



**SPRING 2020**

# Home & Garden

Improve Soil Quality • Essentials For A Bathroom Remodel • Comfort Guests While Entertaining



**Weather is intensifying. The grid is overloaded.  
Cyber-attacks are happening.**

**Your power is at risk.**

**ARE YOU  
PREPARED?**



**POWER**  
**YOU CONTROL**

AUTOMATIC STANDBY GENERATORS

## Maintain Power and Peace of Mind

With unpredictable power outages affecting homeowners more frequently than ever, Generac's best-selling home standby generators are designed to protect you and your family from extended power failures. Generac manufactures customizable, automatic standby power systems to ensure you never lose power again. With special financing and affordable monthly payments available, you're one free in-home assessment away from identifying the right generator for your backup power and financial needs. Don't wait for the next outage to leave your home powerless.

**Call today for a FREE in-home assessment.**

**GENERAC®**

**Powertech Electric, Inc.**

Sales 240-298-5985  
Service 240-298-5985  
Website [www.powertechelec.com](http://www.powertechelec.com)

24720 Old Three Notch Rd, Hollywood, MD 20636

# Home & Garden

## What's Inside

<b>Five Outdoor Projects</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Small Kitchen Improvements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Pool Safety</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Defining Hardscape</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Building Retaining Wall</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Bathroom Remodel</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Weekend DIY Projects</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Soil Quality</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Entertaining Guests</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Lawn Equipment Safety</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Mulching Mistakes to Avoid</b>	<b>17</b>

## 5 Outdoor Projects That Add Value



Exterior renovations can enhance the appearance of a property and make it more enjoyable for homeowners. Certain renovations have the potential to add value to a home, while others may do the opposite. Learning which one have the largest return on investment can help homeowners select features that will have the most positive impact.

Curb appeal goes a long way toward attracting potential buyers. According to the National Association of Realtors, first impressions of a property have a strong influence on buyers. Landscaping and external features can do much to influence such impressions. .

- **Lawn care program:** Investing in a lawn care program that consists of fertilizer and weed control application and can be transferred over to a subsequent home owner is an attractive feature. NAR says such a care program can recover \$1,000 in value of the \$330 average cost, or a 303 percent ROI.

- **Low-maintenance lifestyle:** When choosing materials for projects, those that offer low-maintenance benefits can be preferential. These include low-maintenance patio materials, composite decking, vinyl fencing, and inorganic mulched beds.

- **Fire pit:** A fire pit can be used for much of the year. In the spring and summer, the firepit is a great place to congregate to roast marshmallows or sip wine and gaze into the fire. In the fall, the fire pit can make for a cozy retreat. A fire pit that has a gas burner is low-maintenance, and the National Association of Landscape Professionals says that most can recoup about \$4,000 of their \$6,000 average price tag.

- **Softscaping:** Hardscaping refers to structures like outdoor kitchens or decks. Softscaping involves the living elements of the landscape. Hiring a landscape designer to install trees, shrubs, natural edging, and rock elements can do wonders toward improving the look and value of a home.

- **Pool or water feature:** In certain markets, particularly hot climates, a pool or another water feature is a must-have. However, in other areas where outdoor time is limited, a pool or water feature can actually lower the value of a home. Speaking with a real estate professional can give homeowners an idea of how a pool will fare in a given neighborhood.

Outdoor improvements can improve the marketability of a home, as well as enhance its appearance and function.



# Stay safe around power lines

With the return of spring, many people are excited to head outdoors and get started on some projects around the house and yard. It's important to stay safe and be aware of overhead power lines. Look up.

- Never climb power poles or transmission towers.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- Keep equipment away from overhead lines when carrying ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning tools.
- If you are doing work close to power lines—such as trimming trees, working on your roof, or doing exterior renovations—keep yourself, your ladder and anything you are handling a safe distance from the power line.

In addition to overhead lines, SMECO has many underground electric lines. Call **Miss Utility at 811** before you dig.

- Contact SMECO to disconnect power if you are doing work that requires close contact with overhead lines attached to your home.

- Use a licensed electrician for all electrical work.
- Plant trees away from power lines.

**SMECO**  
People. Power. Progress.



Download our free mobile app or use our texting service to report an outage or pay your bill.

[www.smeco.coop/SMECO247](http://www.smeco.coop/SMECO247)



# Small kitchen improvements that maximize functionality

Many homeowners wish for expansive kitchens. Modernized kitchens that include sought after features and showcase the latest trends go a long way to improving the overall value of a home.

As desirable as such kitchens may be, some homes simply don't have enough space for a centerfold-worthy kitchen featuring an

island, wine refrigerator and walk-in pantry. However, homeowners with small kitchens can still improve the form and function of their existing spaces.

## Reconfigure and revamp cabinetry

Homeowners whose kitchens are small often lament their lack of storage. Redesigning the layout of cabinets, and possibly adding some more cabinetry, may take care of certain storage issues. The experts at Merit Kitchens suggest utilizing corner space with LeMans units, lazy susans and other gadgets to make access to these areas easier. Going vertical with wall cabinets that extend to the ceiling also can add more storage, as can roll-in work carts.

## Work with the walls

Small kitchens require clever usage of vertical space. Vertical storage units, hooks, shelving, and more can move items out of drawers and off of counters. Consider an under-the-cabinet toaster oven and microwave to create more counter space.

## Use scaled-down appliances

Shop with size in mind when looking at new appliances if you have a small kitchen. Compact versions won't take up as much space as larger alternatives. Homeowners should consider the ultimate function of the kitchen and then think about which appliances will serve them well. Homeowners with small kitchens may not need a large stand mixer or an oversized commercial stove.

