

HOME & GARDEN

MARCH 2024

SEVERNA PARK VOICE

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1981

PARK HARDWARE PAGE 14

Rick Miller Jr. and his team at Park Hardware have built upon the Clement Hardware legacy, expanding products and services.



PARK HARDWARE

GROWING GRASS

Page 7 The mixture of clay, soil and sand can make growing grass a difficult task for the novice gardener.

UPGRADING YOUR LANDSCAPING

Page 12 When it comes to home improvements, your outdoor space deserves attention.

SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES

Page 19 You don't have to be a farmer to embrace sustainability in your life. You just need a few tools.

Preparing Your Fence For A Stormy Spring

Three Ways To Protect Your Outdoor Investments

Nicole Bailey
Fence & Deck
Connection

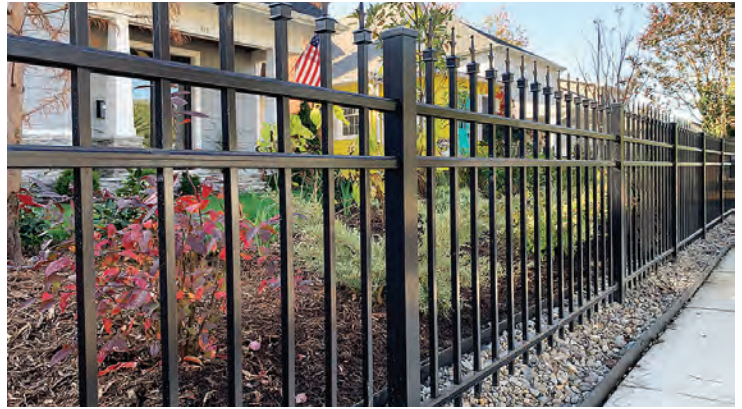


are some essential tips to protect your outdoor investment to ensure it weathers any storm!

Year-Round Maintenance

Regular, seasonal maintenance is crucial to keep your fence in tip-top shape. The changing weather conditions, especially from cold to warmer temperatures, can be harsh on your fence. Start by thoroughly checking your fence for loose or broken boards. These can compromise the overall structure and its ability to withstand strong winds or heavy rain. If you notice any damaged boards, it's crucial to repair or replace them immediately. This not only ensures the safety and stability of your fence but also

Continued on page 24



With the arrival of Maryland spring comes the promise of warmer weather, blooming flowers and, unfortunately, unpredictable storms. As homeowners, it's crucial to prepare our properties for whatever spring sends our way — wind, rain and sometimes even hail. One area often overlooked in storm preparation is our home's fencing, which is susceptible to damage if not properly maintained or reinforced. Here

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Selecting the **RIGHT** Roofing Contractor

Things to know and ask!



Rob
Calhan

Artie
Hendricks



LANDMARK ROOFING

When it comes to needing, wanting or having to select a roofing company to replace or repair your roof, what should you (as a consumer) consider so you select the right company? What are the key differentiators and expertise that a roofing company needs to possess for you to select them for your roofing needs? We will look at this and provide some insight that should be helpful for selecting the right contractor to handle your roofing needs.

First, look for a roofing company that is local. It is critical to find a roofing company that is owned by people who live in the area. They should have a Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC) contracting number and be registered with the state of Maryland. If a company has a MHIC number, you can rest assured that this company has passed a Maryland licensing test that proves that the company is in good financial standing, has all insurances and is in good credit standing. Also, this a critical question and differentiator to ask: "Do all of your salespeople have a MHIC Maryland sales license?" A company with a MHIC license and licensed salespeople provides a great way to differentiate a quality company from just another roofing company. It shows company values, commitment, quality and superior professionalism.

Also ask about the company's warranty offers — for both materials and workmanship. All these things, when combined, means that you are dealing with a quality roofing contractor, with proper training, proven knowledge and competence, along with being a responsible



company as viewed by the state of Maryland. Another differentiator is to note if the roofing company invests back into its community. Ask if the company and owners are a Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce member. Do they support various causes in the community? A company that values and invests in the community, and is a chamber of commerce member, shows key signs of being a quality company that is part of the community fabric.

Second, check that the company has the highest levels of manufacturer's certifications, which proves that the roofing company is dedicated to and invests in the training and education, at a high level, for its team, ensuring that they are trained in all the latest installation techniques of various roofing materials.

Third, check Google reviews. Compare these reviews

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inspect for any damage, general wear and tear and, if there is no damage, great. You will then want to make sure you get on a recommended inspection schedule moving forward. Further, you should get a roof inspection after every heavy weather event, such as nor'easters, hurricanes, heavy thunderstorms, hail and high winds that we experience in Central Maryland, to ensure your roof is still in good condition following these weather events.

Should you have an issue after any roofing inspection, or have experienced roof damage due to a storm, you should contact a qualified roofer that is experienced in the insurance process. Why is this important to you? They know how the insurance claim process works! A roofing contractor with experience dealing with insurance claims is important because they will become your advocate with the insurance company and adjusters. They will help oversee the roof inspection process and help you to navigate the entire process during your insurance claim.

Selecting a roofing contractor is an important decision you must make. You want to choose the right contractor that has a MHIC license and is licensed and insured, with salespeople who have MHIC sales licenses, one that has numerous certifications and has multiple — not just a few — Google reviews and understands the insurance claim process. These are all very important factors to consider when selecting the right roofing contractor. ■

against all companies that you are considering for your roofing job. Do they have a lot of reviews or just a few? What is their Google reviews rating? Look for companies that have a 4.9 to 5 review rating. Also, look for a company that has multiple reviews to check — not just a few. This will let you know about the way the company does business and will give you a level of confidence in how the company performs and how customers perceive the work they have done for many installations. This is critical in your roofing contractor search.

