# HOME & GARDEN

OCTOBER 2023

# HIMMEL'S

LANDSCAPE & GARDEN CENTER

SINCE 1969

## ADD CURB APPEAL TO YOUR HOME

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#### HIMMEL'S LANDSCAPE & GARDEN CENTER

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The landscape team is equipped to handle everything from design to installation.



# **Making A Fall Preparedness Plan**



while the leaves start to fall and the weather begins to change, you should be preparing your home for the start of the fall season. It is the time of the year when days become shorter and the weather gets cooler. With the cooler temperatures upon us, get your home ready now.



#### Here are some recommendations for your fall preparedness plan:

## Clean your gutters and install gutter guards to prevent backups.

Clogged gutters can create problems for your foundation as water falls off your roof. Clearing your gutters can direct water away from your foundation and home.

# Turn off and drain your outdoor water spigots and ensure any exterior water pipes are insulated to avoid freezing.

For colder temperatures later this year, draining spigots helps prevent them from freezing and bursting. Adding insulation in walls and around exterior, exposed pipe can keep them from freezing this winter.

#### Trim and remove any dead or damaged tree limbs near your home and make sure outdoor drains are clear of leaves or debris.

Fallen limbs and debris can damage your home and block water from being directed away from the property. Many homeowners experience water damage in their basement due to clogged

drains. Cleaning outdoor drains weekly is a smart choice. One heavy rain can create water damage to your home.

#### Check and replace the batteries in your smoke detectors and test your generator.

Daylight savings is a good time for home and business owners to change the batteries in their smoke detectors. Have your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) unit inspected by a professional. Like smoke detectors, HVAC units should be inspected twice a year and daylight savings is a great time to do so. If you own a generator, this is the time of year to make sure it is working in case of an emergency.

### Make a readiness plan in case of a power outage in the coming months.

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# **Transforming Your Home With**





hen it comes to home renovations, one of the most impactful transformations you can make is updating your home's exterior. Two popular options for enhancing the look and durability of your home are GAF asphalt shingle roofing and James Hardie siding. Let's take a look at how these two materials can completely transform the appearance and functionality of your home.



When it comes to home renovations, one of the most impactful transformations you can make is updating your home's exterior.

Asphalt shingle roofing is a classic choice for homeowners due to its affordability, versatility and durability. If your current roof is worn out, damaged, or simply outdated, replacing it with GAF asphalt shingles can give your home a fresh new look while providing excellent protection against the elements.

One of the key benefits of GAF asphalt shingle roofing is its wide range of styles and colors. Whether you prefer a traditional, rustic, or modern aesthetic, there is an asphalt shingle design and style to suit your taste and the options are endless. Also, asphalt shingles roofing offers exceptional durability. GAF asphalt shingles are designed to withstand harsh weather conditions, including heavy rain, strong winds, and even hail. They are also fire-resistant rated, providing an added layer of safety for your home.

While GAF asphalt shingles roofing can transform the look and functionality of your home's exterior, updating your home with James Hardie siding can take the transformation to the next level. James Hardie siding, also known as fiber cement siding, is a durable and low-maintenance option that offers exceptional beauty and protection.

James Hardie siding is made from a blend of cement, sand and cellulose fibers, resulting in a material that is resistant to rot, insects and fire. This makes it an ideal choice for homeowners seeking a long-lasting and low-maintenance siding option.

One of the standout features of James Hardie siding is its ability to mimic the look of other materials, such as wood or stucco. With a wide range of textures, colors and finishes available, you can achieve the desired aesthetic for your home without the drawbacks associated with traditional materials.

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# **Landmark Roofing**





James Hardie siding is also highly resistant to weather damage. It can withstand extreme temperatures, high winds and heavy rain, ensuring that your home remains protected year-around. Additional James Hardie siding is engineered to resist fading, cracking and warping, maintaining its beauty and integrity for years to come.

In terms of maintenance, James Hardie siding requires minimal effort. Unlike wood siding, which may need regular painting or staining, James Hardie siding is pre-finished with a durable coating that resists fading and peeling. Occasional cleaning with a mild detergent and water is usually sufficient to keep your James Hardie siding looking its best.

When considering a transformation with GAF asphalt shingle roofing and James Hardie siding, it is critical that you work with experienced, and certified professionals. Consider a GAF Presidential Winning Master Elite certified contractor for your shingle installation. Only 2% of roofing contractors nationally qualify for the Presidential certification level. An Elite Preferred certified James Hardie con-

tractor is also a premier level certification that only 5.8% of contractors achieve nationally. A qualified contractor with both of these certifications will ensure you have the most qualified and certified contractor working on your home, will help guide you through the selection process, choose the right materials and designs and ensure that the installation is done properly for your home and warranty. Landmark Roofing is proud to have achieved both of these prestigious certification levels with GAF and James Hardie.

