breeding ground for all types of contaminants. When people hear the word contaminants, they often think of bacteria from foods or hair or mud, but many don't consider the microscopic spores hanging around in the air

and settled on the floor. These microbes can circulate in the air of high-traffic areas and settle on other surfaces.

Carpeting is especially difficult to keep clean, but it should be vacuumed regularly to reduce the collection of contaminants. You've probably seen videos where vacuuming alone creates a dust cloud that rises from the carpet once the vacuum is turned on. Hardwood floors and tile should also be cleaned regularly because of the contaminants trapped in the cracks, crevices and grout. Having a schedule for consistent cleanings helps preserve the longevity of your floors and contributes to cleaner and fresher air.

The six principles of effective cleaning are the following:

1. Remove Dry Soil

Studies show that 74% of soils found in textiles are dry soils, consisting of skin cells, hair follicles and dust mites. Using a vacuum or a dry-cleaning sponge are two of the most

used dry soil removal methods.

2. Identify Surface

This involves determining if the surface to be cleaned is porous or nonporous and if the surface is natural or synthetic. The second part, trying to determine if the textile is natural or synthetic, is a bit harder and is a critical step in determining the proper cleaning method.

3. Identify Soils

Soils fall into two basic categories, water based and oil based. The basic idea is that if it's water-based soil, the soil will be easily removed with a water-based cleaning product, and if the soil is oil based, the soil will be easily removed with an oil-based cleaning product.

4. Suspend Soils

The cleaning product is applied to the textile and agitated to help it penetrate and loosen soils. Soils are suspended within the cleaning product in two ways, dissolving and

emulsifying.

5. Remove Soils

Depending on the cleaning method, rinsing may occur before or after drying. Hot water extraction uses wet vacuum extraction.

6. Dry The Surface

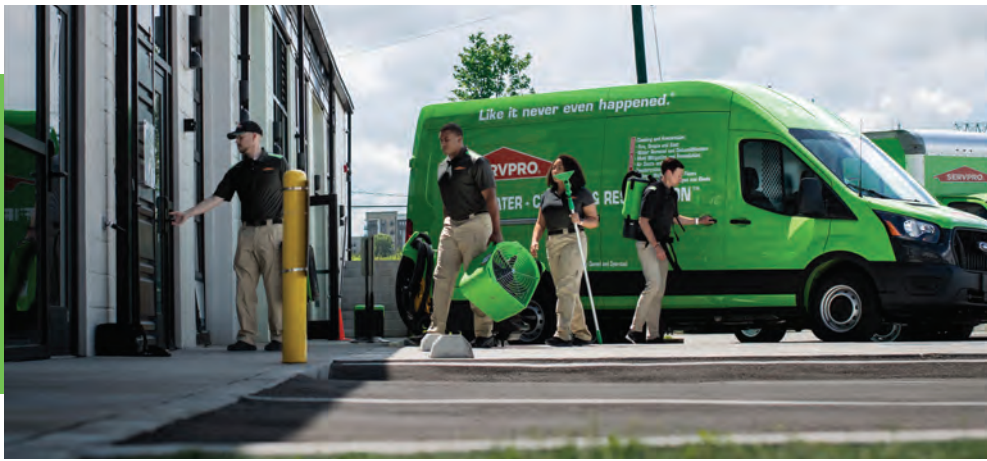
Drying prevents the fibers from attracting and holding additional soils and prevents the growth of microorganisms. Drying time varies depending on the amount of moisture used in the cleaning process as well as temperature and humidity conditions.

Here at SERVPRO of Annapolis/Severna Park, we embrace this demand and understand the impact our work has on better health. We strive to ensure that our customers receive top-of-the-line service and that their carpets and floors are cleaned properly. To schedule a residential or commercial carpet cleaning today, call 410-647-8181. ■



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Robert Wade
Owner
MaidHealthy

Here are three tips to create a healthier living environment through proper cleaning techniques. The focus will be on maid services, carpet and upholstery cleaning, and cleaning air ducts.

Whatever level of service you request, you need to

know what products are being used for cleaning and the dwell time those products require to disinfect your surfaces. In addition to the right products, it helps to know the type of vacuum cleaner and bags being used and how they impact your air

quality. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website lists products that are approved to properly disinfect surfaces. As for the vacuum, you need to know how well the vacuum and the bags retain dust particles.