Turning to roof inspection, we want to address several things that are very important for you to know about roof inspections. How often should you have your roof inspected? How do you know if you have any roof damage? Is a roof inspection necessary if you just had a new roof installed? Let's review. First, we all go to the dentist every six months, and we also have annual health appointments to ensure we are in good physical health. Should there be any issues, a plan is made to address them. The same applies to your home's roof. It is a critical element of your home and needs attention too.

Look at it this way: either you have had a roof inspection or you have not. Chances are that you have not. If you haven't had a roof inspection, we recommend that you call and schedule one with a qualified local roofing company. There should be no charge. The company will



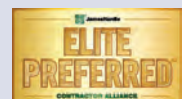
For more information: Contact Landmark Roofing located at 540 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard in Severna Park, MD for all your roofing needs including roofing inspections and assistance with the insurance claim process. Landmark Roofing over the last five years has successfully assisted over 1400 Anne Arundel County homeowners navigate the insurance claims process for a full roof replacement.

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Four Kitchen Design Trends That Are Here To Stay

Pegah Scotti
Kitchen Tune-Up
Annapolis



The kitchen is the centerpiece of every home. As centuries of kitchen design trends have gone by, we've seen a fair bit of eye-raising design choices (installing a work desk in the kitchen was a real trend that happened). Yet some design trends have never left us. There are kitchen designs that stand the test of time, regularly topping each year's "hottest kitchen trends" lists. You'll notice that these are the trends that have a practical use.

Here are four of our favorite evergreen kitchen trends:

1 Wood in the Kitchen

Wood is truly timeless. Once upon a time, it was one of the only building supplies available, along with stone and other natural materials. Yet over the years, even as technology and innovation have given us countless alternatives to wood, many people still gravitate to it. Wood makes any kitchen look cozy, rustic and classy.



Whether your eyes prefer oak, maple or pine, there's bound to be a wood choice that completes your kitchen. Wood can be used to accent a more modern look or it can be the very heart of your kitchen's design. Wood can be practical, too. Butcher block countertops and wood utensils are great, natural alternatives for people who prefer to have less plastic in their kitchen.

2 Task Lighting

The kitchen needs good light, both for safety and comfort, but that doesn't mean you have to default to having one big light in the center of the ceiling. Most kitchens have at least a little task lighting (think of the extra light right above the stove). Layered lighting can help give you focused light on the areas that need it the most like food prep areas and over the range.



Task lighting can help you save energy in your kitchen, and it gives the whole room an extra layer of personality. Like other trends rooted in practicality, task lighting stands the test of time. Years down the road, you may find yourself wanting to swap out a lamp or two, but going back to the single ceiling-mount kitchen light design will never cross your mind.

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Pegah Scotti

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Growing Grass Can Be A Complicated Matter

By Cory Stephens
A.A. Co. Farm Lawn & Garden Center

Anne Arundel County is no easy place to grow a beautiful lawn. The mixture of clay, soil and sand can make growing grass a difficult task for the novice gardener. That's why it is best to call in the experts.

There are over 22 types of grass seed that can help you grow grass in this area during all three seasons. The first step is to obtain a soil test and check the brochure "Grassfacts" for a step-by-step guide to helping your lawn grow and thrive.

It's crucial to understand your soil's pH level, the sweetness of your soil, which allows the roots to grow deep



and your plants to become strong.

Things to consider when talking to someone about your yard are whether or not there is full sun and full shade, the number of hours your yard is in the sunlight, pets, and, of course, high-traffic areas.

A custom blend can be the best way to overcome tough growing conditions. Experts can help you figure out the best course of action, including an application schedule. They will consider weather, organic products, pet-safe seed and bay safety products that can be applied to your lawn to customize the most fertile growing conditions possible.

A.A. Co. Farm, Lawn & Garden Center, also known as the "king of grass seed," has recently moved to 224B Mountain Road in Pasadena and has been serving the area for 97 years. Stop by and get advice from the experts. Happy growing. ■



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Why Do Mosquitoes Like Me So Much?

While there are many ways a mosquito can sense you, there are also many ways to keep the annoying bug away.



Kendra Burnett
Mosquito Squad

If you ever feel like mosquitoes seek you out when you're in a group and are most likely to bite you, you might not be wrong. You could be "the best" at attracting mosquitoes! You can change some of the factors in attracting mosquitoes, like the color of your clothes. But others, like your carbon dioxide output, are qualities you're stuck with.

Of course, mosquitoes can find you by your scent; that's why bug spray is so helpful. But what other lesser-known factors are drawing them to you? Learn why you might be a mosquito magnet and tips to keep them away!

WHAT BLOOD TYPE DO MOSQUITOES LIKE?

Many species of mosquitoes favor type O blood. Their least favorite blood type tends to be A, but that doesn't mean they won't bite you if you have A blood.

If you're type O, you can't change who you are! Our best solution: Stick around friends with type O blood when you're out on humid summer nights to make it harder for the mosquitoes to decide who to bite. Our next best solution: Get a traditional mosquito barrier treatment to keep mosquitoes away from your outdoor space for up to 21 days! After that, no matter your blood type, you can stop worrying about attracting the bothersome bug.

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Why Details Matter When Choosing Your Next Contractor



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With spring right around the corner, a variety of to-do list tasks are on the spring-cleaning list. Your asphalt or concrete driveway,

walkways and patios are some of your greatest exterior assets and should be maintained properly. A quality job from a professional can help these surfaces look their best and fulfill their potential for a long lifespan. However, a sloppy job can leave them worse off physically, while also leaving you with a sour taste from your poor experience.