## Add some glass and upsize

The DIY Network recommends incorporating glass to improve the perception of space in small kitchens. Glass lets you see through the objects, thereby enhancing the feeling of spaciousness or what designers call "negative space." Glass also can be reflective, visually expanding the space.

## Embrace high-end materials

It costs less to renovate small spaces than bigger areas, so homeowners may be able to afford high-end materials that really add personality to a kitchen. Flooring, counter materials and quality fixtures can really set small kitchens apart.

Small kitchens can be culinary havens with the right improvements to maximize the space.



## Dumpster Rentals

Serving Southern Maryland

- Residential & Commercial
- 10-20-30 Yard Containers
- Construction Debris
- Concrete/Brick & Block
- Garage/Home Clean-outs
- Property Clean Up
- Fast Reliable Service
- Competitive Rates



**MENTION THIS AD  
AND RECEIVE ONE  
ADDITIONAL WEEK  
OF RENTAL FREE**

(Offer Ends on 12-31-2020)



**CONTACT US TODAY!**

**301-884-8565**

**www.CCRollOff.com**



# Pool safety starts with prevention

Pools make some backyards the places to be in late spring and throughout summer. Lazy summer afternoons are a lot more enjoyable when they're spent in or alongside a pool, and kids tend to say "I'm bored" with considerably less frequency when a pool is within arm's reach.

Pools are certainly fun, but they're only as fun as they are safe. According to the USA Swimming Foundation, between Memorial Day and Labor Day in 2018, at least 148 children younger than age 15 fatally drowned in swimming pools or spas. While those figures represented a nine percent decline from the year prior, 148 deaths is still 148 lives lost too early. Pool safety need not come at the expense of summer fun. In fact, homeowners can employ various preventive measures to reduce the risk of pool-related accidents on their properties.

- Inspect gates around your pool. The International Code Council®, a member-focused association dedicated to the construction of safe, sustainable, affordable, and resilient structures, advises homeowners to inspect all pedestrian gates in the barrier fences around their pools. Such gates should be self-closing and self-latching, as both features ensure gates are always closed. In addition, the ICC recommends padlocking other gates around the property.

- Remove objects around pedestrian gates. Kids can climb up on chairs, tables, large toys, and other objects left around pool gates to gain access to pools even when their parents aren't looking. Pool safety starts with prevention or even home. Such items should be removed.



- Install a pool alarm. Pool alarms can alert homeowners to accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. The ICC recommends installing such alarms while noting that they should not be considered a substitute for barrier fences or safety covers.

- Install automatic or manually operated pool covers. Pool covers can effectively prevent access to pools, spas or hot tubs. At the end of each pool session, cover the pool, even during the height of summer when pools are used daily. The minor task of covering the pool is worth the considerably lower risk of accident or injury if pools remain uncovered.

Summer afternoons at the pool can be made much safer by adhering to a few safety tips.

## ***"We do it right the first time!"***

# **Granados Tire Company, Inc.**

## **Your Neighborhood Tire and Auto Shop**



**Prince Frederick**  
175 W Dares Beach Road  
**410-535-3880**  
M-F 7AM-7PM  
SAT 7AM-4PM

**Lusby**  
25 Cover Point Road  
**410-326-2672**  
M-F 7AM-6PM  
SAT 7AM-4PM

**Owings**  
7605 Meadow Run Lane  
**410-257-2830**  
M-F 7AM-6PM  
SAT 7AM-4PM





# Benjamin Moore® Paints



## BEST PAINT FOR ANY JOB

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!



### Southern Maryland Paints LLC.

23976 POINT LOOKOUT ROAD • LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650

(ACROSS FROM LEONARDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL)

301-475-0448 • [smdpaints.com](http://smdpaints.com)



# The Apple Basket

Transform old heirlooms into new treasures with Annie Sloan Chalk Paint

The world's easiest paint to use. Available exclusively at The Apple Basket

ANNIE SLOAN CHALK PAINT STOCKIST

Find us on: facebook

27056 Mt. Zion Church Rd | Mechanicsville, MD | 301-884-8118

Open Thursday - Sunday

HOME DECOR

ANTIQUES

Mary Lou Troutman | Dixie Belle Paint | Furniture & more!

**Spruce Up For Spring**

**IKNOTTED MERCANTILE**  
At Cecil's Country Store LLC

www.CecilsCountryStore.com

20853 Indian Bridge Rd | California, MD | 301-994-9622

# Defining Hardscape and How to Use It



Hardscaping refers to the elements in a landscape that aren't living, such as paths, walls and fences.

Curb appeal is beneficial in various ways. Curb appeal can make a home more attractive to prospective buyers and give existing homeowners a place they want to come home to. In its study of the worth of outdoor remodeling projects, the National Association of Realtors found standard lawn care and overall landscape upgrades were most appealing to buyers, as well as the most likely to add value to a home.

Although plants, grass and other items can improve curb appeal, homeowners should not overlook hardscaping.

Hardscaping is an industry term that refers to the non-living features of a landscape. These features can include everything from decks to walkways to ornamental boulders. Introducing paths or paver walls to a property helps develop that home's hardscape. Hardscape and soft elements often work in concert to create inspiring landscape designs.

DIY landscape designers can heed certain tips to make the most of hardscape features on their properties.

## Choose materials.

As with many landscaping projects, homeowners must first determine what types of additions they would like on their properties. Common hardscape features include patios, decks, walkways of pavers or bricks, and retaining walls. Hardscape elements can be functional or simply decorative features that add whimsy to the yard.

## Choose a theme.

The right style allows hardscaping and softscaping materials to work together. For example, homeowners may want to give their yards an eastern feel, complete with a koi pond and decorative bridge or trellis. A formal English garden, however, may include manicured paths with stepping stones and ornate topiaries. Mixing too many styles together can take away from the overall appeal.