High-efficiency particulate

air (HEPA) filtered vacuums are the best as they accumulate 99.97 microns of particle size. A vacuum without a high particulate filter can often redistribute up to 30% of the dust picked up from the vacuum. Imagine getting

Continued on page 22

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The Kitchen For Entertaining

Kristy Wallace
Severna Park Kitchen and Bath



place to offer refreshments and truly anchors the space. An island with seating is both inviting and easy on guests. However, if an island isn't possible, try to create intimate moments in your home with upholstered occasional chairs around a breakfast table, or a table that extends for larger dinner parties. Diverse seating is important for hosting.

Lifestyles have changed over the years, and so have kitchens! A kitchen suited for entertaining is often at the top of clients' lists, and there are some key elements that fulfill that request.

Island

We recommend incorporating an island for entertaining, if possible. It is a great

Beverage Center

Whether your guests are drinking coffee, wine, beer, soda or Yoo-hoo, a designated beverage center will make them feel welcome.

Continued on page 22



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Celebrating 50 Years: Homestead Gardens Is Rooted In Tradition

By Zach Sparks

Just like the plants, trees and shrubs it nurtures, Homestead Gardens has blossomed over the last 50 years.

From its beginnings as a roadside produce stand, the business has expanded to include three stores, a landscaping division, and a horticulture supply center.

As the current president and CEO of Homestead Gardens, Brian Riddle has carried on the family legacy that was started by his grandparents and continued by Brian's father, Don Riddle Jr.

Marketing specialist Clint Albin has seen much of the business' growth firsthand since the Davidsonville store opened in 1973.

"In 1973, this was all farm fields," Albin said, standing near the entrance of the Davidsonville store. "They used to land crop-dusting planes out here, so it was really rural and just a fruit stand."

Today, the Davidsonville store is 240,000 square feet, enough to showcase a variety of annuals, perennials, trees, shrubs, outdoor lighting fixtures, garden accessories, indoor and outdoor furniture, grills, gifts, décor and other products.

The Severna Park store opened in 2010, with a smaller footprint at 35,000 square feet of retail space. This location offers a large outdoor sales area with concrete water fixtures, pottery, seasonal plants and shrubs.

Homestead later unveiled a third retail location in 2021, bringing its horticulture services to Smyrna, Delaware.

Each of the stores is meant to offer various goods while inspiring each guest who walks through the door.

"It's a way for the community to engage with a group of different products that they're not going to find at Home Depot or Lowe's or those national brands," Albin said.

Inside the Davidsonville store, visitors will find Houseplant Haven, a greenhouse with top-quality annuals and houseplants to help guests whether they are looking to fill a flower bed or find a unique houseplant for their home office.

"This is a gateway product for a lot of new gardeners who are constrained to their home," Albin said. "We offer this as a year-round place for people to come, walk and engage with the product."



Named for Brian's grandmother, Evelyn's Boutique is a cozy space in the store, carrying handbags, jewelry, fashion accessories, apparel for women and kids, gift items and more.

While the store sells plenty of products, its mission extends beyond what guests will find on the shelves. Homestead Gardens serves as a community hub, allowing people to congregate for events that are fun and educational. Some of the store's most popular events and attractions are Chicks on the Loose, Fall Festival and the holiday lights display.

The spring kickoff, set for March 18 through March 26, is another anticipated event. Attendees can enjoy workshops, interact with barnyard animals and get gardening advice from the staff. Also this month, the Davidsonville Area Civic Association Green Expo will draw about 24 vendors to the store on March 26, prompting a discussion about sustainability.

"If you look at what we sell — be it plants, soil, or other things — we want to be here to support our community with plants and all plant-related things for the next 50 years," Albin said. "It's very important that we continue to be stewards of the earth."

With that in mind, Homestead Gardens hosted "The Pursuit of Houseplants," a 10-week program with workshops in the winter. Another 10-week course is planned for the spring.

Brian does not need a crystal ball to foreshadow the next 50 years for Homestead Gardens. His vision of the future starts with adding three new elements to the Davidsonville property: a brewery, a barnyard and an outdoor activity area.

He also plans to keep supporting local organizations like the Anne Arundel County Food Bank, Maryland Hall, Bello Machre, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce, local schools and other nonprofits.

With that community focus, he hopes to see Homestead Gardens flourish even more over the next 50 years.

Homestead Gardens has Anne Arundel County locations at 743 West Central Avenue in Davidsonville and 522 Ritchie Highway in Severna Park. For more information, visit www.homesteadgardens.com or find Homestead Gardens on Facebook and Instagram. ■

“It’s a way for the community to engage with a group of different products that they’re not going to find at Home Depot or Lowe’s or those national brands. We want to support the Severna Park community with a lot of stuff they wouldn’t find anywhere else.”