Continued on page 26



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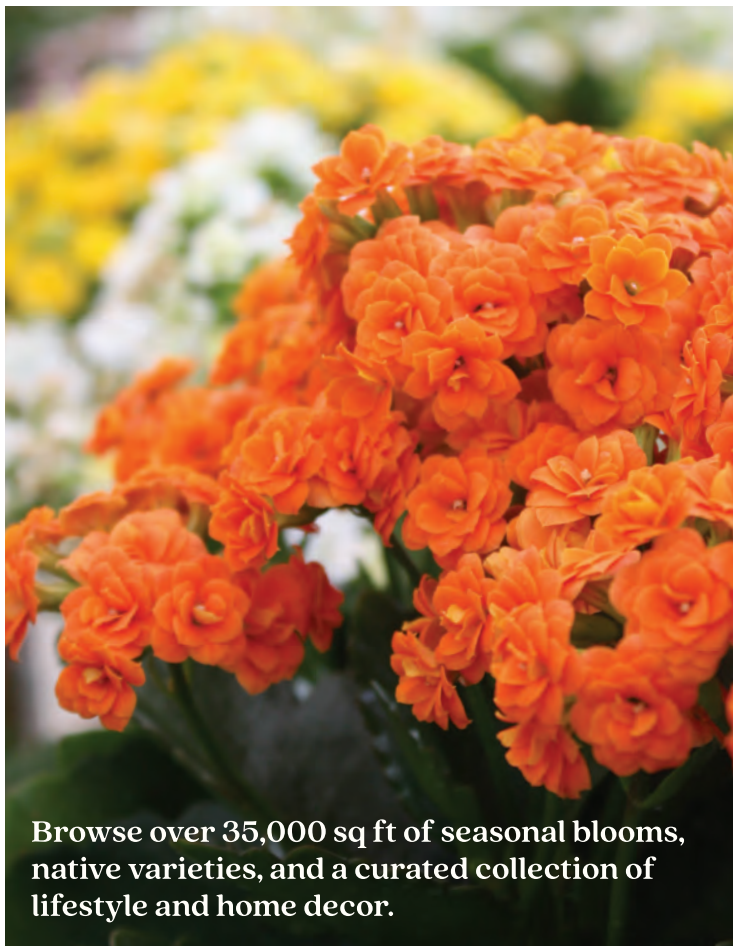
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The Hidden Gem Outside: *Why Upgrading Your Landscaping Matters*



Dylan Hudson
Estimator
Evergreen Gene's Inc.

When we think of home improvements, our minds often gravitate toward interior upgrades — the freshly painted walls, the sleek kitchen coun-

tertops, or the cozy new furniture. But there's another aspect of your home that deserves equal attention: your outdoor space. Landscaping isn't just about pretty flow-

ers and neatly trimmed hedges; it's an essential part of your property that impacts your well-being, curb appeal, and overall quality of life.

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Peas And Carrots

Kitchen Trends That Are In-Season For 2024

Kristy Wallace
Severna Park
Kitchen
& Bath



We're back to deliver our favorite kitchen trends for 2024. As the pandemic supply chain delays start to fade, kitchen design is catapulted into more bold, personalized designs. From your favorite color to the gadget that you never knew you needed, kitchens are becoming more fun and functional in so many ways. We've paired up our favorite kitchen trends for 2024, and we think they go together like peas and carrots!

Custom Colors and Natural Stone

Color is taking a bold turn in that it is becoming much more personal. I tell my clients that the colors and finishes they choose in their kitchens are less about trends and more about how they make them feel when they enter the room. Will the space bring them joy and comfort? Custom colors are more and more available in kitchen cabinetry, allowing homeowners to make their spaces truly their own. We are also seeing a rise in natural stone as the beauty of marble and granite are truly one-of-a-kind. No two slabs of stone are ever the same, and the depth and movement of natural stones like Dover white and Taj Mahal create a truly customized space.



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“When you shop here, you’re not just supporting one local family; you’re supporting our employees and their families too who are from this area. It’s the true meaning of a local family business.”

— **RICK MILLER JR.**
OWNER, PARK HARDWARE

When Zeskind’s, a local family-owned business, acquired Clement Hardware and renamed it Park Hardware last April, the local resident and owner of Zeskind’s, Rick Miller Jr., made it clear that his goal was not to replace the longstanding community landmark.

“I remember going to Clement with my parents to pick out knobs for their new kitchen back in 2000,” Miller said. “Even though we had our own hardware store in Baltimore, Clement still had the best selection around. But it also had a great old-fashioned hardware store atmosphere.”

He wanted to build upon that legacy, expanding and enhancing products and services, and giving people more reason to consider Park Hardware a home center much closer than any big-box store.

Since then, expanding the products and services at the store has been a priority for the staff and Miller, who knows what it’s like to run a family business in Anne Arundel County. Not only is he a fourth-generation owner of Zeskind’s, but he is also a Severna Park High School graduate and a longtime Severna Park and Arnold resident. Miller’s wife, Joni, and kids, Chloe and Jax, also help at the store on a regular basis.

“We are a family business at our core, improving on the Clement family legacy by adding new services and additional products to this branch of our business,” Miller said. “Our primary focus has always been serving our valued customers, whether it is through our retail hardware stores, or while serving our builder and contractor base of clients.”