The pros suggest looking at the overall plan of the design, even if all of the work can't be completed at once. This way the eventual finished project will be cohesive.

## Think about the purpose.

Hardscaping can look good but also serve key purposes. Pebbles or gravel can mitigate trouble areas that don't grow grass or plant life well. Retaining walls hold back soil in yards with sharply inclined hills. Mulch can set perimeters around trees and shrubs, as well as planting beds. Fencing, another form of hardscaping, is essential for establishing property boundaries and adding privacy.

## Consult a professional.

While many hardscaping additions can be handled by novices, large-scale projects, such as patios and decking, can change the grading of the yard. Professionals can map out how to handle drainage issues and meet building codes. In addition, professional installation can ensure hardscaping features last for years to come.

Hardscaping should blend with the nature around it and take its cues from the surrounding environment. This can help softscaping and hardscaping work as one.



# A Lesson In Building A Backyard Retaining Wall

Flat, even landscapes are often coveted in backyards. However, flat backyards are not always so easy to find. Fortunately, varied terrain does not mean that certain landscaping plans are entirely off limits, especially for homeowners willing to build retaining walls.

Retaining walls help turn steep slopes in a yard into terraced focal points. They also can reduce soil erosion in hilly areas and can be used for aesthetic purposes, like raised planters, or to create more usable space within the yard. When an inground pool or pond is cut into a backyard hill, a retaining wall helps keep the remaining portion of that hill from collapsing into the cut-away area.

When contemplating retaining wall projects, a lesson in physics and engineering may be needed. A sturdy and long-lasting retaining wall needs to be built in a way that will take into consideration the force of the soil and the point at which the soil will begin to slide away, advises the experts at The Family Handyman. If these calculations seem beyond the scope of your ability, installation of a retaining wall is a job best left to a professional. If you are ready to forge ahead, these tips can get you started. However, it's important to note the potential benefits of working with others who have already built a retaining wall.

- Safety first: Call to have underground utilities plotted and marked before beginning any excavation.

- Map out your trench and begin to dig. The trench should have a level, compacted base as it will be the foundation for which the retaining wall materials, be they blocks, bricks or wood, sit in. A crushed stone base will help anchor the courses and serve to promote drainage. The Family Handyman says to bury the first course of the retaining wall one-tenth the height of the wall to prevent soil behind it from pushing the bottom out.

- Check for level. When placing blocks or timbers, make sure they are even with the first and periodically check for level as you go, advises the home improvement retailer Lowes®.



- Stagger and set back. The next row of blocks or material should be positioned so that the joints are staggered for blocks, bricks or wood. A masonry blade will be needed to cut the harder materials; a circular saw will cut timber. Also, work against gravity by setting the second course slightly back from the first to help push back against the soil that is trying so hard to push forward. Repeat the process as each level is placed. Many retaining wall products are made with a lip to create this set back.

- Go with the grade. For especially steep slopes, a gradual step-up design may be more secure and more appealing than a very tall retaining wall. Each level of a stepped design should be done like the first.

- Backfill with stone for drainage. Using a layer of stone behind the retaining wall can help successfully direct water away so it will not increase the weight of the soil behind the wall and push against the retaining wall, advises The Home Depot. Retaining walls serve different purposes in a yard. Building such a wall requires planning and careful execution to ensure the job is done correctly.

## CARROLL'S EQUIPMENT

*Parts, Sales, & Service*



**Monday-Friday 8-5 Saturday 8-12 Closed Sunday**  
17723 Three Notch Rd. Dameron, MD  
**301-872-553 [www.CarrollEquipment.com](http://www.CarrollEquipment.com)**





# Essentials for a bathroom remodel

What began as a utilitarian space for personal sanitation has, in modern times, transformed into one of the most coveted rooms in the house. Bathrooms have become a place to relax and unwind, and new bathrooms are on the tops of many homeowners' wishlists.

Bathrooms can be as lavish as budgets allow. Wish lists can include everything from luxurious soaking tubs to rainfall showerheads to chaise lounges to televisions or home entertainment systems contained in the space. Those contemplating their own bathroom renovations may draw inspiration from the following features.

- Hot water recirculation system: Few things can be as disappointing as desiring a hot bath or shower only to find that the hot water tank has been drained. The home remodeling company Normandy Remodeling says that water recirculation systems provide on-demand hot water. In such systems, hot water may continuously run through the pipes or there may be a pump underneath a sink. Either way, one needn't wait for the water to warm up any longer.
- Double undermount sinks: Bathroom time is

at a premium, especially when people must prepare and leave the house together. Rather than jockeying for position around a single sink, dual sinks enable more breathing room and time efficiency. Undermount sinks are easy to clean because there is no lip around where the sink meets the vanity, preventing the accumulation of grime and gunk.

- Glass-free shower: Soap scum and water deposits can form on shower doors, even for homeowners who are diligent with cleaning. A sizable shower prevents water spray and affords the ability to forgo glass doors or curtains, thereby cutting down on cleaning and making the room feel more modern.
- Multihead shower: When redoing the shower, account for various shower heads so that the water can cascade across the body more completely. This provides a spa experience at home.
- Touchless faucets and soap dispensers: These aren't just for public bathrooms anymore. Touchless faucets and dispensers are more sanitary and convenient.
- Separate toilet room: A shared bath almost necessitates this type of set-up. The toilet is housed

inside its own small space and closed away from the rest of the bathroom. It's more private and convenient this way.

- Heated flooring: You need not worry about stepping out of a warm shower onto a cold floor when heated flooring is part of the equation. This option is available in various flooring materials as well. Remodeling a bathroom boils down to certain coveted features that can really set a space apart.