— **CLINT ALBIN, HOMESTEAD GARDENS MARKETING SPECIALIST**



The Top 10 Reasons Why You Need To Paint Your House Inside And Out

Stacy and Shawn Carroll
Painting with Pride



Painting your house inside and out has many benefits beyond just making it look nicer. Here are the top 10 reasons to paint your home:



1. Painting both the interior and exterior walls, trim and other home surfaces will increase the overall real estate value of your home. This helps in the evaluation of your assets and can also help with resale.

2. Painting exterior walls, trim and other surfaces on the exterior of your home will increase curb appeal.

3. Painting interior walls, trim and other surfaces inside your

home with quality paints and finishes will reduce odors and fumes, and promote healthy, indoor air quality for you and your family.

4. Particularly in homes with plaster walls, keeping your interior walls, trim and other surfaces painted can keep dust and dirt at bay. Paint keeps plaster in check and dust to a minimum. For old homes or tough interior surfaces, make sure you use high-quality paint, like Sherwin-Williams.

5. Painting both interior and exterior walls, trim and other home surfaces will help cover permanent marks or stains that have proven difficult to remove.

6. Painting exterior walls and trim will help protect the home from inclement weather, particularly sun, ice and snow.

7. Painting both interior and trim, as well as other surfaces like doors and built-ins, will help these areas hold up under nor-

mal wear and tear of family life. Paint can also protect walls from water damage.

8. Does your home need a new look? In this economy, homeowners are finding out there's nothing quite like painting to refresh your home and living environment, and it comes in at a fraction of the cost of a remodel.

9. Using quality paints and finishes will improve the air you breathe. You spend more time in your

home than anywhere else, making healthy choices matters.

10. Sometimes, changing the interior and exterior colors of your home can also change the complete vibe of your living environment. Light-colored paint makes small rooms and spaces appear bigger. Bright colors can make a family room or playroom fun and vibrant. Pastels can make a bedroom cozy and serene. Bedroom makeovers can make a teen feel like they're growing up.

For more information about painting your home, contact Painting with Pride to schedule your free estimate and virtual consult with a color expert from Sherwin-Williams. Painting with Pride is family owned and operated. Call Painting with Pride at 410-544-6840 or visit www.paintingwithpridemd.com. ■

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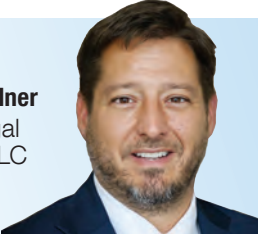
TILE



LUXURY VINYL

Maryland Protects Homeowners Who Want To Protect Their Environment

Brian R. Fellner
Fellner Legal
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Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. A recent change in Maryland law has made this old saying true for lawns and gardens within homeowners' associations, or HOAs.

Section 2-125 of the Maryland Real Property Article prohibits HOAs from imposing their standard of beauty on the lawn of an owner or resident. The law, which went into effect in 2021, prohibits any covenant from imposing unreasonable restrictions on low-impact landscaping. Low-impact landscaping includes measures that conserve water, lower maintenance costs, provide pollution prevention and create habitat for wildlife. The law means your HOA can't force you to cut



Continued on page 25

HOA Board members — need legal advice?

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- Collecting unpaid fees
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Porcelain tile is a great and versatile way to finish a remodeling project. Porcelain tile is extremely durable with an expected lifespan of 40 to 60 years, so you have the opportunity to do something that will look appealing for decades to come.

There are metal tiles, glass tiles, porcelain tiles, cement tiles and ceramic tiles. There are small mosaic tiles and there are large 24-by-48-inch tiles.

A tile specialty store has staff on hand to help you

Continued on page 22



Build A Perfect Bathroom Or Kitchen With Tile

April 24, 2023 will mark the 30 year anniversary of Atlas Marble & Tile and I, John Childs, founded the company when I was 26 years old. Atlas imports and distributes products from Italy and Spain, as well as American manufacturers and we stock porcelain tiles and all the supplies necessary for installations — including Schluter Systems, marble thresholds and corner shelves, 50 colors of grout, waterproof boards, cement boards, and two lines of luxury vinyl tiles. The Atlas showroom, which has been located at 1244 Ritchie Highway in Arnold, MD for the entire 30 years, is over 3,000 square feet and has the best and most talented tile designers anywhere. With 30 years of experience comes a wealth of knowledge and technical skills. Atlas, also, offers custom made mosaics — we have made crabs, lighthouses, sea turtles, fish, dogs and many others. We help you design the mosaics in house and the cost is surprisingly affordable.