Zeskind’s has two other nearby locations, its legacy retail hardware store in Baltimore City, and a door and millwork manufacturing facility and distribution center in Landover, Maryland. All in all, Zeskind’s has over 100,000 square feet of factory and retail space, five delivery trucks, and employs nearly 60 full- and part-time local residents.

“When you shop here, you’re not just supporting one local family; you’re supporting our employees and their families too who are from this area,” Miller said. “It’s the true meaning of a local family business.”

When customers visit Park Hardware, they are greeted and helped immediately by knowledge-

able and friendly staff. “We are proud that the amazing staff has stayed with us and become part of the Park Hardware team, continuing their tradition of excellent customer service,” Miller said. “We also want feedback from customers to see what they want us to stock. If there is a product or service that our customers need, let us know so we can bring it in!”

Customers are amazed as they wander into the Zeskind’s showroom through a giant custom-made wood pivot door straight down the main aisle of the Park Hardware retail store. There, they will find thousands of products from hundreds of manufacturers in the 2,200-square-foot Zeskind’s Door & Window Showroom. Manufacturers include JELD-WEN Windows & Doors, Andersen Windows + Doors, Masonite Doors, Therma-Tru Doors, Simpson Door Company, Emtex Products, Baldwin Hardware, Rocky Mountain Hardware, Top Knobs, Ashley Norton, Northeast Building Products, Glasscraft Door Company and more.

“Not only have we improved on the retail hardware store; we’ve expanded the existing Clement fine hardware selection, and added windows and doors, now beautifully displayed for our customers in a dedicated showroom where they deserve the spotlight and tasteful organization,” Miller said.

A virtual tour of the showroom, courtesy of Matterport, is available online (or use the QR code with this article).

Miller wants to meet all hardware, plumbing, paint, electrical and outdoor living needs. Expanding beyond the products offered at Park Hardware, some of the new services include screen, glass and window sash repair, small engine repair, key-cutting and duplication (from standard keys and specialty designs to fob reprogramming), assembly services, and other assistance that is not offered at any other local hardware store.

“If you bought a shelf unit from IKEA or you found a great deal on furniture but can’t assemble it, we can assemble it for you,” Miller said, citing one example.

For customers looking to refresh the inside or outside of a space using new colors, Park Hardware carries a full selection of Benjamin Moore paints. Park Hardware is a destination for many local contractors and homeowners who love the





Benjamin Moore product and need a competitive and reliable store open seven days a week for their projects.

“We want to be your partner, whether you’ve got a weekend DIY (do-it-yourself) project, or you’re a builder or contractor looking for knowledgeable salespeople and plenty of paint and sundries in stock,” Miller said.

The store is also partnering with Greenworks to offer electric lawn and garden tools and other equipment while also being an authorized service center that can do repairs, so Park Hardware can stand behind the products it sells and provide the highest level of customer service. Greenworks products were personally chosen by Miller for their great value and high quality.

“As we jump into spring, I’m excited to have a freshly renovated store, with plenty of new products,” said store manager Mike Page. “I’m excited to offer our customers our new Greenworks electric lawn and garden tools, a line we not only stock but service as well!”

With that full complement of products and services, Park Hardware can provide a combination of convenience and inventory that shoppers can’t find anywhere else.

Now that spring is arriving, customers can also come to Park Hardware for all of their seasonal needs, whether they need grass seed or birdseed, fertilizer seed, potting soil, bag mulch, Weber and Green Egg grills, fire pits or lawn mower tune-ups. Park Hardware can be a destination for neigh-



borhood cleanups.

Or they can consult Maryland Master Gardeners while enjoying food truck fare during a native plant sale on May 4. The plants, including milkweed, Black-eyed Susans, and other native favorites, were grown locally by Providence Center of Maryland, a nonprofit that supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The group will also supply vegetables and flowers at Park Hardware throughout spring and early summer.

Giving back to the community is important to Miller as a Severna Park native. On behalf of Park Hardware and Zeskind’s, Miller and his team have donated to the For Ellie Foundation, Severna Park High School theater and drama program, Stef Ripple, several Boy Scout troops, the Belvedere Elementary School Belvedere Ball, and St. Martin’s-in-the-Field Episcopal School. Miller is an Eagle Scout from Troop 855 of Severna

Open For Business
Park Hardware opened in 2023 and welcomes customers to see the updated store and all it has to offer.

Park, and he understands the importance of community service, involvement and giving back to the community.

Miller, his wife and two children all want Park Hardware to be part of the fabric of the community as they continue to build upon its legacy, just as the Clement family did for over five decades.

To see what the buzz is about, find Park Hardware at 500-A Ritchie Highway in Severna Park. Customers can currently order for delivery to their home or to the store by visiting www.doitbest.com/park-hardware. For more information, call 410-647-4611 or go to www.parkhardware.com. ■



Check out this video to see how Park Hardware serves the community.

Miller wants to meet all hardware, plumbing, paint, electrical and outdoor living needs. Expanding beyond the products offered at Park Hardware, some of the new services include screen, glass and window sash repair, small engine repair, key-cutting and duplication (from standard keys and specialty designs to fob reprogramming), assembly services, and other assistance that is not offered at any other local hardware store.

Spring Into Safety

Electrical Service Company's Guide To Spring Cleaning

Ryan Deshaies

President
and CEO
Chesapeake
Electric



As the flowers bloom and the days grow longer, homeowners embark on the annual ritual of spring cleaning. While decluttering and dusting are essential tasks, one aspect often overlooked is the electrical system. Neglecting electrical maintenance during spring cleaning can lead to safety hazards and costly repairs. In this guide, we'll explore why spring is the perfect time to assess and maintain your home's electrical system, along with providing tips from electrical service experts to ensure a safe and efficient spring cleaning.