**THE QUALITY DIFFERENCE SINCE 1954**  
20375 Point Lookout Road, Great Mills  
[www.dysonbuildingcenter.com](http://www.dysonbuildingcenter.com)

**SPRING IS HERE**

**TIME TO GET BACK OUTSIDE!  
MAKE YOUR YARD AS UNIQUE AS YOU!**

- ✓ Choose from **7 types of mulch**: Red, Brown Black, Cypress, Pine Bark, Pine Mini Nuggets, and Shredded Hardwood
- ✓ **Jonathon Green** grass seeds and fertilizers found only at Dyson's. **Organic** options available!
- ✓ Great selection of **Miracle Grow** plant food & soil
- ✓ Update or build something new! All stock treated lumber is **ground treated**. **Stronger** lumber treatment, will **last longer** outside.
- ✓ **Garden Seeds**, Bird Feeders & Seed, **Straw Hats**, Mosquito Control, and **more!**

**SCHOENBAUER**  
FURNITURE SERVICE, INC.  
*All-Generation Craftsmanship*

*Repair, Refinishing, Antique Restoration & Reupholstery*

**301-884-3011 • [schoenbauer.com](http://schoenbauer.com)**  
30507 Potomac Way, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622





# Taylor GAS Co.

(301) 862-1000 or 1-855-764-(4GAS) 4427

21434 Great Mills Road Lexington Park, MD 20653

[www.taylorgascompany.com](http://www.taylorgascompany.com)

## **SERVICE**

Taylor Gas Company offers full service installation and repair for a breadth of propane related systems.

## **DEPENDABILITY**

The customer is our top priority here at Taylor Gas. We provide 24 hour emergency service and deliveries to the Southern Maryland area.

## **EXPERIENCE**

Combining extensive training with 68 years of on-the-job experience, you can be sure that you'll be getting the best service available.



# J. COLLINS ENTERPRISE LLC.



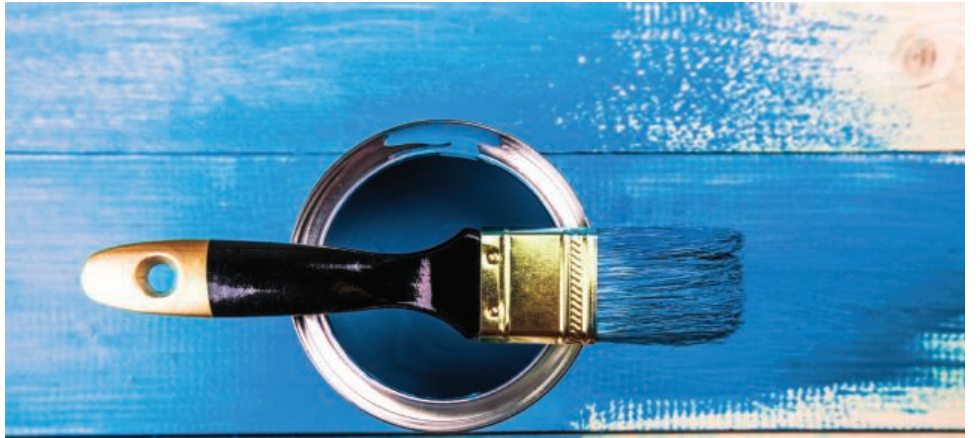
- Landscape
- Lawn
- Hydroseeding
- Lot Clearing
- Patio/Walkway
- Grading
- Site Work
- Excavation



**Free Estimate**  
**CALL US TODAY!**  
**240-808-1151**



## Weekend Home Improvement Ideas



Home improvement projects ramp up when the weather warms up, as homeowners channel the rejuvenating feelings of spring and tackle their home to-do lists. Large-scale renovations can greatly affect a home, but smaller projects can yield impressive results and be completed over the course of a single weekend.

If time is of the essence, these weekend or one-day projects may satisfy homeowners' desires to fix up their homes.

- Create an accent wall. Painting a focal wall in a home can create a serious impact. The bonus is it will not take as long or require as many materials as painting an entire room. Accent walls frequently feature a bold color, so decide on placement and tackle this project in less than a day.
- Install stair runners. Dress up hardwood stairs with decorative carpet runners. Runners come in elongated pieces of carpeting or individual pieces that can be placed on each step. If carpeting doesn't fit with the home's design, painting individual stair treads also can create visual appeal.
- Dress up the entryway. An entryway is a guest's first impression of a home. Many entryways can use a minor overhaul, both inside and outside. Paint the front door a different color so it pops from the curb. Install a new mailbox or decorative house numbers. A new welcome mat can change the look as well. Inside, consider laying a new floor. Resilient vinyl tiles come in many different patterns and can mimic the look of wood, travertine or marble. Installing a floor can take a day or two.
- Install a new faucet. Instantly improve a kitchen or a bathroom with new fixtures. New faucets can provide aesthetic appeal and low-flow faucets can help conserve water.
- Create a gallery on the staircase. Gather and arrange framed photos, artwork or wall accents so that they ascend the wall of a staircase. This creates a designer touch and can dress up an often barren area of wall space.
- Install a fresh light fixture. Improve drab spaces with a little illumination. Better Homes & Gardens suggests replacing an existing fixture with something new and vibrant. If hanging a new fixture is not within one's skill set, free-standing table or floor lamps also can cast a new glow on a space.
- Add molding. Molding can add instant aesthetic appeal to a room. Molding is appropriate near the floor, at the top of walls where they meet the ceiling, or even mid-wall as a chair rail. Some homeowners like to create framed molding on walls in formal living spaces.
- Update kitchen or bathroom hardware. Replacing hardware is a fast and easy project, but one that can have immediate impact. Swap out tired or outdated hardware for newer brushed metals and more impactful shapes and designs.