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Build A Perfect Bathroom Or Kitchen With Tile

Continued from page 21

transform your dream kitchen or bath into a finished product that is both functional and beautiful. I recommend that you start with a general idea and perhaps a picture or two. With a general direction, even if it is simply a color preference, we can start building that into a masterpiece. It's important to remember that the cabinets, the paint colors, the toilet, the towels and the faucet colors will all be part of the puzzle. It's the job of specialists to help sort through the puzzle to put together the perfect room for you.

Don't be overwhelmed by the thousands of tile choices. It is often the case that someone's first trip to our tile store leaves them overwhelmed and unsure of what to do next. For most people, it takes two or three trips to get the right tile selections. I encourage people to take samples home and see how the tile looks in their house. The lighting and overall environment will determine which tile is the perfect one for you. The best place to make a final judgment on the tile is in your living space.

Tile professionals can help you through every step of the project to make sure the details are right. After all, as my grandmother used to say, the devil is in the details. In the right tile store, the selection process will be fun and rewarding.

We look forward to seeing you, and happy tile shopping. ■

Indoor Air Quality And Better Health

Continued from page 14

30% of the dust from the last customer redistributed into your home.

Carpet and upholstery typically require cleaning every 12 to 18 months just to keep the warranty in place. Some manufacturers require the cleaning service provider to be supported by the Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification, or they will void your warranty. If the manufacturer wants you to remove the dirt and pollutants from your textiles to preserve the integrity of their product, how does this translate into health? Think about this — every 400 times someone comes into your home, they bring in one pound of dirt and outside pollution. That dirt and outside pollution needs to

be removed to keep your air quality at a healthy level.

If you want to see how dusty your upholstery is, take this test — pick up one of your pillows from your sofa or chair and pat it in the sunlight. Back up far enough after patting it to see the amount of dust that comes out of your pillow. Now, think about your carpets. As you walk on your carpets, the air and dust disperse from under your feet and enter the air.

Lastly, let's discuss air duct cleaning. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans, on average, spend approximately 90% of their time indoors, where the concentrations of some pollutants are often up to five times higher than typical outdoor concentra-

tions. Inspect your air ducts to see if you need to clean them. A less expensive way to see your need would be to look in your vents. Take your vent off the wall or floor and tightly hold your camera as you take a picture facing into the vent. If you see dirt, it might be time to clean. Call your local air duct cleaner for an inspection or cleaning.

For more information, contact MaidHealthy, a local family and veteran owned business serving Anne Arundel County and surrounding areas for more than 14 years. MaidHealthy provides a healthier environment for you and your home. Its management has more than 50 years of experience in the cleaning industry. Call 410-897-9400 or contact MaidHealthy at www.maidhealthy.biz. ■

The Kitchen For Entertaining

Continued from page 15

We like to incorporate wine and beverage refrigerators under the counter. If space allows, an icemaker is perfect for families hitting the boat or heading to sports, but it also serves well during parties and holidays. We also often top the beverage center off with glass-front cabinetry that both shows the guests where the glassware is and brightens the room with light.

Clean, Functional Designs

Kitchen gadgets, like an air fryer, Instant Pot and toaster oven, have become popular during the past three years as more people are cooking at home. Incorporating pocket doors in the cabinetry allows for daily appliance use, but then closes it away while hosting guests. If you are considering a coffee bar, pocket doors can be a great solution for hiding the coffee maker. The client who loves to host may also opt for adding a second dishwasher drawer, and paneling the dishwasher and refrigerator creates a seamless look.

Butler's Pantry

Forget hiring a butler — a butler's pantry is all that and more. While historically,

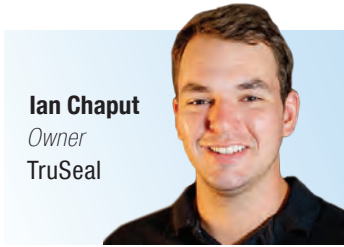
it was intended for silver and heirloom storage, today's butler's pantry can also host an additional dishwasher, refrigerator, and sink. We often add the microwave in the butler's pantry so that the kitchen has a seamless look. We incorporate versatile storage like rollout trays, drawers, open shelves, and even wine cubes in this space for easy access of platters and serve-ware. Though the butler's pantry should coordinate with the kitchen aesthetic, it can also be a fun place to use color or drama.