Updating your home's exterior with GAF asphalt shingle roofing and James Hardie siding can have a significant impact on your home's curb appeal, functionality and enhance your property value. With a wide range of styles and colors available for both asphalt shingles and James Hardie siding, you can give your home a fresh new updated look while providing excellent protection against the elements. By combining these two materials and using a qualified and certified contractor, you can achieve a transformative exterior that will enhance the beauty and value of your home for years to come.

**For more information:** Contact Landmark Roofing, which is a GAF Presidential Winning Master Elite certified roofing contractor and is also a James Hardie Elite Preferred certified contractor with professionals who can answer any questions you may have. Let Landmark Roofing help guide you in the transformation of your home.

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# The Benefits Of Soft Washing And Power Washing For Your Property

Alex
Prevezianos
Owner
Checkmark
Power Wash

oft washing and power washing are two effective methods for cleaning and maintaining various surfaces. While they share the goal of removing dirt, grime and stains, they differ in terms of pressure and approach.

Soft washing is a gentle and low-pressure cleaning technique that utilizes a specialized nozzle and a combination of eco-friendly detergents and chemicals. This method is particularly suitable for cleaning delicate surfaces such as roofs, siding, decks and fences. The benefits of soft washing include:

- Soft washing minimizes the risk of damage to fragile surfaces. By using low-pressure water and specialized cleaning solutions, it effectively removes dirt, algae, mold and mildew without causing harm.
- Cleaning solutions used in soft washing not only eliminate existing stains but also help prevent future growth of algae, mold and mildew.

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# **More Than A Floor**



Jessica Consultant Absolute

looring in every space of your home or business has heavy lifting to do as it needs to complement your design and withstand the rigors of life. To make sure your floor meets your needs, it's important to consider these points when choosing a surface.

#### Performance

Where will the floor be located - a laundry, basement, bathroom, kitchen, dining area, fover, gathering room, mudroom, pool house or another space? Each one of these areas has requirements needed to optimally perform for many years.

#### Aesthetic

For just about every type of design preference, there is flooring to achieve the aesthetic. Perhaps the aesthetic is calling for the warm look of wood or tile that replicates wood. Maybe the durability of vinyl plank flooring or the timeless charm and longevity of stone or tile are intriguing. Combine these offerings with an almost infinite color palette and there is sure to be a flooring option to make each area a design statement.

Continued on page 28

Flooring in every space of your home or business has heavy lifting to do as it needs to complement your design and withstand the rigors of life.

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# Add Curb Appeal To Your Home With A Fall Facelift



f you are looking to add a little extra pizzazz to your home's exterior this fall, boosting your curb appeal can be quicker and easier than you might expect.

You don't need a big budget or a lot of time to create outstanding curb appeal. You just have to pick the right projects. Your changes can be focused on just the front of the home to update the overall look, making your neighbors stop and stare. And while adding curb appeal might sound as if it is going to involve a big spend, that does not have to be the case. You can DIY your way to a smart yard and welcoming home focusing on a few important features.

#### Paint or replace the front door

As the entryway to your home, your front door makes a statement about your whole property. It conveys that the home is welcoming and well maintained. There are many makes and styles of doors at various price points to consider. If a replacement is not in the budget, applying a coat of high-quality outdoor paint to your existing door can often be done in a weekend and make a startling difference. Add a new lockset and coordinate all of your hardware for an elevated look.

Refresh your garage door, windows, shutters and trim
Carrying through the new look of the front door, you can apply the same refresh to
the entire front of the home. Replacing your windows will update and add value to
your home. Fresh paint on your garage door, shutters, and trim will brighten the space and
give you the boost you are looking for. Replace or repair window screens for a neat and
clean look. You may consider residing or repainting just the front of the home to make it look
like new at a fraction of the cost of doing the whole house.

#### Complete a fall landscaping checklist

In just one day, you can have your front yard in tip-top shape for fall. It's easy to rent an aerator from your local hardware store to alleviate soil compaction. Put down lawn seed to allow your lawn to establish roots and fertilizer to give your grass the nutrients it needs to grow properly. A battery-powered edger will quickly help you clean up around the edges of your driveway and sidewalk, giving your front yard a neat and polished look.

Not sure where to start? Stop by your reliable neighborhood hardware store and speak to knowledgeable professionals. They can offer tips and advice on the right products, tools, applications and much more.

For more information, contact Rick Miller at **rick@zeskinds.com** or 410-647-4611. Park Hardware is located at 500-A Ritchie Highway in Severna Park.











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# The Sweet Spot

## Creating A Kitchen Design That Is Both Fresh And Timeless

Kristy Wallace
Designer
Severna Park
Kitchen and Bath



n the world of kitchen renovations, most homeowners want both an updated and timeless design that feels fresh but won't date itself in 10 years.