Importance of Electrical Maintenance

Your home's electrical system is the backbone of modern living, powering everything from lights to appliances. Over time, wear and tear, as well as environmental factors, can degrade its components, increasing the risk of electrical hazards such as shocks, fires and outages. Spring cleaning provides an excellent opportunity to inspect and address any issues before they escalate.

Key Areas to Address

1 Inspect Wiring and Outlets: Check for frayed wires, loose outlets, and signs of overheating such as discoloration or burning smells. Replace damaged components promptly to prevent electrical fires.

2 Test Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Alarms: Ensure that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms are in working order by testing and replacing batteries if necessary. These devices are crucial for early detection of potential hazards.

3 Clean Light Fixtures and Ceiling Fans: Dust accumulation on light fixtures and ceiling fans can reduce their efficiency and pose a fire risk. Clean them thoroughly and replace any burned-out bulbs to maintain optimal performance.

4 Outdoor Maintenance: Trim trees and bushes near power lines to prevent damage during spring storms. Inspect outdoor outlets and lighting fixtures for damage and replace weathered components as needed.



Expert Tips for Safe Spring Cleaning

- Schedule a professional electrical inspection annually to identify potential issues before they become major problems.
- Avoid overloading circuits by spreading out the use of high-power appliances like air conditioners and space heaters.
- Use surge protectors to safeguard sensitive electronics from power surges caused by lightning or electrical grid fluctuations.
- Never attempt do-it-yourself (DIY) electrical repairs if you are not trained or experienced. Contact a licensed electrician for any electrical work beyond basic maintenance tasks.

Don't let spring cleaning stop at surface-level tasks. Take the time to assess and maintain your home's electrical system to ensure the safety and comfort of your family. By following these tips from electrical service experts, you can spring into the new season with peace of mind, knowing that your home is powered safely and efficiently.

Chesapeake Electric has been locally owned and operated for over 10 years. To learn about the services it provides, go to www.cheselectric.com or call 410-656-8750.

March Into *Spring!*

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Improving your property's curb appeal through pressure washing and soft washing can make a significant difference in enhancing your home's overall appearance. Pressure washing involves using high-pressure water to clean surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, decks and exterior walls. On the other hand, soft washing is a gentler approach that uses low-pressure water combined with eco-friendly cleaning solutions to remove dirt, grime, mold and mildew without causing damage.

Pressure washing is ideal for

Continued on page 20

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Sustainable Principles That Everyone Can Practice



Vicki Haberkorn
Morris Hill Farm



that rely heavily on synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and monoculture crops, sustainable agriculture focuses on long-term ecological balance, soil health and biodiversity.

Sustainable agriculture isn't just a buzzword or a trend for the next generation of farmers; it's a fundamental shift in the way we can choose to interact with our environment and our food system. Unlike conventional farming methods

You don't have to be a farmer to embrace sustainability in your own life! Whether you have a backyard garden, a few pots on your balcony, or dreams of starting a homestead, there are plenty of ways to incorporate sustainable

Continued on page 23

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Improving Curb Appeal Through Pressure Washing And Soft Washing

Continued from page 18

tougher surfaces like concrete or brick that can withstand high pressure. It effectively removes stubborn stains, dirt buildup and even graffiti, restoring surfaces to their original condition. Soft washing, on the other hand, is more suitable for delicate surfaces like vinyl siding, stucco, wood and roofing materials. It is gentle yet effective in cleaning these surfaces without causing any damage.

By combining pressure washing and soft washing techniques, you can transform the exterior of your property. Here are some key benefits of these cleaning methods:

- 1 Enhanced Curb Appeal:** Pressure washing and soft washing can instantly refresh the look of your property, making it more attractive to visitors, potential buyers or simply for your own enjoyment.
- 2 Preventative Maintenance:** Regular cleaning with pressure and soft washing can help prevent the buildup of dirt, mold and mildew, extending the lifespan of your property's exterior surfaces.
- 3 Health and Safety:** Removing mold, mildew and other contaminants not only improves the appearance of your property but also creates a healthier environment for you and your family.
- 4 Increased Property Value:** A well-maintained exterior significantly boosts the value of your property. Potential buyers are more likely to be attracted to a clean and well-kept home.
- 5 Environmentally Friendly:** Soft washing techniques use biodegradable cleaning solutions that are gentle on the environment while effectively cleaning surfaces.

When performing pressure washing and soft washing, it's essential to hire professionals who have the expertise and right equipment to ensure a thorough and safe cleaning process. Always consider the type of surface being cleaned to determine the appropriate technique to avoid any damage.

In conclusion, pressure washing and soft washing are valuable methods for improving your property's curb appeal, maintaining its condition, and increasing its value. By investing in these cleaning techniques, you can transform the look of your property and create a welcoming exterior that you can be proud of.

For more information, contact CheckMark Power Washing at 443-848-0581 or visit www.checkmark-powerwash.com. ■

Kitchen Trends That Are In-Season For 2024

Continued from page 13

Storage Solutions and Pocket Doors

A new kitchen offers advantages in storage that weren't readily available before. Updates in construction have led to options like deeper drawers, stacked cabinetry and hidden

storage solutions. More and more people are adding smart storage, like hidden paper towel pull-outs or cabinetry with pocket doors, that allow you to tuck away small counter-top appliances for a clean look.

Natural Colors and Wood Tones



Classic jewel tones will always have their place – especially with historic colors like navy and bottle green. We are seeing a shift in tones to lighter, airier colors that reflect a more natural feel. Watery blues and mossy greens are very on-trend and reflect our current climate of well-being and getting into nature. Wood finishes in cabinetry are also still on the rise – we love integrating white oak and alder into the kitchens to add warmth and texture.