Lighting

Speaking of drama, lighting is key in the entertainer's kitchen. Overhead flush lights work well for task lighting, and under cabinets, large pendants and sconces can add beautiful warmth and highlights to the space. We recommend using a dimmer for those who want to incorporate a beautiful glow in their space.

We would love to help customize your entertainer's kitchen with our talented team of designers and beautiful selections of finishes. For a consultation, call 443-784-1325. ■

Addressing Asphalt Driveway Distresses Before They Become Costly Endeavors



Ian Chaput
Owner
TruSeal

over time, a variety of issues can arise that are not only an eyesore but can also lead to costly replacement expenses if left untreated.

What is asphalt pavement?

Asphalt pavement was first utilized in the 1870s and is conventionally a mix of crushed stone “aggregate” and a “binder,” also called asphalt cement, which is produced during the distillation of crude oil. Despite advances made in pavement mix designs and paving techniques, it is common for distresses like cracking, potholes, surface oxidation

Continued on page 29



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Finding Your Home Ally

Continued from page 6

To receive this license, individuals must have trade experience, pass an exam on basic industry knowledge and applicable Maryland regulations, and show proof of insurance.

Expertise in Repairs and Customer Service

Look for a company with expertise in home repair and customer service. The company should support you throughout the entire process, from learning about its services to explaining your project, scheduling appointments, completing repairs and following up with any warranty.

The BID vs. T&M

Be aware of the difference between the bid and time-and-materials (T&M) models. The bid model is mostly used for medium to large renovations, while T&M is used for smaller projects. Understand that compa-

nies that offer free estimates mark up their bids to compensate for their time spent on estimates. With the T&M model, contractors charge only for their travel, hourly rate and materials. Companies with good reputations will work quickly to earn your future business and referrals to family and friends.

Warranty

Check to see if the company offers a warranty. How long is the warranty? What will it cover? Look for a warranty on both labor and materials. Most companies will cover

repairs for up to 30 days. Some will offer even longer periods of coverage at 60 days, 90 days and even a full year.

Project Bundling

Ask if you can get multiple projects completed in one appointment. If you have limited funds in your repair budget, you may have to prioritize your repair list and wait to accomplish everything on your list. However, if you are able, project bundling will reduce your overall price. Ultimately one eight-hour day will be more cost-effective

than four two-hour visits that each incur a travel charge and each take up billable time for traveling to pick up materials.

We recommend using these tips to help you find your home ally. If you have any trouble finding such a company, call Ace Handyman Services at 443-225-4364. ■



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Maryland Protects Homeowners

Continued from page 20

down or remove your native plant gardens, pollinators, xeriscaping or rain gardens.

The Letter of the Law

The actual statute provides that a restriction regarding land use may not impose, or act to impose, unreasonable limitations on low-impact landscaping. This is provided that the property owner owns or has the right to exclusive use of the property and maintains and regularly tends to the low-limit landscaping.

An unreasonable limitation includes a limitation that significantly increases the cost, significantly decreases the efficiency or requires cultivated vegetation to consist in whole or in part of turf grass.

In other words, HOA covenants are not allowed to force people who are caring for their rain garden or native lawn to remove those features in favor of

turf grass.

The Backstory

This legislation came about in large part because some believers in native planting and low-impact landscaping stood their ground. In 2019, a Maryland couple took their HOA to court, alleging that the standard being insisted upon for the lawn — basically turf grass — was not fair or proper. They argued their rain garden and native plants were just as beautiful and appropriate as a full lawn of clipped green grass.

While their particular case ended up being resolved at mediation, it caught the attention of many people who felt strongly about the issue. Maryland Delegates Terri Hill and Jessica Feldmark noticed and saw an opportunity to effect real change. Their bill became the new law, which protects homeowners who want to avoid using artificial fer-

tilizers and chemicals that could end up in our rivers and streams.

The Right to be Green

Regardless of your opinion on HOAs, I think you ought to be in favor of this law. First, it gives clarity to everyone involved. Now, both owners and board members are aware of what rights they have and what rights the other party has. This helps avoid disputes and unnecessary litigation. Second, it gives options. If you are Scotts four-step lawn method disciple, that is still acceptable. If, on the other hand, you are a native plant enthusiast, you now can practice your art and show off your version of a green thumb without concern for any alleged violations coming from the homeowners' association.