In a world of ever-changing design trends, how can you make the most of your renovation so that it will stand the test of time? How do you find the sweet spot between trendy and timeless that makes the project worthwhile? The answer is closer than you think: do what you love. Rethink how you approach these design elements so that your personality shines through.

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#### SPACE

Everyone wants an island, but sometimes it just doesn't fit. Design for your space instead of what's trending and avoid the pitfalls of overdesigning a space. An overdesigned kitchen will feel crowded and dysfunctional almost instantly.

#### **TEXTURE**

Dated kitchens have one thing in common — they lack changes in texture. Think of an all-brown kitchen with a busy brown countertop. Diversify the surfaces in the space and select finishes that juxtapose smooth and textured elements, like a natural walnut island surrounded by creamy dove cabinetry. Combine a monochromatic backsplash with a bold countertop. Texture adds drama and personality.





because life is sweet

check out our designers' most-loved sweet potato recipes for the holidays





# Enjoy The Outdoors But Inside



any people conduct home remodeling projects to add square footage as well

as creative outdoor entertainment spaces, decks, gazebos, screen decks and porches, front porches, rooftop decks and outdoor kitchens.

For some, the covered screened deck/ porch seems to be the best of both worlds, giving more usable entertainment space to the home and allowing the enjoyment of

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# Do You Have The Correct Outdoor Lighting That Can Withstand This Holiday Season?



he most exciting time of the year for many is almost here. With the holidays around the corner, consider a couple of electrical safety tips and tools to ensure you have the best and safest decorated house on the block.

These tips are helpful whether you are lighting a Christmas tree or decking your house with outdoor lighting. Around this time of year, there are hundreds of house fires that could be avoided.

When was the last time

you gave your holiday lights and decorations a thorough inspection?

Before using lights that have been in storage most of the year, take time to ensure that you know how to give a safety inspection of the strands.

Go through each strand of lights and extension cords before hanging anything. You want to check for missing sockets or lightbulbs. Make sure when replacing lightbulbs, you are using the correct voltage. When taking one lightbulb and switching it out for an incorrect light voltage, you run the risk of overheating.

During the inspection, make sure there is no exposed wiring. If you have exposed wires and are not familiar with electrical repairs and what would go into replacing or removing the damaged portion, be sure to find an electrical expert to do so.

When turning your house into the best decorated home in the neighborhood, follow manufacturer recommendations for how many strands can be connected safely. The recommended amount is no more than 210 watts total when connected end-to-end.

Extension cords are typical during the holiday season when it comes to decorations. However, be careful not to overload extension cords. Plug lights into a surge protector for extra caution and to avoid overload.

To ensure you don't overload your overall circuits, you want to use no more than 80% capacity. For example, a 15-amp circuit can safely handle 1,440 watts.

Now, let's discuss properly lighting your Christmas tree, whether you have a Charlie Brown tree or you go all out. If using a real tree that needs to be watered daily, or for your general outdoor lighting, you may want to consider installing a ground-fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, receptacle. A GFCI monitors the balance of electrical current moving through a circuit and prevents fatal electrical shocks because it eliminates any shortage in current when it occurs.

The holidays are the most magical time of the year for lights. To ensure your holiday is a safe and happy one, consider hiring an electrical professional to help with all electrical inspections and installations.



With the holidays around the corner, consider a couple of electrical safety tips and tools to ensure you have the best and safest decorated house on the block.

# Create a **HOME** that you can find peace and comfort in this holiday season.



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# **Himmel's On Mission To Make**

#### By Lauren Cowin

t's been five years since Elizabeth Elliott traded international peace building for community building as the owner of Himmel's Landscape and Garden Center.

Elliott was in South Korea for her work on behalf of the Global Peace Foundation when she received a call from her former boss, Himmel's Farm and Garden Center's then-owner Steve Watkins, asking if Elliott was ready to buy the business. It was a move the two had discussed for years, and the time had come.

"I was in heels and dresses every day," Elliott recalled with amusement.

Though her wardrobe didn't make the cut for farm life, Elliott has utilized tools and lessons from the corporate world to cultivate and grow Himmel's.

First up was crafting a mission that customers can find printed near the cash register in the garden center: helping our neighbors build a better, healthier, more beautiful world.

Five years in, that mission remains the driving force behind all of Elliott's decision-making.

"We really are thinking globally and acting locally by the way we interact with people, by inviting diversity and being a welcome, open space, a safe space for everyone," Elliott explained. "That's very, very important to me."

Also important to Elliott was expanding what Himmel's had to offer. One of her first major shifts in the business model was the addition of the landscaping division.

"I love transforming a space," Elliott said of starting with a blank canvas and creating an outdoor space tai-



Photos by Lauren Cowin

Elizabeth Elliott and her landscape team of Josue Chacon, Candice Pung and Julio Tejada handle every step of transforming an outdoor space.

lor-made for her clients.

The landscape team at Himmel's is trained and equipped to handle everything from design to installation.

