



Spring HOME & GARDEN

A Special Supplement to

MailMax

Your Good News Paper

APRIL 2023

How to handle a lengthy renovation

The global pandemic reignited people's passions for home renovations, as they directed dollars that would normally have been spent elsewhere into the places where they were now spending the most time — their homes. According to the 10th annual Houzz & Home survey of more than 70,000 respondents in the United States, higher-budget projects cost around \$85,000 or more in 2020, compared with \$80,000 in the two years prior. Kitchen projects were the most popular among renovating homeowners.

Even though many COVID-19-related restrictions have lifted and life has largely returned to regular programming, renovations remain a popular investment. Homeowners embarking on home renovation projects understand that a certain measure of upheaval is to be expected, but some may not fully anticipate the impact that renovations have on daily life. The following are some tips for making it through a lengthy renovation.

- Discuss the timeline with contractors. It may be easier to make a plan for how much

life will be disrupted if you have an idea of how long the renovation will be (if everything goes according to plan). Sit down with contractors and have them spell out the minutiae of the project so you'll be able to anticipate what's going on day-to-day.

- Start at the right time. Some contractors may say they can fit your project into their schedules in between other jobs. While this may seem convenient and timely, your work may be put on hold if there are delays with the other job or jobs. Instead, it may be better to hold off until the contractors can devote the bulk of their attention to your renovation.

- Recreate commonly used spaces elsewhere. A kitchen or a bathroom remodel often requires giving up spaces that are used throughout a typical day. Unless you have a spare full bathroom or kitchen, you'll need to make due. Set a microwave, tabletop electric burner and a coffee pot on a folding table in the garage or utility room. Rent or purchase a small refrigerator where you can store a few necessities. Ask your contractor to set up a makeshift outdoor shower so you have a place to get clean when the bathroom is under construction.

- Pack up and cover. Remodeling one room may cause a trickle down effect on other areas. Dust from drywall sanding can infiltrate many rooms in the home. Pack and label boxes with items not immediately needed and store them in another area. Cover most things so a film of dust won't form on them.

- Adjust your schedule. Sleeping in will be a thing of the past for the duration of the renovation, as may be working from a home office. Try to get out of the work zone as much as possible for new scenery and respites from the noises and smells.

- Ease up on cleaning standards. It's challenging to keep a home clean during a renovation. Relax standards and expect a mess for some time. Explain to guests what they'll find if they drop by.

Renovations can disrupt life, but often are well worth the sacrifices homeowners must make to see them through to completion.



Five Star
Heating & Air Conditioning
Carrier
Turn to the experts

ASK ABOUT OUR CARRIER COMPLETE HEATING AND AIR SYSTEM INSTALLED FOR:

as low as **\$75** a month*
*With credit approval
10 year warranty on parts & 3 years labor.

Call (269) 428-0004
Fivestarheat.com f i



BEAUTIFUL FIREPLACES, STOVES & INSERTS

Napoleon fireplaces, stoves and inserts are built to provide high quality, lifetime use and keep you warm and safe even if the power goes out!

- Gas Logs
- Gas Direct Vent
- Wood Burning Inserts
- Gas Linear Units
- Electric Linear Units



269-888-2211



8324 Shaver Road • Portage, MI • HearthAndHome-Portage.com



Southwest Michigan 269-556-0495



Our New Roofs Cut Your Long Term Roofing Costs by 50%

Serving Southwest Michigan Since 1975

50 YEAR LABOR & MATERIAL WARRANTY

Our Leakproof Installation System:

- Saves Energy – Cuts Utility Bills
- Reduces Homeowners Insurance Premiums
(130 mph Wind Warranty -
Class 4 Hail Resistant Shingles)
- 7,000 Satisfied Customers



GutterToppers.com

ELIMINATE GUTTER CLEANING FOREVER!

- Gutter Topper ends the fear & danger of climbing dangerous ladders to clean your gutters!
- Gutter Topper gutter covers are customized at your home to adjust to your roofs pitch, style of shingles and gutters including 13 colors to match your roof and gutter system
- Gutter Topper is the ONLY gutter protection system to pass independent testing for wind, rain, debris infiltration, weight, snow loads and be rated the #1 solid metal gutter cover on the market today!

MADE IN THE USA!

WILL NOT VOID YOUR SHINGLE WARRANTY

**Call us today for your FREE ESTIMATE
269-556-0495**

How to prepare soil for spring planting

Spring is a season of rejuvenation, and perhaps nowhere is that rebirth more noticeable than in the yard. Each spring, grass begins to grow again as inviting landscapes beckon people outdoors.