What to Know

Homeowners have the right to maintain their yard using

native plants and rain gardens, just as they have the right to grow a flawless green grass lawn. Keep in mind that certain other covenant provisions, such as keeping the yard neat and orderly, restricting the location of vegetable gardens or play structures, and more, are still valid and enforceable. Contact and use local resources to implement best practices on your native plant lawn. And above all, when dealing with neighbors, remember that they are part of your community and deserve your respect, even if you disagree.

Brian R. Fellner is the founding attorney of Fellner Legal Services LLC. The firm represents and provides advice to communities throughout Maryland and Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.flslawyer.com, email bfellner@flslawyer.com or call 443-906-0117. ■

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Three Must-Have Deck Upgrades For Style, Function And Comfort

Continued from page 9

big investment, and when it's time to finally consider a deck makeover, homeowners want to get the best bang for their buck. Luckily, there are several design choices and accessories to incorporate into your deck makeover that fit with your family's budget and lifestyle in mind.

Accents and Complementary Colors

A popular decking trend in recent years is incorporating different colors or shades in your deck boards. With so many hues to choose from with composite decking, homeowners can create one-of-a-kind, stylish outdoor spaces with the two-toned look. Opt for a lighter or darker shade of your main decking for a mid-deck seam board, or feature board around the deck's perimeter. You can also design your deck railing with a drink rail in an accenting color. A drink rail utilizes decking boards to create a perfectly flat space on top of your railing. It's a great additional space for drinks, planters, or your hands and elbows to rest as you admire the landscape.

Screened Porches and Pergolas

A screened porch offers numerous benefits depending on how your family plans to enjoy the addition. As a bonus room and extension of your home, screened porches provide a comfortable place to enjoy the outdoors, protected from the elements. There's nothing worse than a barbecue ruined by passing showers or thunderstorms. With a screened porch, you can keep the party going outdoors, sheltered from rain and debris. For the summertime in particular, screened porches provide additional shade and can limit exposure to pesky bugs and insects. And when the crisp autumn air arrives, your family and guests can stay warm and cozy, semi-protected from the chill.

Pergolas, on the other hand, do not provide as much shelter, but they do provide valuable shade with tighter budgets in mind. Designed and oriented correctly on your deck, a pergola can provide plenty of shade and a designated area for dinner parties, book reading or a home office location. You may also install additional covers, such as

fabric or a retractable one, for even more sun protection or in preparation for unpredictable summer storms.

Lighting

Outdoor lighting is an essential accessory if you plan on using your deck at night. Once the weather warms up, afternoon gatherings can easily transition to an enjoyable evening retreat with the installation of deck lighting onto the railing posts or deck steps. These LED or solar-powered lights are functional, affordable and also a great safety feature. If you want to really spruce up your space, globe string lights hung from the deck's railing or a pergola will add an after-dark ambiance that will make any neighbor jealous.

If you are ready to upgrade and "deck out" your outdoor space, now is the perfect time to get your project started. Beat the late spring and early summer rush and contact Fence & Deck Connection at 410-757-5511 to learn more about its many fence and deck options customizable to your needs. ■

Hiring An Electrical Contractor

Continued from page 11

of experience in electrical contracting. An electrical contractor with experience should have great suggestions and solutions on how to best approach all your electrical needs. It's also important to ask if the electrical contractor provides a warranty on their work and workmanship. Also, you want an electrical contractor who offers 24-hour emergency service. Finally, it's important to hire an electrical contractor who is local and lives in the area. Shop local for all your needs, including an electrical contractor.

W. M. Lawson Electrical Contractor serves the entire states of Maryland and Delaware, with a focus on Anne Arundel County. With 31 years of electrical contracting experience, the team is licensed in Maryland and Delaware. W. M. Lawson Electrical Contractor takes care of all electrical needs and specializes in all phases of pool service. Call 410-349-9400 to get your spring projects scheduled now or visit www.wmlawsonelectric.com. ■

Plants That Help To Repel Mosquitoes

Continued from page 8

mosquito repellent.



Mosquito plant:

This is actually a collection of several species, but perhaps the most popular being the citronella plant, a citrus-scented geranium. Check with your local nursery to see which species might be most effective in your area.



Chives: Related to garlic, some of the same mosquito-repelling chemistry is

going on within the chive plant.



Marigolds: This flower has a distinct smell that helps to repel mosquitoes

and deter insects that prey on tomato plants — an added bonus for gardeners.