Home renovations do not need to take weeks or months. Many projects can be completed over the course of a weekend.



# Improve soil quality for a better lawn

A lush, green lawn can vastly improve a home's curb appeal. Thick, healthy grass indicates that homeowners care enough about their properties to invest the time, effort and money to make them beautiful.

According to the landscaping tool company Troy-Bilt, soil fertility is the foundation of healthy lawns. In fact, the quality of the soil is essential whether one is growing acres of grass, potted plants or vegetable garden beds.

No matter which type of soil a homeowner is working with, there are various ways to make it better.

## Remove thatch

Thatch is a tightly knotted layer of leaves, grass roots, stems, and other debris that accumulates between the grass blades and the soil. Too much thatch can hinder the movement of water, air and nutrients into the soil. According to organic fertilizer company Organo-Lawn, thatch often occurs if the production of dead organic material in the lawn exceeds the ability of the microorganisms in the soil to break down that organic matter. A half-inch of thatch is normal. If thatch gets too thick, it will need to be removed. The home improvement resource DIY Network says dethatching can take place in the summer, fall and winter using a thatching rake.

## Aerate

A lawn aerator will create holes in the soil. This can improve drainage and encourage worms and helpful microorganisms that require oxygen to thrive in the soil. The Briggs & Stratton Company says the best time

to aerate a lawn is during the growing season when the grass can heal and fill in any holes, such as spring and fall. Aeration can help develop deeper grass roots for a healthier lawn.

## Test and amend soil

A great lawn has loamy soil, which has a key ratio of clay, silt and sand. Silt is a granular material of a size between sand and clay that originates from quartz and feldspar. It is the most fertile of the three types of soil components. Sand does not retain water, but it helps to create spaces in the soil that permit air to circulate. Clay particles are small and bind together tightly, but clay is naturally nutrient-rich. The home improvement site BobVila.com says loamy soil should have equal parts sand and silt and half as much clay.

If the lawn is not yet established, loamy soil can be created and then the grass seeds planted. For established soil, after removing thatch and aerating, top-dressing the lawn can help. This involves adding a thin layer of soil over the lawn. It can improve the soil without killing the existing turf. Ideally, it should be done in early fall or spring, as this gives the grass time to grow through three to four more mowings before severe heat or cold sets in.

Healthy soil is vital to a lush lawn. It takes a little work, but improving soil can create vibrant, healthy, green grass.



**Griffin's**  
**FlooringAmerica®**

*Not Just a Flooring Store*

where friends send friends

**3 YEARS, NO INTEREST FOR FINANCING HOME IMPROVEMENTS!  
NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY!**

For qualified customers of Griffin's Flooring America's home improvement service. Conditions apply. Ask Griffin's for details.

**At Griffin's Flooring America, we offer a wide range of home improvement services such as**

**BATH & KITCHEN REMODELLING, ROOFING, DECKS, & PAINTING**

**All in addition to the flooring products & service we are famous for!**



**www.GriffinsFlooringAmerica.com** **LEXINGTON PARK • 22806 Gunston Dr., Lexington Park**

**SHOP FROM HOME!!** **WWW.GRIFFINSFLOORINGAMERICA.COM**

**301-862-2700 OR 410-414-9293**



# 7 Ways to Make Guests More Comfortable When Entertaining



Many people enjoy opening their homes to friends and family. Entertaining can include everything from backyard barbecues to hosting formal dinner parties to providing overnight accommodations. While each of those things is different, hosts always want to ensure their guests are as comfortable as possible, regardless of which style of gathering they're hosting.

Hosts can use these seven strategies to help guests feel at home.

1. Consider the details. Does your guest like chocolate covered almonds? Does he or she prefer a certain genre of music? Take note of the specific details that make the guest tick, and then incorporate them into your entertaining plans.

2. Ready the space. Not everyone has a full-fledged guest room, but that doesn't mean you can't create a welcoming and private retreat for guests. Turn a home office into an overnight area with a pull-out couch or even a dressed-up air mattress with high-quality linens.

3. Anticipate guests' needs. Think like a concierge when hosting at home. Have extra toothbrushes, antiperspirant, mouthwash, and a phone charger at the ready. Is your guest a reader? Keep a few selections nearby or a book of

puzzles so they can stay busy during their downtime.

4. Keep dietary needs in mind. Guests have different palates and preferences, but some may have serious food allergies as well. Ask in advance if any guests have food allergies so you can ensure that any meals served are not just delicious, but also safe and healthy.

5. Keep pets at bay. Guests may not be as enamored with pets as their hosts. If you know a guest has an allergy or an aversion to pets, keep the animals away as much as possible.

6. Freshen the home. Take inventory of your home in its current state and make some minor improvements. Add some interior lighting, clean the bathrooms, create some extra seating, and freshen up with some flowers to make for a welcoming environment.

7. Prepare a special meal. Give guests a sensational meal they're not likely to forget. This can mean indulging a little with sourced ingredients, home cooking and a good bottle of wine.

Comfort should always be a priority when readying a home for guests.

# Doyle's

50 YEARS

# Carpet

**Family Owned & Operated  
in Southern Maryland  
Since 1969**

**\$4.99 PER  
SQUARE FT.  
INSTALLED!**  
Price good through April  
19, 2020



**I'm  
Norm Doyle,  
Let my team & I  
install Smart Select  
Collection flooring  
by Mohawk for  
\$4.99 per Sq. Ft.  
(material only \$2.69 sq. ft.)**

**MOHAWK**  
**SMART SELECT  
COLLECTION**  
**WATERPROOF  
KID PROOF  
PET PROOF  
PLANK FLOORING  
15 YEAR  
WARRANTY**



**See Doyle's for any  
type of flooring needs!**

**Doyle's Carpet & Furniture**  
**20041 Point Lookout Rd. • Lexington Park**  
**301-994-3650 • [www.doylesofsomd.com](http://www.doylesofsomd.com)**





# READY TO GO BOLD

*with a new kitchen design?*

## Take out a **Home Equity Line of Credit** *that fits your life*

As you make payments on your mortgage, your home's current market value could be greater than what you actually owe on the mortgage. That dollar difference, known as equity, can be a great asset to you.