Extra sunlight and rising temperatures make spring a great time to plant flowers, grasses and trees. To ensure successful planting, homeowners must take steps to prepare the soil. Healthy soil can provide the ideal conditions for roots to take hold, helping plants establish themselves before potentially

harsh summer conditions arrive. Preparing soil might seem like an extensive job, but a simple approach may be all that's necessary to create conditions that promote plant growth this spring.

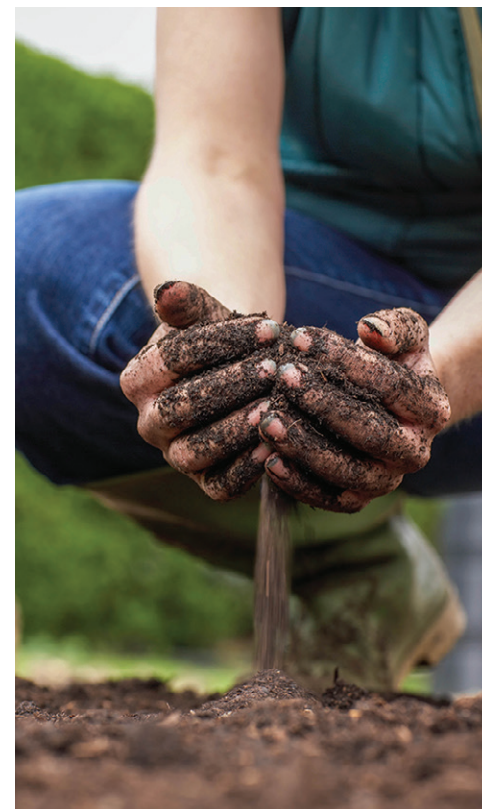
- Clean up the previous months' mess. Whether homeowners live in regions marked by year-round warmth or places where winter typically features heavy snowfall, it's a good idea to clean up an area prior to spring planting. Fallen leaves, rocks, grass clippings, and other debris can contribute to compacted

soil that makes it hard for plants to establish strong, healthy root systems. Clear away any debris prior to planting before taking the next step in your soil preparation routine.

- Loosen the soil. Once debris has been cleared away, loosen the soil. Depending on the size of the area where you'll be planting, you may need to invest in tools like a shovel, spade, spading fork, and/or a lawn edger. If you're planting in a small area, such as a deck planter box that still has soil from last year's planting inside it, you can either clean the box and replace the soil entirely or dig around with a handheld trowel, cultivator and/or weeder. It's important to loosen all of the soil around where you will ultimately plant prior to planting to ensure water can reach the roots and help them establish themselves once planting is completed.

- Test and, if necessary, amend the soil. A simple pH test can help determine the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. This is an important step as soil that is too acidic or alkaline can decrease the availability of nutrients the plants will need to thrive. In addition to conducting a pH test, which can be purchased at little cost at a local home improvement store, homeowners can contact their local Cooperative Extension Service to test their soil quality. These tests will reveal soil pH, but also can shed light on the texture of the soil and other components. Once the test is conducted, the local Coop Extension Service may recommend amendments to improve the nutritional quality of the soil so new plants can thrive.

Soil conditions go a long way toward determining if new plants will thrive. Preparing the soil prior to spring planting can ensure a successful season.



Book Now and Get Last Year's Prices!
Residential & Commercial • Licensed & Insured

Veteran Owned & Operated – 10% Veteran's Discount

WEE

BEE

**DUNN
ROOFING**

Harry Dunn 269-470-0607
weebedunnroofing.com

**In Stock Carpet Save
40% up to 70% Off
Regular Retail Price**

**Full Service
Installations -
Short Lead Times**

**12 Months 0%
Financing Available**
(based on credit approval)



CARPET MART
More Floors...More Choices

2500 M-139 • Benton Harbor MI
269-925-7079 • www.CarpetMartMi.com
Monday-Thursday 9:00 - 6:00
Friday 9:00 - 5:00 • Saturday 10:00 - 2:00



DEFINE

Your Space

Priebe's
Creative Woodworking

CABINETS & SURFACE
SOLUTIONS

269.926.2469

WWW.PRIEBESWOODWORKING.COM

What to know about installing a pool at home

Summer is a season of relaxation when school is not in session, vacation season is in full swing and people everywhere are getting outside and soaking up the summer sun. It's hard to imagine how that can get any better. But it can for people thinking of installing a pool in their backyard.

Pools definitely have a wow factor that's hard to replicate. Homeowners considering pool installation can take note of these factors as they try to decide if a pool is right for them.