Other mosquito repelling plants include tansy, cedar, eucalyptus, ageratum, onions and garlic. You can place these plants outside or even in window boxes or around doors to discourage mosquitoes from flying inside.

If you find some landscaping changes aren't getting the results you need for your home and yard, don't hesitate to call Mosquito Squad.

With more than 150 franchise locations nationwide, Mosquito Squad specializes in eliminating mosquitoes and ticks from outdoor living spaces, allowing homeowners to enjoy their yards. Kendra Burnett, owner of Mosquito Squad of Annapolis, has been fighting the bite in Anne Arundel County for more than 13 years. For more information, visit www.mosquitosquad.com or call 410-317-8385. ■



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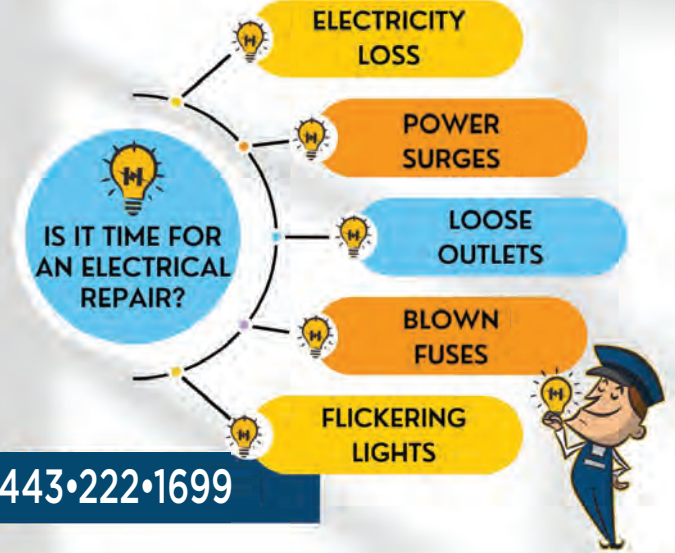
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The House Is Broken

Continued from page 7

and fixtures as well as the finish and material changes mentioned above.

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Getting your house right may seem like a daunting task, but by clearly identifying its prob-

lems and developing a sound understanding of the whats, whys, hows and whos of your residential design and construction, it becomes a much more approachable task. Finding the right professional is an important part of the process, so make the call. Most building professionals offer free consultations to help guide you down the right path.

Chris brings over 27 years of award-winning architectural experience to Severna Park. Boydarc is a small boutique architecture firm specializing in residential renovation and new home design. The team can help you "love where you live."

For more information, contact the boydarc team at 301-219-7729, by email at cb@boydarc.com, or visit www.boydarc.com. Follow boydarc on Instagram at [@boydarc_architects](https://www.instagram.com/boydarc_architects) for cool design ideas. ■

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Addressing Asphalt Driveway Distresses Before They Become Costly Endeavors

Continued from page 23

and raveling to occur.

Cracking

Cracks in your asphalt driveway can appear from a variety of causes. The most common types are “stress” cracking from vehicle and tire loads; transverse and longitudinal cracking, which occur at the joints where the asphalt meets other surfaces or where there were joints when the driveway was paved; and reflective cracking.

Reflective cracking occurs when cracks are in underlying layers of the driveway, most common when an “overlay” of new asphalt is done over an existing asphalt or concrete driveway.

Why is this important? Cracks in your driveway are a point of weakness and susceptibility. They allow moisture to penetrate the pavement and underlying layers. Asphalt expands and contracts with varying seasonal temperatures, which can exacerbate existing cracks and cause new ones to form. It is critical to make sure the cracks are treated and sealed. Consult your driveway coating professional for the best products and application methods for your property.

Structural Distresses/Potholes

Potholes are a nuisance for everyone, especially your car. They can come in many shapes and sizes but commonly appear due to poor compaction of asphalt base layers and from moisture freeze/thaw cycles. Cracks that are left untreated retain moisture in the pavement and expand as it freezes,

then contract when the temperatures warm again. This shift can cause gaps to occur when the frozen water expands and pushes down the base material levels. If the base material and asphalt material were not properly compacted during the paving process, potholes will occur more frequently.

A more economical method to filling in these potholes can be done by cleaning the area and “surface patching” with hot mix or cold patch products. However, for the best longevity, these areas should be treated with a full-depth replacement, where it is cut out, base material supplemented and compacted, and then new asphalt installed. A quality driveway coating company can help find the best solutions for your driveway based on the severity of the pothole and your budget.