"We try to get the customer to talk as much as they can about what their dream is," Elliott said. "That's our whole thing: turning the landscape of your dreams, turning your backyard into a unique habitat."

Himmel's has maintained a bustling retail inventory, including a unique variety of plants and décor, and they've added landscaping services and hardscapes to their offerings, making them a one-stop shop for their clients. Elizabeth Elliott and her team created a houseplant habitat and they offer classes on how to raise chickens.





## **World More Beautiful**

People are just trying to find happiness in this world. Come here. Learn about plants, start your first garden. Get out. Get your hands in the dirt."

- ELIZABETH ELLIOTT, OWNER, HIMMEL'S LANDSCAPE AND GARDEN CENTER

This year, Elliott chose to move full tilt into hardscaping, a decision intended to provide customers with a more comprehensive experience.

"We had customers who we would build a beautiful landscape job for after they had their patio installed, and we wanted to be more of a one-stop shop, and now we are a one-stop shop," she said.

Elevating an outdoor space can be a significant time and financial commitment, depending on the project. Elliott understands this and wants to work with her clients at their pace, no matter how long it takes to reach the end goal.

"Customers don't have to feel like they have to do it all at once; we're happy to work with customers in phases," she said.

Not to be forgotten, at the heart of Himmel's is the retail side, where Elliott said she'll put her plants up against the best of them.

"Our plant material is just extraordinary," Elliott said. "We try and bring in things that other garden centers don't have, so that when [customers] come here, they know they're going to find something unique and special."

Elliott and her team recently added house plants to their inventory to expand their offerings, a move that required some creativity.

"We didn't really have a way to keep them healthy in our greenhouse, over the winter especially, so we built a mini greenhouse inside of our big greenhouse," Elliott said.

When Elliott took over at Himmel's, she prioritized the professionalization of the staff. She is quick to give credit

to her highly skilled and dedicated staff of 30.

"They're here because they love plants, and they love people," she said, noting that her staff comprises career horticulturists and landscapers.

A knowledgeable staff and valuable product could, arguably, be enough to carry a business.

But Elizabeth Elliott doesn't settle for enough.

"I like being a person who uplifts other people, and I wanted the business to do that," she said.

In addition to the retail selections and landscaping services, Himmel's offers community. The company sign along Mountain Road also lists upcoming events, which include a variety of activities that promote wellness, the arts, gardening and the overall homestead lifestyle.

"People are just trying to find happiness in this world," Elliott said. "Come here. Learn about plants, start your first garden. Get out. Get your hands in the dirt."

Himmel's Landscape and Garden Center is located at 4374 Mountain Road in Pasadena. For more information, call 410-255-7730 or visit www.himmelsgardencenter.com.







# **Safeguarding Your Home:**

## The Hidden Dangers Of Procrastinating Home Repairs



Phil Savard
Ace
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Services

wning a home comes with its fair share of responsibilities and one often overlooked responsibility is timely maintenance and repair.

Among the commonly delayed tasks are fixing window and door leaks, addressing plumbing issues, and dealing with deteriorating caulk and grout. These problems may appear to be minor,

but putting them off can lead to more than just damaged drywall — it can result in structural beam damage.

Water damage is known for its silent progression, often working its way behind walls and into hidden corners. Over time, this moisture can weaken your home's structural integrity. Initially, the most visible consequence might be damaged drywall. Stained or warped drywall can be unsightly, but it's what's beneath the surface that's the real concern. Prolonged exposure to moisture can compromise the wooden framework

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# How Cabinet Refacing Can Transform Your Kitchen

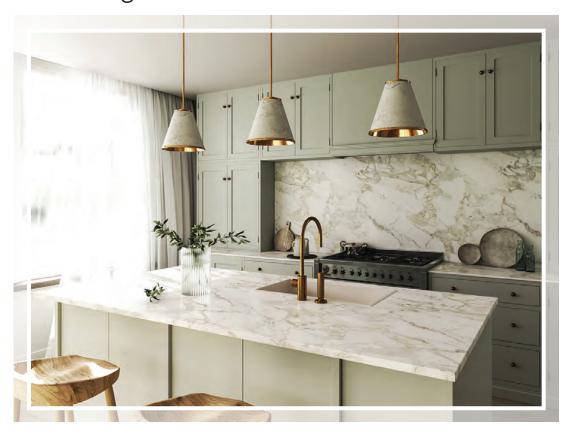
Pegah Scotti Kitchen Tune-Up Annapolis



o your kitchen cabinets need refreshing? Maybe they're scuffed or stained. Maybe you're just plain tired of the color or finish. But you're reluctant to yank out all those cabinets, rip up the walls and start from scratch — that's expensive and could put your whole kitchen out of commission.