Cost

The cost to install a pool depends on a host of factors, including which type of pool homeowners are considering and where they live. According to the online home improvement resource Angi (formerly Angie's list), the average cost to install an above ground pool in the United States in 2022 was \$3,322, while the average inground pool installation in the same year was \$55,000. That's quite a disparity in price, and homeowners should know that the average cost of each project is

higher in certain regions and under certain circumstances. Potential ancillary costs, such as excavation and plumbing relocation, will add to the final cost of the project. The erection of fencing around the pool if no fencing currently surrounds the area where the pool will be located also will add to the final cost.

Pool type

As noted, above ground pools, on average, require a considerably smaller financial investment than inground pools. This is an important consideration, but which option may ultimately prove the better investment is worth researching. Homeowners can speak with a local real estate professional to determine if an inground pool or above ground might yield a significantly higher return at resale. If an inground pool is likely to increase property value by a substantial amount, it could be well worth the extra upfront costs.

Maintenance

Pools are undeniably fun, but they still require maintenance. The experts at Better Homes & Gardens note that vinyl liners in pools last approximately six to 10 years, while painted concrete may require a fresh coat of paint every five years. Plaster finishes may last as long as 15 years, while cement-coated products can last a lifetime. Pools also need periodic cleaning, and chemicals to keep the pool operating safely and cleanly will require an additional, if somewhat minimal, financial investment. Homeowners investing in a new pool should be aware of the maintenance required to keep the pool clean and be willing

to do that maintenance. And though homeowners typically can open and close pools on their own, it's also possible to hire someone to do it for a relatively small fee each season.

Location

A survey of the land in a yard can reveal how smoothly a pool installation may or may not go. Though it's possible to install a pool in just about any yard, some spaces might require greater preparation and pre-installation effort than others. Sloped backyards, for example, may require the services of a landscape architect to prepare the space, which can extend the time it takes to complete the project and add the overall cost.

These are just some of the factors that merit consideration when mulling a pool installation. A homeowners' best resource might be a local pool company who can visit a home, provide an estimate and point out any challenges that may arise during the install.



Serving S.W. Michigan Since 1970

HASS ROOFING

Residential • Commercial • Industrial
Roofing Repairs & Storm Damage
Shingles • Flat Roofs • Silicone Roof Coatings

CALL US TODAY FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATE
269-982-0908

www.hassroofing.com • ben.hass24@gmail.com

NOW'S THE TIME TO SCHEDULE YOUR ROOFING PROJECT!

We Are Southwest Michigan's Largest Producer of Quality Landscaping Soil Mixes - Pick Up or Delivery



465 West Glenlord Road • St. Joseph • 269-428-0200

Our knowledgeable staff can help you with that project from start to finish!

- Landscaping Topsoil
- Grass Seed
- 7 Types of Mulch
- Flagstone
- Landscaping Stone
- Play Sand
- Lawn Edging
(Plastic, Steel, Aluminum)

We feature **ferti-lome** **Products!**

- Lawn Food Plus Iron
- Gardener's Special
 - Weed-Out
- Crabgrass Preventer
- Organic Plant Food
- 4-Step Programs Available



HARDWOOD BLEND MULCH
EVERYDAY-ALL YEAR ROUND PRICING
ONLY \$22.00 PER CUBIC YARD!

Retaining Blocks and Pavers by:



Hardwood Blend & Organic Topsoil Produced On-Site Daily

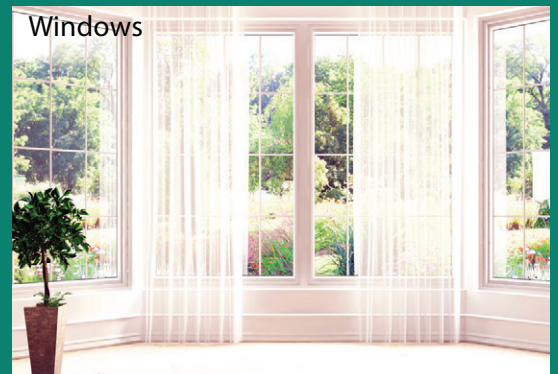
Love the Home You're In

With a New Kitchen, Bath or Windows,
and Get Home Show Pricing Now Through June 2023!

Budget-Friendly
Kitchen Restyling
and Refacing



Windows



Baths



FREE Audit
& Seal



Say **YES SIR** to Your Spring Home Improvement Projects
and Get Budget-Friendly Home Show Deals from the Comfort of Your Own Home.