Oxidation/Raveling

When asphalt is first paved, it is a rich black color. Over time, ultraviolet radiation from the sun and erosion of the “binder” in the asphalt pavement can cause it to become gray and oxidized. This is a telltale sign that your driveway needs a sealcoating application to replenish that binder in the asphalt while also giving it a fresh, appealing facelift. Applying an asphalt sealer also extends the lifespan of the driveway by blocking out moisture and chemicals from further deterioration.

Ian Chaput is president of TruSeal Asphalt Maintenance. For additional information about asphalt maintenance services, visit www.truseal-asphalt.com or call 443-223-9491. ■



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How To Decide Which Front Door Is Right For Your Home

Continued from page 10

a 20-year warranty with no overhang, or you may consider less costly options.

Paint or Stain

While any door can be painted, a stained door must be made of either wood or grained fiberglass. Without a protective overhang, grained fiberglass may be the best option for a durable stained door. Smooth fiberglass and steel doors can be painted, and smooth fiberglass doors have an attractive texture when painted and offer dent resistance, while steel doors are perfectly smooth but are susceptible to dings and dents. Aluminum-clad wood doors are not as popular but can offer a great option in certain circumstances. When painting

wood doors, even when protected by an overhang, most manufacturers prohibit dark tint exterior paints due to sunlight superheating the dark exterior surface, while the interior may be around 70 degrees. This causes the panels, stiles and rails to warp with the opposing surface temperatures.

Choosing a Door Style

Once the material and type of finish are determined, then focus on style. Consider the style of home — for instance, a mid-century modern home should have a similar style door. Some house types allow for a blending of styles, while others may be limiting. Some neighborhoods may have historic designations or homeowners' association requirements to consider.

Determining the number and placement of panels, the use of glass and privacy considerations, and other details such as beaded panels, sidelites, transoms and divided lites for the glass will all come into play.

Check out Pinterest and Houzz for inspiration, and share pictures with your door supplier.

Size and Budget

You now know exactly what material, finish and style door you want by this point. With so many manufacturers to choose from, the size of your door and your budget will be the final determining factor. Your door supplier should provide you with options from several manufacturers that fit your specifications. The pricing and lead time

can vary significantly, and you may also be presented with options for factory finish or having the installer finish the doors in the field. There are benefits with each option.

Working with a knowledgeable local supplier will make the entire process easier and more enjoyable.

Make sure your door supplier has access to several manufacturers. They should provide you with multiple pricing and lead time options from one helpful business. Also, make sure to source your door locks from the same company to ensure they get the specifications correct. Your local supplier will have higher-quality products that are guaranteed to fit, unlike some online budget outlets. ■

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Container Color For The Spring

Kevin Wengernuk
President and Founder
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Many front stoops, rear patios and even pool decks have containers on them. The trend is to plant them for the summers, adding additional color to your spaces and delivering more interest. But please do not forget about them during the other seasons. Now is the time to think about sprucing up your containers for the upcoming spring months.

First, though, you need to get your container ready for new plants, and this should be done at each season. Remove all the undesired plants and thoroughly mix the soil to loosen and remove any remaining root matter. You may need to top off your container with some fresh potting soil, such as an organic potting mix. Be sure to add a little bit of fertilizer, such as a low-nutrient value and slow-release organic fertilizer. A half cup is plenty for some initial feeding of a 24-inch container. This much of a higher nutrient value fertilizer could burn the plants.

Once the additional organic potting mix is added with the organic fertilizer, mix it to a fluffy state with your hands. Make sure the level of the soil is a few inches below the top of the container, but save the excess soil for additional backfill after planting is done. Now, pick some plants. Make sure your choices are cold-hardy as we might see frosts maybe well into April. Pansies, primrose and snapdragons add some fantastic color. But don't stop there — consider a perennial like hellebores or epimedium for other blooms. Maybe include some creeping phlox for color that will spill out of your container or add a grass (actually a rush) like juncus for an additional texture and some height.

The point is to have fun and play around a bit. The only mistake is not planting your containers for the spring. At times, we were bold and planted black mondo grass for an ultimate contrast in color.

Unlike your summer containers, these spring plant choices do not grow a tremendous amount, so plant like you feel when you are in a crowded elevator, and create a full look at the beginning. After an initial watering, and as long as the soil is moist a few inches down, no additional watering is needed — the spring rains come in handy for this. Now your landscape will have pops of color until the summer months arrive.

For more information, email kevin@kwlandscaping.com. ■



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