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Continued on page 27



# kitchen tune-up



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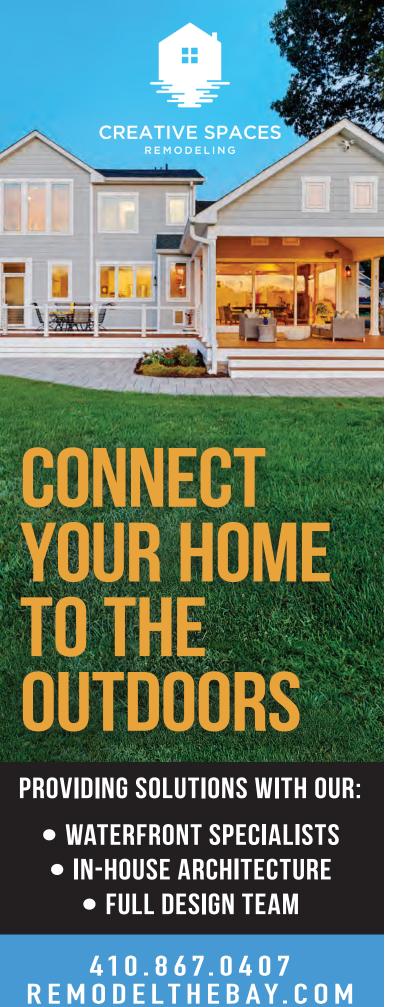


Pegah Scotti (410) 604 -8518

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# Is Remodeling And Building Different On Waterfront Properties Than Inland Properties?



he answer is yes and no. Yes, as to the regulations, permits and actual construction practices and materials. But not in the way we think and plan design.

In regard to the regulations, permits and construction, there

are many restrictions when it comes to waterfront properties and how they will affect our Chesapeake Bay. Items to be aware of are established wetlands, land disturbance, containing soil runoff, and first-floor elevations due to flooding and rising sea levels.

When building on the waterfront, it is important to select the correct materials that can withstand the harsh weather elements, especially during a major storm such as a hurricane

Continued on page 28



# ow To Prepare vay For Wintertime



seems to surprise us every year. One minute, we are sitting on a warm beach in August with a cold drink in our hand. The next minute Halloween is fast approaching while store shelves are being stocked with Christmas merchandise.

Regardless of how we

all handle the inevitable changing of seasons, there are tasks homeowners face to ready their property for the winter months. Your asphalt or concrete driveway should be no exception.

The most damaging season for all pavements is winter, so if proper maintenance is not done. your driveway could start to show early symptoms of damage. Freeze/thaw cycles, road salts and heavy snowplows are the frequent culprits. When rain and snow

make their way into the profile of your driveway, often through pavement cracks or underneath into the base layers, they expand into ice with freezing temperatures. When temperatures then warm up again, the ice that was previously supporting the asphalt or concrete below thaws, causing potholes to form as well as worsening existing linear cracks. Another great way to avoid big issues with your driveway is to ensure downspouts, sump pump lines and yard grading

facilitate proper stormwater drainage away from valuable assets like your home and driveway.

Asphalt driveway cracks should be cleaned out and sealed up using a quality rubberized asphalt sealant. Fill the cracks just slightly below the surface of the surrounding pavement, so the material has room to move with the expansion and contraction cycles the driveway experiences during temperature fluctuations. It is good

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#### Creating A Kitchen Design That Is Both Fresh And Timeless

#### Continued from page 12

Natural elements in design, such as natural oak and walnut, have made a big comeback but so have dramatic jewel tones like deep navy and green. The direction that you choose should be personal and evoke a feeling of joy and comfort for you whenever you walk into the space. So, if keeping white clean scares you, or you feel heavy with trendy dark colors, let your heart lead and find that sweet spot with finishes that you love.

You are the most relevant element in your kitchen design. The designer at Severna Park Kitchen and Bath knows how personal kitchen design should be, and the team takes great care in creating functional spaces that speak to their clients' personal style. Call Severna Park Kitchen and Bath at 410-777-9526 for a consultation on a custom kitchen design.

#### COLOR

Consider adding color. Personalized choices stand the test of time because they look custom and uniquely authentic. Simply walk the streets of residential downtown Annapolis and you'll find bright blues, greens and even pinks that fit perfectly with the historic atmosphere but remain fresh and relatable. There's joy in a personal design, and if mint green brings you joy, find a way to use it.





#### LINE

Rectangular shapes and clean lines are trendy, but if you love the more traditional form of curves, lean into that in subtle ways — add a simple bead to a shaker door or apply a chalky black finish on traditional raised panels doors. You could add a scalloped backsplash to a modern piece of quartz or choose a fun hardware shape to an otherwise stock shaker door. You can make the design instantly custom and timeless with subtle but purposeful uses of shape.