— LIMITED-TIME COUPON SPECIAL —

Windows: \$200 Off Your Quote • Kitchens & Baths: 60% Off Labor
PLUS, Free Energy Efficiency Audit & Seal With Every Remodel!

HURRY! Offer Ends June 30, 2023.



FREE IN-HOME 3D DESIGN & QUOTE!

(269) 218-1373

*The Company Your Neighbors Trust, Since 1980.
Serving Southwest Michigan and Northern Indiana.*



www.sirhome.com

How to make outdoor living spaces more comfortable

Private backyards are now go-to spaces for recreation and entertainment and great places to recharge the body and mind.

One ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was more time spent outdoors, even if it was predominantly on one's own property. OnePoll, in conjunction with the lawn care company TruGreen, surveyed 2,000 American homeowners and found participants spent 14 hours outside every week in 2021, which was three hours more than prior to the pandemic. In addition, respondents admitted that time spent outdoors was therapeutic.

A separate survey conducted for the International Casual Furnishings Association found that people now spend more time relaxing, gardening, exercising, dining, and entertaining outside than in years past. Though COVID-19 may no longer dominate headlines, the desire to enjoy outdoor spaces has not waned.

While enjoying outdoor living areas, homeowners can do all they can to make these spaces comfortable and welcoming. The following are some good starting points.

Get all lit up

Outdoor spaces can be enjoyed no matter the hour when there is ample lighting. That could be why the International Casual Furnishings Association reports those who plan to renovate their outdoor spaces list outdoor lighting as a priority. Outdoor lighting not only sheds light on entertaining spaces, but also makes spaces safer and more secure.

Increase privacy

No matter how friendly homeowners are with their neighbors, there comes a time when privacy is paramount. Fencing, whether it is wood or vinyl, or even a natural fence made from closely planted hedges, can ensure residents feel comfortable venturing outdoors to swim, take a cat nap or even star gaze in private.

Address the elements

Homeowners should note the direction their backyard faces and the typical daily conditions of the space. For example, a yard that faces southwest may get plenty of strong sun during the day, requiring the addition of shade trees, covered patios or arbors to cut down on the glare and heat. If the yard is often hit by winds, trees or bushes planted strategically as windbreaks can help.

Sit comfortably

High-quality comfortable seating increases the likelihood that homeowners will want to stay awhile in their outdoor spaces. A deep seating set complete with plush chairs, outdoor sofa or love seat and chaise lounge chairs gives people more opportunity to sit and stay awhile.

Take a dip

A pool can be the perfect gathering spot on a warm day, while a spa/hot tub can bridge the gap to cooler weather. According to the Family Handyman, soaking in hot tubs can relax tired muscles after a long day, loosen up stiff joints, improve cardiovascular health, and reduce the time it takes to fall asleep.

Bite back at bugs

Homeowners may want to consider using a professional exterminator to get rid of ticks, mosquitoes and other nuisance insects from outdoor spaces.

As people spend more time enjoying their properties, they can consider the many ways to make outdoor living spaces more comfortable.



BLANKENSHIP'S
LANDSCAPING • HARDSCAPING • LAWN CARE

LAWNCARE
LANDSCAPING
EXCAVATING
SNOW PLOWING
DEMOLITION
RETAINING WALLS



269-357-4078
SERVING SOUTHWEST MI



SALLY'S GREENHOUSE

OPENING MAY 1ST!
"Spring" up your home with our low prices!

Hours:
Mon.-Thurs. 9am-6pm
Fri.-Sat. 9am-5pm
Sun. 12pm-5pm

5748 M-140 | Eau Claire, MI 49111




HAZEN
LAWN CARE
269-252-4399
SERVING SOUTHWEST MI
& Snow Plowing

"We Don't Cut Corners, We Mow Them"

- Residential & Commercial
- Lawn Mowing
- Fertilizer & Weed Control

To Learn more visit
HAZENLAWNCARE.COM



HAZEN
MATERIAL
HAULING INC

Serving Southwest Michigan for all of your
HAULING NEEDS!
The perfect choice for small or large loads.

- Crushed Asphalt and Concrete • Sand • Gravel

(269) 208-6794

Our Purpose: Providing customers with the Best Quality Service through our dedication to complete customer satisfaction!

TORO.

**SPRING
SALES**
— EVENT —



\$30 OFF

**SELECT RECYCLER
LAWN MOWERS**



UP TO
\$300 OFF

SELECT ZERO TURN MOWERS



\$20 OFF

**SELECT 60V MAX BATTERY
HANDHELD YARD TOOLS**

Offer valid April 1 - May 31, 2023. Battery manufacturer rating - 60V maximum & 54V typical usage.
Actual voltage varies with load. Offers available at select retailers; restrictions apply.
See retailers for details. Offer valid in US only.