Technology and Sustainability

There has been an explosion in technology in the last year, and kitchens are becoming smarter and smarter. Touch-control cooktops and energy-efficient, quiet ventilation make cooking easier, cleaner and healthier. Built-in composting machines eliminate gallons of garbage and add important nutrients to gardens. Workstation sinks made of durable composite granite can feature a built-in drying rack, glass rinser, cutting boards and strainer.



What is the best kitchen trend of 2024? Personalizing your design to best fit your family. Severna Park Kitchen & Bath would love to help customize your kitchen design with its talented team of designers and beautiful selections of finishes. Call 410-777-9526 for a consultation! ■

Critical Planning In A Critical Area

Daniel Stefany
50 East
Remodeling



Whether planning a large addition, building a pool, adding a garage, installing a shed or outbuilding, creating sidewalks or patios, or doing smaller projects – tree removal, brush cleanups or rerouting gutters and French drains – an amount of planning can be critical to reach the finish line on time.

A piece of that preparation puzzle is, obviously, what you want to build, but just as important, where? We have all seen and heard the commercials, “Call before you dig” from Miss Utility and the 311 phone services, but there can be more to it than just electric lines, plumbing and gas lines. Does your property/project exist within a Critical Area?



What is a Critical Area?

According to the Anne Arundel County Department of Planning and Zoning, Critical Area is located 1,000 feet landward from mean high tide or the edge of tidal wetlands, as designated on the state tidal wetland maps, and all waters of and lands under the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Seems like most of Anne Arundel County falls within this area! What can this mean for your project?

The following activities must have approval through the forestry section outlined by

the Anne Arundel County Department of Inspections and Permits:

- Clearing or grading, including cutting or pruning of existing vegetation (except for routine grass cutting and maintenance of existing garden and landscaped areas)
- Disturbance of steep slopes
- Construction, alteration or relocation of a structure or lot coverage
- Installation of stormwater management system

In short, the intent of the Critical Area stipulations is to preserve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay as well as the wildlife habitat along the shoreline. Water runoff and retention are other key factors. For every square foot of impervious material, the rainwater and groundwater are then displaced from their normal path, as water finds a path of least resistance.

In a small yard, this may mean the water that is now running down the new shed roof creates a gully in your yard to eventually create erosion.

Large scale, to recall *Continued on page 24*



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The Hidden Gem Outside: Why Upgrading Your Landscaping Matters

Continued from page 12

Your front yard is the first thing visitors see. A well-maintained landscape creates an inviting atmosphere, making a positive first impression. Imagine a lush green lawn, vibrant flower beds, and well-defined pathways leading to your front door. It sets the tone for what awaits inside. Mature trees, colorful shrubs and a functional outdoor living area contribute to the overall appeal. So, when you're considering renovations, don't forget to allocate resources for your landscaping.

Landscaping isn't just

about aesthetics; it's about creating a habitat. Native plants attract birds, butterflies and beneficial insects. A diverse ecosystem thrives in a well-designed landscape. Plus, watching birds flit among the branches or spotting a butterfly on a sunny day brings a sense of harmony and tranquility. Your backyard becomes a sanctuary for both you and nature.

Strategically placed trees and shrubs also provide natural shade. This can reduce the need for excessive air conditioning during hot summers. A well-designed landscape can

shield your home from harsh winds in winter, too. By optimizing your outdoor environment, you indirectly save on energy costs.

Your backyard isn't just an extension of your home; it's an oasis waiting to be discovered. Imagine evenings spent on a cozy patio, surrounded by fragrant flowers and the gentle rustle of leaves. Whether it's hosting a barbecue, reading a book, or simply unwinding, a well-landscaped yard enhances your quality of life.

Updating your landscaping isn't just a luxury; it's a ne-

cessity. So, as you plan your next home improvement project and allocate time and resources for your outdoor haven, contact Evergreen Gene's for an estimate. The professionals at Evergreen Gene's can help you, from design, to installation, to maintenance. Remember, the beauty of your home extends beyond its walls — it's in the blossoms, the shade of the trees, and the serenity of a well-tended garden.

For more information, contact Evergreen Gene's at 410-766-6877 or evergreengenesinc@gmail.com, or visit www.evergreengenes.com. Evergreen Gene's is located at 401 Crain Highway South in Glen Burnie. ■



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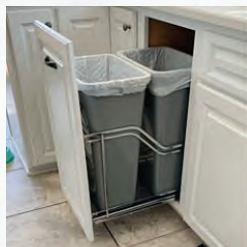
Four Kitchen Design Trends That Are Here To Stay

Continued from page 6

3 Storage and Organization

Kitchens get cluttered. It's one of the most common problems homeowners have with their current kitchen layouts: It seems there's never enough room for all the pots and pans in your set. And if you dared to purchase that bread maker? Then you're really in trouble. That's why designing for maximum storage is one of our favorite trends.

Open shelving makes good use of otherwise "dead" space while still looking great. You can also maximize cabinet space and install drawer and cabinet organizers to maximize the storage space you already have.



4 Practical Kitchen Islands

Center islands have always been a great addition to any kitchen. They look sleek, they give the room personality, and they can be the perfect middle ground between open-air designs and walled-off rooms. Yet islands also have the potential to make your kitchen larger. Equipping a kitchen island with appropriate cabinetry or even a range or sink gives the island a level of practicality and can double your storage space.