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# Three Under-Deck Ideas For Maximizing Your Unused Outdoor Space





ecks provide a versatile outdoor living area to relax, entertain

guests, dine or simply enjoy the outdoors. With a deck, you can extend your usable living space and connect with nature without leaving your home. A raised deck can also add the bonus of more useful square footage to your outdoor space. Maximizing the unused space under a deck can significantly enhance an outdoor living area and improve the overall functionality of your backyard. Here are three under-deck ideas to help you make the most of this often-overlooked space.

# Construct a functional storage area

If more storage space is needed, use the area under your deck to build a functional storage area. Install shelves, cabinets or storage bins to keep gardening tools, outdoor equip-

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# How To Prepare Your Driveway For Wintertime

Continued from page 21

to pressure wash the surface to remove dirt, mildew and chemicals from tree debris that has accumulated on the driveway throughout the year, followed by a sealcoating application to the entire driveway.

Concrete driveways and patios need attention too. Typically, when new concrete is poured and finished, a sealer is applied to protect its surface from staining, scuffing and harmful substances. These sealers eventually wear off, so if it has been

more than five years since your concrete was last sealed, it is time to reapply. Sealers should be applied to a clean and profiled surface, which means pressure washing or acid etching may be necessary to prepare.

There are a ton of products on the market, but clear acrylic sealers in either a matte or gloss finish are most commonly used in residential applications. Roll or spray apply two coats of sealer, ensuring no wet weather and temperatures are above 50 degrees. Wait until the first coat is dry before ap-

plying the second, then stay off the concrete for two to three days once completed.

Cracks in concrete should be treated to prevent further deterioration. Clean out loose dirt and debris in the crack using a blower or wire brush. Next, chase out the crack with a chisel or angle grinder to create a V shape, which allows for the most surface area for the crack sealant or repair compound to adhere to. Deep cracks can be backfilled with sand or foam backer rod before applying material.

Afterward, apply a bonding agent inside the affected area. A concrete crack sealant or repair material should be flexible and elastic to allow it to move with the concrete. Expansion joints should be left alone, as they are designed to crack with expansion and contraction cycles, instead of elsewhere in the concrete.

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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#### Enjoy The Outdoors But Inside

Continued from page 13

the outdoors while remaining inside.

Rather than an entire addition, a covered screen deck has a roof attached to the home, typically off the kitchen or living room, siding and large screened openings with an option to finish interior walls with electric, lighting, and fans.

It is easy to control the budget with different types of finishes. To keep costs down, consider pressure-treated lumber, or for a long-lasting investment, consider composite decking material.

The interior walls can remain open framing or be finished with an exterior beadboard or shiplap. The

ceiling and rafters can be flat or vaulted, open, or covered in things such as

As the seasons change, heater combination to stay more comfortable while eating dinner and watching television.

Whether it be a ground level, or second story built upon a deck, this can be an economic solution in comparison to a complete addition.

With a covered screened deck, imagine sitting and eating dinner with the breeze coming through the screens but not worrying about the bugs getting to you. It's a great way to enjoy the outdoors, but inside.

## beadboard and soffit. utilize a ceiling fan and

#### The Benefits Of Soft Washing And Power Washing

Continued from page 6

This leads to longer-lasting cleanliness and reduces the frequency of cleaning required.

- Soft washing relies on biodegradable detergents and chemicals that are safe for the environment, plants, pets and humans. It minimizes the use of harsh chemicals and reduces the ecological impact compared to some other cleaning methods.
- This method can restore the original appearance of surfaces by removing unsightly stains and discoloration. By enhancing the curb appeal of your property, it can increase its value and make a positive impression on visitors or potential buyers.

Power washing, on the other hand, involves the use of high-pressure water to clean surfaces. It is typically used for tougher cleaning tasks on harder surfaces such as driveways, concrete, brick walls and sidewalks. The benefits of power washing include:

- The high-pressure water generated by power washers can penetrate and remove deeply embedded dirt, grease, oil stains, and graffiti. It is highly effective in restoring heavily soiled surfaces to their original condition.
- Power washing can save significant time and effort compared to manual scrubbing or traditional cleaning methods. The powerful stream of water can quickly cover large areas, making it an efficient cleaning solution.
- Power washers come with adjustable nozzles, allowing you to control the pressure according to the surface being cleaned. From delicate wooden decks to tough concrete surfaces, power washing offers versatility in tackling various cleaning tasks.
- Regular power washing can help prolong the lifespan of surfaces by removing dirt, grime, and contaminants that can deteriorate them over time. By keeping surfaces clean, you can prevent potential damage and the need for costly repairs.

Soft washing is ideal for delicate surfaces and provides long-lasting results, while power washing is effective for deep cleaning and tougher stains. Consider the specific needs of your surfaces and choose the appropriate method to ensure optimal cleaning and maintenance.

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#### How Cabinet Refacing Can Transform Your Kitchen

**Continued from page 19** 

days, not weeks. How do you decide if cabinet refacing is right for you? Check out this primer to learn how refacing works.