Since 1974

MID-COUNTY
Lawn & Garden

Service after the sale.

\$750 OFF certain models of 2000, 3000, 4000, 5000,
and 6000 series machines

\$500 OFF ALL Grandstand (including MULTI FORCE)

\$300 OFF TD Timecutter/Titan Blower Trimmer

\$250 OFF MULTI FORCE attachments

\$200 OFF Turfmaster HDX

Transportation Available

429-7500 • 3959 M-139, St. Joseph (at Scottdale) • MidCountyLawnGarden.com

INSURANCE
FJF
SINCE 1943
Auto-Owners
 INSURANCE
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS

Protect Your World
Auto • Home • Business • Life
F. JOSEPH FLAUGH INSURANCE AGENCY
 1355 E. NAPIER AVE. BENTON HARBOR
 269-925-0611
WWW.FLAUGH.COM
 Monday- Friday: 8:30am – 5:00pm • Saturday & Sunday: Closed



FENCE MASTERS

Premium Fence Installation & Custom Design
 When it comes to fencing, we do it all!

269-209-9307
www.fencemastersmi.com



"We bring people and nature together"

We'll work with you to create a landscape design that you love and that fits your yard.

We offer the following services:

- Tree, Shrub, Flower and Lawn Installation
- Landscape Lighting • Water Features
- Patios and Outdoor Living Area, Fire Pits, Outdoor Kitchens, Putting Greens
- Retaining Walls



SECOND NATURE GARDENS

Call us today to schedule your **FREE** initial consultation! **269.429.0886**

info@secondnaturegardens.net • www.secondnaturegardens.net

Spring cleaning tips and tricks

Spring is a time of year when change is in the air. Trees are budding, plants are flowering, and homes laden with dark or heavy fabrics and clutter could use some lightening up.

Spring cleaning projects are popular this time of year as residents take inventory of their living spaces and aim to declutter, clean and increase efficiency. Some people find the prospect of getting organized overwhelming. Here are some tips that can help anyone master spring cleaning.

- Create a plan. Make a checklist and establish a cleaning plan of attack. Focus on areas that are not regularly cleaned, as they probably need a little attention.
- Assemble your cleaning kit. Spring cleaning can be slowed down considerably if you don't have all of your equipment at the ready. Items to have on hand include an all-purpose cleaner, concentrated cleaner, microfiber cloths, paper towels, mop, vacuum, dusters, and a squeegee. Adjust your equipment based on the task at hand.
- Curate your cleaning playlist. Create a playlist with songs that will get you moving and motivated to clean.
- Work from top to bottom. Work efficiently by cleaning shelves, ceiling fans and other elevated items first, as dust and debris will trickle down and need to be cleaned next.
- Purchase or rent a carpet cleaner.

According to the experts at Clean That Up, carpets help filter indoor air by trapping debris and allergens. By deep cleaning carpets,



homeowners can improve the indoor air quality of their homes. Use a carpet cleaner on a warm, dry day so that windows can be opened and cross breezes will help dry the damp rug.

- Clean windows. Wash windows inside and out and utilize their screens to help brighten indoors spaces.
- Deep clean the kitchen. Clean out and disinfect the refrigerator by wiping it down with warm water and baking soda or a vinegar-and-water solution. While in the kitchen, set the oven to the self-clean function so it becomes cleaner as well.

Homeowners also can focus on cleaning curtains (including shower curtains), steam-cleaning upholstery, removing clutter from closets, cleaning out the dryer vent and duct tubing, wiping inside kitchen drawers, and vacuuming under beds and other furniture.

Spring cleaning can bring the revitalizing nature of this beloved time of year into your home.

GET THAT FRESH SPRING LOOK FOR YOUR HOME!




Helping the Benton Harbor Area with it's roofing and gutter needs! After a harsh winter, get a clean spring look going!

MIGHTY DOG ROOFING OF BENTON HARBOR

269-222-7392

MIGHTYDOGROOFING.COM/BENTON-HARBOR-MICHIGAN



LEARN MORE

FREE
 inspections
 and
 estimates
5%
 discounts
 to veterans

Independently owned and operated. Services may not be available in all areas.
 © 2023 Mighty Dog Roofing®. All rights reserved.