In some cases, your kitchen island can even double as a table or a small bar! Casual seating is always in fashion and makes parties and family get-togethers much more comfortable. In addition to storage, islands are also an opportunity for extra power outlets, and they make sure you have plenty of room for all your kitchen appliances, so you'll no longer have to choose between that toaster oven and the rice maker.



Design the kitchen of your dreams.

Can you see any of these trends finding a home in your new kitchen? Do you have other ideas you'd rather explore instead? Kitchen Tune-Up's handy design tool can help you visualize your dream kitchen as you design. Test out different materials and arrangements until you find one you like.

Pegah and the Kitchen Tune-Up team are happy to help you narrow in your design ideas. Call 410-604-8518 and see why people trust Kitchen Tune-Up to deliver affordable, quality kitchen updates. For more information, go to www.kitchentuneup.com/annapolis-md. ■

Sustainable Principles That Everyone Can Practice



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principles into your lifestyle. Planting native species, composting yard waste and kitchen scraps, and shopping with your local farmer are all simple yet impactful steps you can take to promote biodiversity, conserve resources and support local ecosystems.

In addition to caring for the soil, sustainable agriculture prioritizes the well-being of animals. Although modern "factory farming" methods have increased availability and affordability of meat products, those methods come at significant environmental and ethical costs, including animal welfare concerns, environmental degradation and public health risks. At a time where many people are adopting a "plant-forward" diet and meat may take up less room on your plate, consider a premium option to elevate your next meal.

But perhaps most importantly, sustainable agriculture is good for you and your family! Whether you wish to grow food at home to reduce dependence on industrial food systems or yearn to cultivate a backyard oasis that attracts beautiful songbirds and butterflies – whatever reason you are inspired to foster a deeper connection to the natural world is a good one in

our book! By supporting local farmers, like us, who practice sustainable methods, you're not only investing in your own health but also in the health of your community and the planet. When you purchase directly from a farmer with pasture-raised meats, you can have confidence knowing exactly where your food comes from and how it was produced.

Morris Hill Farm, located in Anne Arundel County, honors nature's harmony through its partnership with the land, sustainable agricultural practices, and humanely raised animals. It's not just a farm; it's a part of the community, with an open-door policy and a focus on food that's good for its animals, its neighbors and the environment.

Everyone at Morris Hill Farm is filled with a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunity to steward land in Anne Arundel County, offer an enriched life for animals, and provide superior products for over 150 families each week. You can find Morris Hill Farm at the weekly Anne Arundel County Farmers Market or check out its new and improved online store at www.morrihillfarm.com – use the code MHFVOICE to save 10% off your first order over \$100, plus free delivery. ■

Critical Planning

Continued from page 21
 the floods of downtown Ellicott City, those were caused by overdevelopment uphill and in surrounding areas. Water finds a way, overflowing the river, flooding downtown.

Depending on the project, navigating this process can be easier than it seems. The forestry section of Inspections and Permits for Anne Arundel County may advise to shift, downsize or move your project in tandem with planting x number of native trees, bushes or shrubs to help mitigate and soak up the water retention/runoff issues.

In many instances, there is an option to pay a fee so that the forestry section may take your money to use elsewhere to mitigate issues throughout local Critical Areas.

It can seem difficult enough to initiate and execute a project without thinking of all the

outside checks and balances.

To ask for approval just to put down a flagstone paver patio or cut down some brush on your steep sloped backyard, at face value, does seem like overkill. On the other side, having practices and commissions in place to keep Anne Arundel County a beautiful, safe, clean environment for people, animals and vegetation is worth celebrating and encouraging.

For more information, visit the Anne Arundel County website at www.aacounty.org or call the permit office at 410-222-7790.

50 East Remodeling's team of professionals are experienced in interior and exterior home remodeling projects and can work on everything from new builds to historical homes. Learn more about its services at www.50eastremodeling.com or by calling 410-500-2266. ■

Preparing Your Fence

Continued from page 2
 helps prevent further damage. Besides inspecting the boards, check for any loose screws or nails. Over time, these fasteners can become loose due to weather exposure or general wear and tear.

Consider sweeping or power washing the fence once or twice a year to remove dirt and grime that has built up over time. This not only improves the appearance of your fence but also helps extend its lifespan. A clean fence is also less likely to suffer from deterioration caused by environmental factors.

Yard Cleanup

Remove any debris and leaves that may have accumulated around the fence throughout the fall and winter seasons. Not only can these items cause damage during high winds, but they can also lead to moisture retention and potential rot — especially with wood fencing. Additionally, it's wise to trim shrubs or plants that are touching or encroaching on the fence. Overgrown vegetation can create a pathway for pests to access your property and can also cause damage to the fence structure.

Tree Maintenance

Trim any overhanging branches that could potentially fall onto your fence during a storm. During strong winds, these branches

can easily break and cause damage to the fence. You may even want to hire a professional to help you remove any dead or weak trees near the fence as well. Dead trees are more prone to falling during storms, and their impact can be devastating to a fence of any material. Weak trees, those with compromised roots or structural integrity, are also a concern as they may not withstand strong winds. Removing them before the storm season begins can help prevent potential damage to your fence.

Need Professional Assistance?

If you think it's time for a fencing upgrade, choose the most trusted fence installation company in Maryland! Fence & Deck Connection offers a wide range of high-quality fence options designed to withstand high winds and potential storm damage. By choosing a wind-resistant fence and properly maintaining it, you can have peace of mind knowing that your property is protected even during severe weather conditions!

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Why Do Mosquitoes Like Me So Much?

Continued from page 8

ARE MOSQUITOES ATTRACTED TO CARBON DIOXIDE?