Use HELOC options to help cover expenses like home renovation projects, travel costs, college tuition, medical bills and other possibilities.

At Cedar Point, we're here to help you understand your options. Call to speak with one of our Mortgage Service representatives about how we can help you leverage your home's equity.

[www.cpfcu.com](http://www.cpfcu.com)



NMLS# 449975  
Federally Insured by NCUA

301-863-7071 ext. 8408 | [cpfcu@cpfcu.com](mailto:cpfcu@cpfcu.com)

We do Business in Accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act.



# Spring Lawn Equipment Safety Tips

Spring is on its way and homeowners are eager to get outside and spruce up their yards. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing outdoor power equipment, small engine, utility vehicle, golf car and personal transport vehicle manufacturers and suppliers, reminds homeowners to keep safety in mind when working in their outdoor living spaces.

"Before you use a mower, trimmer, blower, power washer, chainsaw, pruner, portable generator or other piece of outdoor power equipment this season, it's important to refresh yourself on handling and safety procedures," said Kris Kiser, President and CEO of OPEI. "We're all eager to get outside and enjoy the living landscape after a long winter, but you should take the time to do basic maintenance to ensure your equipment operates safely for the season and is ready to get the job done."

Here are tips to help:

1. Read your owner's manual. Follow all guidelines for your outdoor power equipment and familiarize yourself with the controls. If you have lost your manual, look it up online (and save a copy on your computer for easy reference in the future).

2. Inspect equipment. Check the air filter, oil level and the gasoline tank. Also check loose belts and missing or damaged parts. Replace any parts needed or take your equipment to a qualified service representative for servicing.

3. If you have gasoline-powered equipment and didn't empty the tank before winter storage, drain the fuel now. You should never leave fuel sitting in the

gas tank of your equipment for more than 30 days. Untreated gasoline (without a fuel stabilizer) left in the system will deteriorate, which may cause starting or running problems or damage the fuel system.

4. Protect your power by only using E10 or less fuel in gasoline-powered outdoor power equipment. With today's higher ethanol content fuels, most manufacturers are recommending a fuel stabilizer be used, especially if you don't use up all the gas purchased right away. Some gas stations may offer 15 percent ethanol (E15) gas or higher ethanol fuel blends, but any fuel containing more than 10 percent ethanol can damage--and is illegal to use in-- small engine equipment not designed for it.

5. Store fuel safely. Label your fuel can with the date of purchase and ethanol content of the fuel. Never put "old" gas in your outdoor power equipment. If you don't know the date of purchase, dispose safely of the fuel in the can and buy fresh fuel. Always store fuel out of the reach of children or pets and in approved containers.

6. For battery-powered equipment, recharge only with the charger specified by the manufacturer. A charger that is suitable for one type of battery pack may create a risk of fire when used with another battery pack. Follow all charging instructions and do not charge the battery pack or tool outside the temperature range specified in the instructions.

7. Store batteries safely. When the battery pack is not in use, keep it away from other metal objects, like paper clips, coins, keys, nails, screws or other small metal objects, that can make a connection from one terminal



to another. Shorting the battery terminals together may cause burns or a fire.

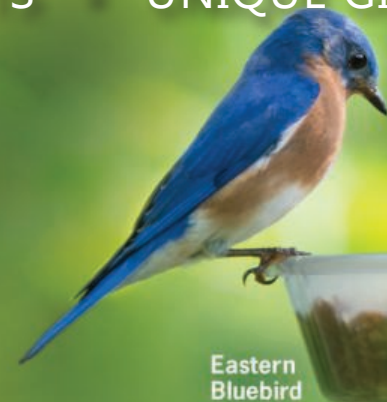
8. Clean your equipment and store it in a dry place. Remove any dirt, oil or grass. Clean equipment will run more efficiently and last longer. Never store your equipment in a place that is damp or wet.

To learn more, go to [www.opei.org](http://www.opei.org). For further information on safe fueling, go to [www.LookBeforeYou-Pump.com](http://www.LookBeforeYou-Pump.com)

BIRD FOOD • FEEDERS • GARDEN ACCENTS • UNIQUE GIFTS

**20% OFF**  
One Regularly-priced item\*

\*Valid in-store at Wild Birds Unlimited of La Plata or Lexington Park. One discount per purchase. Offer not valid on previous purchases, gift cards, optics, DSC memberships or sale items. Offer valid thru 4/15/2020.



Eastern Bluebird

save the birds  
**CERTIFY YOUR YARD**

## La Plata

In the corner next to Target  
301-934-1444

## Lexington Park

In the plaza with Kohl's  
301-863-2473



Wild Birds Unlimited®  
Nature Shop



# Mulching Mistakes To Avoid



Landscape features vary significantly from house to house. Some homeowners may prefer water features on their properties, while others focus on flowers that would be the envy of a botanical garden. Regardless of those preferences, lawn and garden enthusiasts who want to make their properties as idyllic as possible may eventually look to mulch to help them accomplish that goal.

Mulch helps soil retain moisture, which promotes strong, healthy flowers, plants, trees, and shrubs. And because soil beneath mulch retains more moisture than soil that's not protected by mulch, homeowners won't have to spend as much time watering mulched landscapes. That saves time and conserves water, which can be a big benefit in areas prone to drought and/or especially hot summers. Mulch also helps to suppress weed growth, which can ensure all that hard work needed to create an eye-catching garden won't be compromised by the presence of unsightly, thirsty weeds.