6 signs you may need a new HVAC system

There's no place like home, especially when that home is a comfortable and safe haven. One of the ways residents find comfort in their homes is by maintaining the right indoor temperatures, which fluctuate along with the seasons. While there is much to be said about opening windows and doors to let Mother Nature do her thing, indoor comfort is often maintained with an HVAC system.

HVAC stands for heating, ventilation and air conditioning. It can include heat pumps, furnaces and air conditioning units. It is an

automated system that works by adjusting a thermostat to regulate air temperature, and sometimes humidity, in the home. According to Enviguard, a commercial contracting provider, HVAC systems also may be used to improve indoor air quality through filtration and oxygen replacement.

As with any mechanical device, an HVAC system has a life span that must be considered. Should any of the following conditions be present, it is likely time to consult with an HVAC technician to see if repairs or replacement of the entire system is warranted.

1. Age

If the HVAC system is more than 10 years old, it could be time to begin budgeting for a new unit. Many modern, efficient systems may last 12 to 14 years with routine maintenance. But it's good to keep an HVAC system's age in mind so you can readily recognize when it might start to fail.

2. Longer or constant running times

An efficient, properly working system will quickly heat or cool the home and then turn off. A system that is turning on repeatedly or having to run for awhile before the set temperature is reached could be nearing the end of its utility.

3. Strange noises

Groaning, banging or loud humming noises should be addressed. While these noises may indicate that certain components need maintenance or replacement, they also could be symptoms of age and a system nearing failure.

4. Frequent repair visits

Knowing the HVAC company's repair person by name is a sign that the system has required too much work in recent months. Repeated issues and repairs are probably signs that it's time to consider a system replacement.

5. Higher bills

Sticker shock when receiving electricity or gas bills likely mean the HVAC system isn't working efficiently and might need to be replaced.

6. Poor indoor air quality

If the home is dusty or humid or even if allergies seem to have cropped up out of nowhere, this could indicate a poorly functioning HVAC system.

HVAC systems are vital to keeping indoor environments comfortable and safe. Such systems may exhibit certain signs that indicate they need to be replaced.



Serving the community for 20 Yrs

- Spring Clean Up
- Lawn Care & Mowing
- Decks, Sheds & Fences
- Landscaping
- Home Improvements

WWJD LAWN CARE

Call Garry - 269-449-4062

"We're not just ANY Lawn Care Service"

Dependable, Professional, Reliable Service & Prices

ARMSTRONG
FAB & WELD

You dream it, we weld it.

No project too small.

Commercial. Residential. Portable.

AWS CERTIFIED AND INSURED

SERVING SW MI • 269-930-1148

ONE TRUSTED CALL, MULTIPLE HOME SERVICES



"Best service we have ever had for a home repair." – Steve J.



HVAC



PLUMBING



ELECTRICAL



BATHROOMS

\$49
AC check-up



\$500 off
a new AC, tub, shower,
or water heater



theBOSSservices.com

269-281-2230

Offers expire April 30th, 2023

Turn a backyard into your own relaxing respite

Backyards have long been places to unwind and enjoy some peace and quiet surrounded by nature.

Thanks in part to financial instability brought on by rising inflation and measures to tame it, homeowners may decide to forgo traditional vacations in favor of staying home this season. There's no better time to invest in a home, particularly outdoor spaces, to make them welcoming respites. The following are some ways to accomplish that goal.

Incorporate a water feature

The sound of trickling or bubbling water can make surroundings more serene. A low-maintenance water feature can help to create a calming ambiance. A fountain that does not require a collection pond will reduce the chance it becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Locating the fountain out of the sun can keep algae growth at a minimum.

Add lights for ambiance

Outdoor lighting options include professionally installed, hardwired lights on the

home itself or accent lighting that draws attention to trees or architectural structures on the property. It also may include twinkling lights, which some consider a must-have for any outdoor retreat. Lights come in all types and price points. Hang them on porches, pergolas or cement posts inside decorative planters and then string lights between the posts. This way the lighting can be moved around as desired.

Lounging spots

A comfortable outdoor loveseat or chairs may be a focal point of the yard, but build in some additional cozy spots specifically for lounging around. Nestle a hammock in a quiet corner of the yard, or enhance a chaise lounge with throw pillows and a large umbrella for napping poolside.

Add lushness with plants

Plants can transform any space. Use a combination of planted varieties around the yard, then enhance certain areas with potted plants as needed. Plants can make an

area more warm and inviting, plus they give butterflies, bees and hummingbirds places to stop by and visit. Consider the help of a professional landscaper to bring a vision of a lush, plant-filled retreat to life.