# What is cabinet refacing?

Cabinet doors and drawers tend to wear out faster than cabinet frames. In cabinet refacing, doors and drawers are removed, but the kitchen cabinets' existing frames, or boxes, are kept in place. The boxes are covered with a new veneer of wood or laminate, and then new cabinet doors, drawer fronts and hardware are installed. The cabinets appear completely new - and the doors and drawer fronts are new, with the original boxes veneered specifically to match them.

#### What refacing is not.

Refacing is not painting existing cabinets. It is not refinishing the wood on existing wood cabinets. For many kitchens, painting cabinets or revitalizing wood are ideal choices. But if refacing with veneers and new doors is right for your kitchen, someone with a fantastic selection of materials can make your cabinets look new.

# Is refacing or renovating the right option?

Ask yourself these questions to decide if refacing is the best option for your kitchen.

Do I crave a fresher look but do not want to pay big

bucks for a full remodel? HomeAdvisor says refacing is 30% to 50% less expensive than kitchen cabinet remodeling. That gives refacing the cost advantage, if you mostly want to alter the kitchen's appearance and not change its functionality or footprint.

Do I like my kitchen's current layout? If your familiar layout works efficiently, there's no need to tear out cabinets for a full remodeling job. Refacing keeps the layout while upgrading the look.

Are the cabinet boxes in good shape? A professional can inspect your cabinets and tell you if the boxes have damage or other issues that make replacing your best choice. If the boxes are sturdy, refacing likely is an option.

Would I like to keep using my kitchen normally while it is getting upgraded? Refacing does not require demolition and does not move appliances around, so you can keep using your kitchen while the job is underway.

Do I plan to stay in this house for a while? If you are looking at moving within just a few years, painting might be an option for your kitchen cabinets. If you aim to use the cabinets for years to come, refacing gives durable cabinets for the long term.

Kitchen Tune-Up's door catalog has styles, sizes, finishes and colors to perk up any space. The company also features exclusive door designs created just for its customers. As an established home improvement company that does business nationwide, Kitchen Tune-Up gets favorable pricing from cabinet manufacturers. It passes that savings along to customers. Talk to your Kitchen Tune-Up expert about the styles that work best on your cabinet boxes.

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#### More Than A Floor

Continued from page 7

#### Other Considerations

#### **Eco Friendly**

In addition to your flooring choice having such factors for consideration as performance and aesthetic, perhaps you would like the flooring to have an eco-friendly component as well. Today, the flooring industry has many surface options that consider the footprint on the environment. Flooring that uses recycled content, or uses responsibly grown, renewable materials such as bamboo, cork or hardwood, can allow for a great surface while giving a nod to Mother Nature.

#### **VOCs**

Volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, are used in many industries, especially for paints, stains and manufacturing of many components in and around a home. Some flooring options that have low to no VOC content are tile, polished concrete and prefinished flooring.

To learn more about many flooring options and how to make your project a success, visit the Absolute Design Studio in person or at www.absolutedesignstudio.net.

#### Is Remodeling And Building Different On Waterfront Properties Than Inland Properties?

Continued from page 20

or nor'easter. Due to the salt content, stainless steel screws and nails are used. Many people opt for insulation higher than regulations require, especially facing the water, as well as higher wind-rated roofing shingles. It's subtle, but the weather can be relentless on the waterfront even on beautiful days.

Each county can be different, but all have property line setbacks from the water for new structures. Hire a professional who specializes in building on the water and who knows all the regulations before starting to design.

When designing, the same general process is used whether on the water or inland. An inland home may not have sea exposure concerns, and the views will

differ. Every home is unique, as are every homeowner's needs and wishes.

The important part is to carefully review not only what you want to design, but why. Why do you want the kitchen off the family room? Why do you want a place for the kids to hand their book bags? Reviewing why something is important will help you prioritize the desired improvement. I suggest a musthave list and a nice-to-have list. Then, as you start the process of designing your new home or renovation, you have a clear direction of what you want, why you want it, and how it will improve your lifestyle and family living.

Reach John "August" Johnson at john@remodelthebay.
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#### **Under-Deck Ideas**

Continued from page 23

ment, or seasonal items organized and out of sight. You can also hang hooks for hanging bikes, kayaks or other outdoor gear.

# Close it off to unwanted pests

If your under-deck space is not large enough to set up as a functional space, it is often helpful if it is protected against critters. Closing off the under-deck area with lattice skirting or vinyl cladding will deter animals like raccoons, skunks, rodents and neighborhood cats from making a home under the low deck. Composite cladding is a lovely and more modern alternative to traditional lattice, but both make the under-deck space look more finished, adding some style to the deck rather than leaving an empty space underneath.