Mosquitoes are drawn to carbon dioxide because it signals to them that there is an animal with blood nearby. They can sense your carbon dioxide output from up to 100 feet away! Mosquitoes have receptor cells on their antennae and legs that sense carbon dioxide and send a signal to their brain indicating they're near a potential host.

This is why it may seem like mosquitoes are attracted to your breath and extra attracted to you if you're breathing heavily. However, your natural metabolic rate also determines your carbon dioxide output.

Apart from your breath and blood type, external factors can also attract mosquitoes. Let's get into those!

WHAT COLORS ARE MOSQUITOES ATTRACTED TO?

Mosquitoes like dark colors such as black and navy, along with vibrant red and orange. But why do mosquitoes like dark colors? When dark clothing is set against a high-contrast background, like a lovely lake, it makes it easier for mosquitoes to spot your silhouette. Also, dark colors absorb heat, which allows the pesky bugs to find you more easily. Red and orange also stand out, as they replicate human skin undertones.

However, color alone doesn't attract the bugs. Mosquitoes will detect you if you're wearing an appealing color and there's another signal drawing them, such as carbon dioxide, body heat or water vapor (like sweat).

WHAT COLORS KEEP MOSQUITOES AWAY?

To reduce mosquito bites by choosing the right clothing, we recommend wearing light and earthy tones, such as white, green, khaki, or light blue. Light-colored clothes may also help you produce less body heat, which will make you less attractive to mosquitoes.

ARE MOSQUITOES ATTRACTED TO HEAT?

Mosquitoes can detect a body's heat with their sight. Yes,

you read that correctly! Their vision has thermal sensory abilities that help them detect warm-blooded hosts. This means that the warmer you are, the easier it will be for a mosquito to spot you.

ARE MOSQUITOES ATTRACTED TO SWEAT AND WATER VAPOR?

Yes, totally! When you get warm, sweat forms on your skin. This form of water vapor allows a mosquito to recognize when it's close to your skin.

Just as mosquitoes are attracted to the condensation on your body, they're also attracted to the standing water in your yard. Be sure to walk your yard and eliminate any standing water regularly and especially after any rain event.

KEEP MOSQUITOES AWAY!

While there are many ways a mosquito can sense you, there are also many ways to keep the annoying bug away. Remember to wear light-colored clothes and make choices that help you lower your body temperature.

The best way to keep mosquitoes away is with a mosquito control service. Don't spend your time worrying about how you can be less attractive to mosquitoes; enjoy your yard in peace with the help of Mosquito Squad's professional technicians. For a free quote, visit www.mosquitosquad.com/annapolis or call 410-317-8385. ■



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Why Details Matter When Choosing Your Next Contractor

Continued from page 9

When selecting the contractor for your property, ask questions to ensure that the contractor is qualified to propose the proper solutions for your circumstance and also pay close attention to project details that can ultimately go a long way.

On The Job

When scheduling with a contractor to have your driveway sealed, it's important the contractor ensures they will seal any cracks prior to application of any sealers. In concrete pavement, the crack needs to be first chased out to open it up for filler products to best adhere inside the crack, thus stopping water from further intruding. Then, how much time does the contractor commit to preparing the surface? Concrete or as-

phalt needs to be completely clean, either prepared by pressure washing or cleaning thoroughly with steel brooms, blowers, etc.

Ask your potential contractor how they will apply their products near your delicate surfaces like garage doors, stone and walkways. Spray applications can be messy; ultimately you may want to side with a contractor who cuts your edges in carefully by hand. When there is a slight chance of rain (we all know how unpredictable the summertime Maryland forecasts can be), it's wise to hang protective plastic across delicate surfaces to protect against splashing in the event of a flash storm. Once the job is completed, the work area should be cordoned off with clearly noticeable caution tape (or comparable barricade) for the

specified amount of time to prevent any accidental foot or vehicle traffic while products are still drying.

What Sets A Contractor Apart From Others? What To Look For!

Look for a contractor who places an integral focus on recruiting exceptional talent that will provide customers with a tremendous experience. Also check their online reviews and references. Honesty and integrity with a friendly smile are a must for anyone within a company to always uphold.

Additionally, next time you call a contractor for an estimate, pay attention to your first impression. Do the salespeople and installation crews show up well put-together, in clean uniforms and a clean vehicle? This can be

a telltale sign of how they will take care of your property if you hire them.

Last, ask your contractor if they are locally owned and how they are involved with the community. Ask if they donate to local causes, foundations and nonprofits. Are they members of the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce? If contractors support local nonprofits and are chamber members, those signs indicate that the contractor genuinely cares about the community that they live and work in and are part of a quality company you can trust.

For more information or to ask questions about your asphalt or concrete driveway, sidewalks and patios, contact TruSeal Asphalt and Concrete at 443-223-9491 or visit www.truseal-asphalt.com. ■

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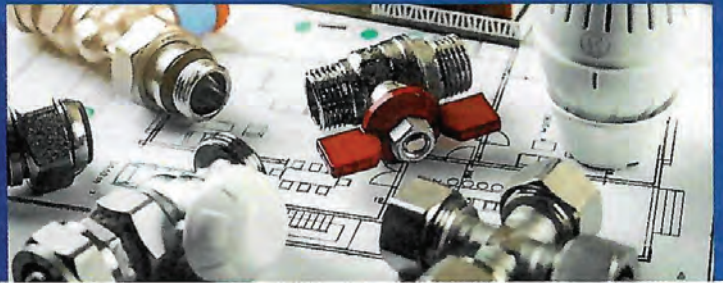
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