Blend in the pool or spa

With some unique landscape architecture, the pool or hot tub can be built right into the landscape, making it a cohesive part of the design. This can make the yard seem even more like an oasis, especially when the pool is flanked by a waterfall or bubbling fountain.

Add some music

Thanks to wireless speakers that rely on Bluetooth technology, it's easy to have music piped right into the backyard. Set up a wireless speaker in an inconspicuous spot, such as inside a planter or in the rafters of a gazebo.

Turning a backyard into an oasis can provide the respite many people look for on their properties.



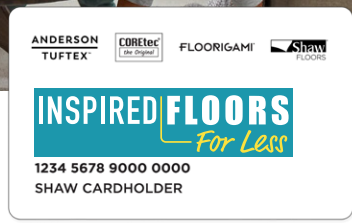
**Family Owned
Proudly Serving
SW Michigan
& Northern Indiana**

**FREE
ROOF
INSPECTION**

ROOF INSPECTION **ROOF REPLACEMENT** **ROOF REPAIR**

Giving Everyone a Great Roofing Experience Start to Finish

616-766-3949 • roofwiz.com • info@roofwiz.com



Get the flooring you want today.
And the freedom to pay for it over time.*

Take advantage of special financing offers, with convenient payment options, and upgrade to the floors you really want.

*Subject to credit approval. Ask for details.

INSPIRED FLOORS
For Less

839 Ferguson Dr.,
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
(269) 926-7367
www.floorstoresofmichigan.com

Hours:
Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm
Saturday 10am-2pm

Popular trends in home exteriors



Certain homes have an undeniable wow factor. That instant appeal tends to be noticeable the moment visitors pull up to the curb, and it might be a byproduct of homeowners' willingness to embrace the latest exterior design trends.

Trends come and go, but recognition of the current fashions can help homeowners create that highly sought-after wow factor. The following are some recent trends in home exteriors that have helped homeowners set their properties apart.

Wood

Natural wood has undeniable appeal, and it hasn't only found newfound devotion among home interior decorators. Natural wood garage doors create a sense of warmth and can set a home apart from others with steel doors, which tend to be the most popular garage door material. In addition to the

garage door, natural wood entry doors and wood decks are popular ways to impart this classical, warm look to a home's exterior.

Painted brick

Like natural wood, brick is a traditional material that's both sturdy and classical. But homeowners can add character to brick with a coat of paint, which has become a popular trend in recent years. Light tones tend to be most popular when painting bricks. The experts at Better Homes & Gardens note that this could prove a long-term commitment if homeowners so desire, as a properly painted brick exterior could last as long as 20 years.

Hardscaping

Hardscaping isn't a new trend, but it has been trending in recent years. Hardscaping is an umbrella term that includes everything from outdoor living rooms to incorporating natural stone into a landscape. Outdoor living

rooms are one hardscaping trend that has become increasingly popular of late. These spaces serve as an extension of indoor living spaces. The home improvement experts at HGTV note that recently homeowners have looked to create covered outdoor rooms that can be enjoyed more frequently than patios or decks that are not protected from the elements.

Outdoor lighting

It makes sense that individuals looking to spend more time enjoying their properties

outdoors would want more lighting outside. Ambient outdoor lighting can be utilized throughout a property. Such lighting can light up walkways and driveways and be used to light up landscaping features like trees and gardens.

Home design trends tend to be fickle. But recognition of the current trends in exterior home design can set homes apart and turn properties into awe-inspiring places to enjoy the great outdoors.

**SPRING IS
HERE!**



CALL MIKE AT 269.621.4543

www.CountyLineNurseries.net



Need Professional Landscape Design & Installation?

CONTACT COUNTY LINE NURSERIES TODAY

Competitive pricing, cutting out the middleman.

36-year grower in Hartford Twp,
specializing in high quality potted
trees & field grown trees & shrubs.

Irrigation designs & installation
using the best products and equipment.

**BUILDERS, CONTRACTORS
& HOMEOWNERS!**

ADAMS
& Son, Inc.
Heating & Cooling

HAS ADDED HEAT & GLO FIREPLACES TO OUR MENU!

We just added a brand-new fireplace showroom inside ADAMS & Son, Inc. Heating & Cooling called *Custom Flames* featuring 11 working fireplace options. In addition to Heating, Cooling, & Refrigeration we now sell, install, & service traditional gas fireplaces, gas inserts, electronic fireplaces, fire pits & custom fire features.

LET US CUSTOMIZE YOUR FLAMES!

If you can dream it, we can build it!