# Turn it into a cozy outdoor living room

A large and finished under-deck area can double as an outdoor living room, turning one deck into two useful living spaces. The top of the deck offers a lovely spot to host dinners and parties on sunny days, while the under-deck patio can keep the party going if it starts raining or if you need a cooler, shaded spot to avoid intense summer sun. For this waterproof living space, your deck will require an effective deck drainage system. This upgrade is a system that captures and channels water away from your house, which keeps the area under your deck dry for a usable space.

To be safe, install weather-resistant furniture, such as sofas, chairs and coffee tables. Add some outdoor cushions, throw pillows and rugs to create a cozy atmosphere. You can also hang outdoor curtains or install outdoor blinds to create privacy and shade. String lights can make any dining space feel cozier and inviting.

If you think it's time to upgrade and "deck out" your outdoor space, now is the perfect time to get your project started. The summer busy season is winding down, which means quicker installation times for Maryland customers. Contact Fence & Deck Connection at 410-757-5511 to learn more about its many fence and deck options customizable to your needs.

# **Year-Round Savings Tips**

#### Provided by Baltimore Gas and Electric Company



uring summer and winter, extreme temperatures may cause you to use more energy to keep your home comfortable — and your energy bill may show it. What can you do now to reduce your energy use and costs?

#### **WINTER SAVINGS**

Before the cold weather hits, here are some things you can do ahead of time that could reduce your energy costs:

#### **Maintain Your Heating System**

Home heating is the highest energy user. Make sure your heating system is running efficiently by scheduling a service check.

#### **Lower Your Water Heater Setting**

Water heating accounts for about 18% of home energy consumption. Reduce hot water usage by installing faucet aerators and efficient flow showerheads and adjusting your hot water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit, or the low setting.

Once winter is here, check out some of these ways to save:

#### **Use The Sun**

Open window curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home. Close them at night to keep heat in.

#### **Conserve With Lighting**

Turn off unnecessary lights and use LEDs, which can save you about \$80 in electricity costs over the lifetime of each bulb.

#### **Adjust Your Thermostat**

It's simple: set your thermostat to 68 degrees. For each degree you lower the thermostat, you can save up to 5% on heating costs.

#### **YEAR-ROUND SAVINGS**

Here are some things you can do anytime to lower your energy costs.

#### **Recycle Your Old Appliances**

The spare refrigerator or freezer in your basement or garage could be costing you money — nearly \$100 a year. BGE will pick up your old working refrigerator or freezer and pay you \$50 in addition to the energy savings. Sign up or call 866-898-1901 to schedule a pickup.

#### **Check Your Attic Insulation**

Add insulation to the recommended 12-15 inches for Maryland.

#### **Reduce Phantom Energy Wasters**

Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. Make it easy on yourself by using smart power strips when possible.

#### **Insulate With Windows And Doors**

Double-paned replacement windows, storm windows and storm doors create pockets of air between the inside and outside of your home and help reduce heat transfer.

#### **Replace Air Filters Regularly**

Clogged and dirty filters can significantly reduce efficiency in your heating and cooling system.

#### **Seal Your Ductwork**

Use mastic or metal-backed foil tape to seal holes, tears and gaps.

#### Safeguarding Your Home

Continued from page 18

and structural beams that support your home. Weakening these vital components leads to more significant and costly issues.

Where there's moisture, mold and mildew often follow. These fungi thrive in damp conditions and can quickly spread throughout your home, damaging surfaces and posing health risks. Mold infestations are notoriously difficult and expensive to remove, making it crucial to address leaks and moisture promptly.

Leaky windows and doors not only let water in but also allow conditioned air to escape. This results in higher energy bills as your heating and cooling systems work harder to maintain a comfortable temperature. **Delaying these repairs means** wasting money.

**Moisture-rich environments** 

attract pests like termites and carpenter ants, which can harm wooden structures. These pests quietly undermine your home's integrity, often leading to costly structural repairs.

While some homeowners may attempt do-it-yourself fixes, these issues typically require professional intervention. Professionals can accurately assess the damage, identify the source of leaks and implement effective solutions. The average homeowner may overlook problems that a professional can spot. Not every exterior leak is best fixed with caulk. Sometimes, the best fix for the leak is the proper installation of J-channel siding. An experienced professional possesses the tools and knowledge to ensure repairs are done correctly, preventing future problems and safeguarding your home's structural integrity.

**Delaying seemingly minor home** repairs can have severe consequences for your home's structural integrity. Water damage, mold growth, increased energy costs and pest infestations are just a few potential problems. To protect your investment, ensure your family's safety and comfort, and avoid larger expenses down the road, it's crucial to address these issues promptly with professionals. Prevention is often more cost-effective than the cure. Don't wait until a small problem becomes a major one — act now to preserve your home and your peace of mind.

For more information about how you can get help with your regular home maintenance or repairs on your home, contact the folks at Ace Handyman Services at 443-225-4364 or visit www.acehandymanservices.com.

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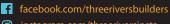
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