Mulching seems like a simple task, and it can be. But that does not mean homeowners cannot make mistakes when mulching. The following are some common mulching mistakes to avoid as lawn and garden season hits full swing.

- Not enough mulch: Mulch is ineffective when spread too thin. It is recommended to apply mulch no less than two inches in depth. Anything less than that will prove ineffective at preventing weed growth and helping the soil retain moisture, and that means you will need to water more often.
- Poorly located mulch: Mulch should not be placed too close to plant stems or tree trunks. When it is, tissue is so wet that it makes for a perfect environment for disease and insect infestation.
- Failing to mulch to the drip line: The drip line of a tree refers to the outermost circumference of the tree's canopy from which water drips onto the ground. It is recommended to mulch to the drip line of a plant or tree, which ensures the plant or tree will get the most out of the mulch. Mulching to the drip line also minimizes competition from the grass, leading to stronger plants and trees.
- Failing to weed before mulching: Weeds should be removed prior to mulching. If they're not, the mulch can provide the same growing environment for weeds that you're trying to create for your plants and trees.

Mulching benefits a landscape in myriad ways, especially when homeowners avoid some common mulching mistakes.

## TRUHOME

ROOFING & RESTORATIONS

Locally Owned and  
Serving Southern Maryland  
for Over 25 Years



**Storm Damage?**  
**Free Property Inspections**  
**We will assess your storm**  
**damage and help you during**  
**the insurance process**

Financing Available

Lifetime Roofing System  
Warranty Available

Restoration Service  
Available

Commercial  
Accounts Welcome



**truhome-exteriors.com**  
**301-373-8111**  
**truman@truhomemail.com**



# Southern Maryland **Online**



**LOCAL CLASSIFIEDS**  
**LOCAL ADVERTISERS**  
**REAL ESTATE**  
**SERVICES**  
**VEHICLES**  
**EMPLOYMENT**  
**CHILD CARE**  
**GENERAL**  
**MERCHANDISE**

**YOUR ONLINE**  
**COMMUNITY FOR**  
**CHARLES, CALVERT,**  
**& ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

**WWW.SOMD.COM**  
**CLASS.SOMD.COM**

## *Houseplants Can Clean Indoor Air*



Gardening is a rewarding hobby that can pay a host of dividends, both for the planet and the people doing the gardening. Healthy plant life can help clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and various air pollutants, while the act of gardening can help gardeners combat stress.

Published in 2011 in the Journal of Health Psychology, a study from researchers in the Netherlands found that gardening promotes relief from acute stress. In the study, two groups of participants were asked to complete a stressful task and then instructed to either read indoors or garden outdoors for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, the latter group had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol and even reported being in a better mood than the group instructed to read indoors.

But gardening does more than just provide gardeners with a reason to spend some time relaxing outdoors in an effort to relieve stress. Gardeners who raise certain plants may be able to bring those benefits with them when going inside as well. According to an article published in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives in October 2011, houseplants can work wonders when it comes to improving overall health, removing toxins from air, soil and water by metabolizing some toxic chemicals and releasing harmless byproducts while sequestering such toxins by incorporating them into plant tissues.

Clean indoor air is important for everyone, but especially so for those people who suffer from respiratory ailments like asthma. In fact, the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology considers indoor air filtration an essential part of any strategy to improve respiratory health. But filtration systems and air purifiers are often not enough, and those who want the air in their homes to be as clean as possible may benefit from introducing certain houseplants into their homes. The following are a handful of plants that can help to improve indoor air quality.

- Aloe vera: Aloe vera might be most often associated with hand creams and hand soaps, but the aloe vera plant, a succulent that even novice gardeners should have no problem growing, can clear indoor air of formaldehyde and benzene, two common byproducts of chemical-based cleaners many people use in their homes.

- Spider plant: Spider plants are resilient, and that makes them great houseplants for busy men and women who tend to be forgetful when caring for their plants. In addition, spider plants are pet-friendly and can be used to combat benzene, carbon dioxide, formaldehyde and xylene.

- English ivy: NASA researchers exploring the possibilities of long-term space habitation found that certain houseplants were more effective at cleaning air inside energy-efficient, nonventilated buildings than others. One such plant was English ivy, which can effectively combat the formaldehyde found in certain household cleaning products.

- Bamboo palm: Bamboo palms also found their way onto NASA's list. Bamboo palm plants thrive indoors, where they are especially effective at filtering out the chemicals benzene and trichloroethylene.

Gardening has been proven to be a soothing hobby that can help gardeners reduce stress. But the health benefits of gardening can extend indoors as well.



# COUNTYWIDE POOL SERVICE

**"We Care About You & Your Pool"**

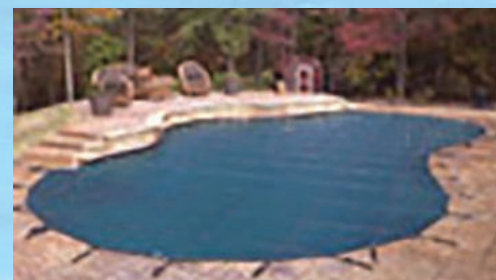


**POOL  
OPENING**

**POOL  
CLOSING**



**Loop-Loc Luxury Liners & Safety Covers, Filters,  
FREE QUOTE on Liner and Cover Installation!  
FREE WATER ANALYSIS!**



**4501 Bonds Place, POMFRET, Md 20675**

**PHONE: 301-934-9524 • 301-870-3445**

**Off 301 - 6 miles from Waldorf**

**Off MD 299 - 7 miles from Indian Head Hwy • 5 miles North of LaPlata**

**2 Convenient  
Locations**

**29050 New Market Village Rd.**

**MECHANICSVILLE, Md 20659**

**PHONE: 301-884-8484**

**On Rt. 5 Across from ADF Bingo**

**IT'S TIME TO ORDER YOUR SPRING  
LINER INSTALLATION!**

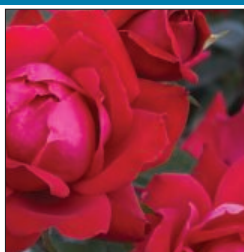


# Signs of Spring

## COME SEE WHAT'S BLOOMING



**4 Pack Pansies**  
Add instant color to  
your garden.  
Full Flat - 48 Plants  
**ONLY \$24<sup>88</sup>**



**Early Bird Roses**  
Mix or Match-Includes  
Knockout & Drift Roses  
**BUY 3 GET  
4TH FREE**



**Purple Plum**  
7 gal 6-7' size  
**ONLY \$88<sup>88</sup>**



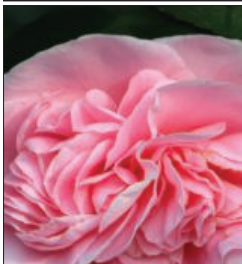
**Flowering Cherry**  
Choose from Weeping &  
Kwanzan varieties.  
**SAVE 25% OFF**  
When you buy  
2 or more



**Fruit Tree Collection**  
Many varieties to  
choose from  
**BUY 3 GET  
4TH FREE**



**Redbud**  
SPECIAL 7 Gal Size  
**ONLY \$88<sup>88</sup>**



**Spring Blooming  
Camellias**  
Red, White or Pink  
**ONLY \$34<sup>88</sup> EA.**



**1 Qt. Perennials**  
Choose from many early  
season perennials.  
**SPECIAL  
5 FOR \$25<sup>00</sup>**

## SPRING SAVINGS FROM THE GARDEN SHOP



**GreenView  
Crabgrass Preventer  
plus  
Lawn  
Food**  
5,000  
sq. ft. bag **ONLY \$24<sup>88</sup>**  
15,000  
sq. ft. bag **ONLY \$59<sup>88</sup>**



**MoleMax**  
10 lb. bag  
reg. \$24.99  
**ONLY \$19<sup>88</sup>**



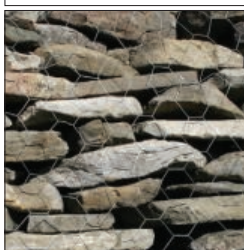
**Holly-tone  
& Plant-tone**  
18 lb. bag **ONLY \$18<sup>88</sup>**  
**Best  
Value!  
50 lb. bags \$37<sup>88</sup>**



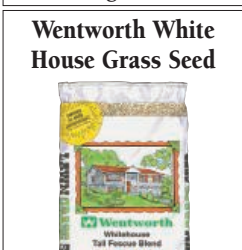
**Black Oil Sunflower**  
25 lb. bag **ONLY \$18<sup>88</sup>**  
50 lb. bag **ONLY \$34<sup>88</sup>**



**Premium Mulch**  
3 cu. ft. bags  
**10 Bags For \$37<sup>50</sup>**  
**\$3<sup>50</sup> or  
ea. when You  
Buy 45 Bags or More.**



**Colonial Gray Stone**  
Full Pallets  
**ONLY \$298<sup>88</sup> EA.**  
When you buy  
2 or more pallets



**Wentworth White  
House Grass Seed**  
25 lb. bag **ONLY \$59<sup>88</sup>**  
50 lb. bags **ONLY \$119<sup>88</sup>**



**Bonide  
All Season Oil**  
1 qt bottle  
reg \$14.99  
**ONLY \$13<sup>88</sup>**

# ESCAPE

## TO YOUR OWN BACKYARD THIS SPRING



**PATIOS**



**FIREPITS**



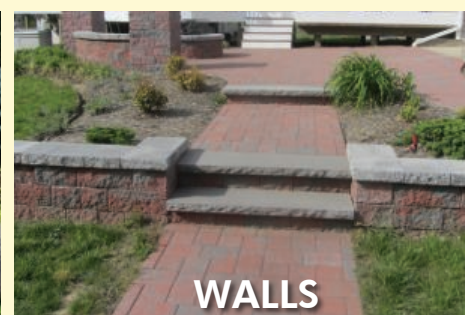
**PERGOLA'S**



**WALKWAYS**



**NATURAL STONE  
& BOULDERS**



**WALLS**

## PROFESSIONAL DESIGN

**To Schedule an Appointment**

**Call: 301-373-9245 • 800-451-1427**

**Or visit [WentworthNursery.com/Landscape](http://WentworthNursery.com/Landscape)**

**ASK US ABOUT OUR FLEXIBLE PAYMENT PLAN**

**NOW SCHEDULING 2020 LAWN CARE PROGRAMS**



**LEAVE YOUR  
LAWN CARE & YARD WORK  
TO US**

**CALL OR SIGN UP ON LINE TODAY FOR AN ESTIMATE.  
800-451-1427 OR [WentworthNursery.com/Landscape](http://WentworthNursery.com/Landscape)  
SPRING CLEAN-UPS • RE-MULCHING • PRUNING**



Prices Good Thru March 31st 2020

**Wentworth Nursery**

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



**CHARLOTTE HALL**  
30315 Three Notch Rd.  
Charlotte Hall 20622  
301-884-5292  
800-558-5292

**PRINCE FREDERICK**  
1700 Solomon's Island Rd.  
Prince Frederick 20678  
410-535-3664  
866-535-3664



**OAKVILLE**  
41170 Oakville Road  
Mechanicsville  
301-373-9245  
800-451-1427