Custom Flames

ADAMS & Son Heating & Cooling Showroom

1465 E. Main St. Benton Harbor • CALL TODAY (269) 927-3766 • www.adamsandsoninc.com



A-1
8rown's
Locksmiths
&
Hardware
 2912 Niles Avenue, St. Joseph • 269-983-0569
 Open Mon-Fri 9-5:30 • Most Sat 9:30-1

We Have SAFES!



Next Level Junk Removal LLC
 You Call We Haul!

- Roll Off Dumpsters
- House Clean Outs
- Hoarder House Clean Outs
- Construction Debris Removal
- Spa and Shed Removal
- Garage and Attic Clean Outs
- Furniture Removal
- Appliance Removal

FREE ESTIMATES
269-369-2733
269-235-0918



How to make a backyard safe for dogs

Dogs, particularly puppies, can be full of boundless energy. Channeling that energy into exercise with long walks or play sessions can help stem dogs' propensity to get into trouble around the house as they burn off extra adrenaline. Pets who don't have an energy outlet may chew off-limits objects or get into other mischief.

According to the American Kennel Club, the amount of exercise a dog needs depends on the animal's age and breed. For example, border collies or Siberian huskies may require much more exercise than English bulldogs, simply because the former are working breeds. Pet owners with large backyards often find those outdoor spots are ideal for when their dogs get the "zoomies," something that tends to be a daily occurrence. Letting their dogs run around yards, whether on their own or chasing tossed tennis balls, is an ideal way to provide exercise and tire out pups. In such scenarios, it's vital that pups have a dog-friendly yard in which to play.

Use safe lawn care products

An expanse of grass is the perfect place to frolic or enjoy some sunbathing – for people or pets. But contact with chemically treated lawns can cause a number of health issues for dogs, such as allergies or intestinal upset.

Switching to native grasses can reduce the need to use chemicals to get lush lawns. When supplementation is needed, homeowners can switch to organic products or natural compost as safer alternatives than chemical-based products.

Fence off the yard

Off-leash running and bounding through the yard will make any dog smile. However, a fence is a must-have to ensure a dog doesn't become an escape artist. Be sure the fence is high enough so that the pup cannot jump over it. Burying chicken wire in the dirt beneath the lower edge of the fence also can help prevent dogs who like to dig from exiting by crawling underneath the fence.

Consider installing a lock on the fence gate so that no one can wander in and surprise the dog, which may startle the animal and prompt it to defend the property. A lock also helps prevent dog theft.

Keep the yard tidy

Maintaining a clean yard also is key to safety. Inspect the yard regularly to make sure nothing is around that can prove harmful, whether it's poison ivy, felled branches or broken fence panels. Also, keep shrubs and grass



trimmed to reduce flea and tick populations on the property.

Avoid poisonous plants

Certain plants can be dangerous if they're consumed by curious pups. Chrysanthemums, peonies, irises, and hydrangeas are some plants that can be poisonous. For a full list of poisonous plants, visit the ASPCA website (aspc.org).

Keep an eye on animals

Dogs can spend some unattended time in the yard, but check in from time to time. Should wildlife get into the yard, dogs may get hurt by tussles or bites. Birds of prey, such as owls, hawks and even vultures, may attack small dogs in a yard. According to Pat Silvosky, director of the Milford Nature Center in Kansas, some birds can be territorial. While they might not view a dog as an easy meal, they could swoop down and attack to defend territory. The same may occur with other wild animals.

A dog-friendly yard may require a little effort to create, but it's worth a little sweat equity to keep pups safe.

Reassurance...
Inside the Boundary



boundary  **plus**

Save \$150
 NEW Boundary Plus Smart™ System

Invisible Fence Brand

800-578-3647 | InvisibleFence.com

*Limited time offer. Valid on professionally installed Boundary Plus Outdoor Solution. Participating Dealers Only. Restrictions may apply. Not valid with other discounts or previous purchases. See your local Authorized Dealer for details. Expires: 5/31/2023

GREAT HOUSEKEEPING
 & MORE making your property shine!

COMMERCIAL • VACATION RENTALS • RESIDENTIAL

Here to Serve Berrien, Van Buren Counties

Spring Cleaning Special
\$20 OFF CLEANING
 (For New Customers Only)
 \$100 minimum charge

269-934-0221
www.GreatHousekeeping.org




CREATIVE
LANDSCAPING
& Design

DESIGN • BUILD • MAINTAIN • SHOP

 269-473-1356  CreativeLandscapinginc.com  

Signs a home exterior needs updating

Renovations are a great way for homeowners to reshape their homes. Some may aspire to renovate so their home is more reflective of their personal taste, while others may do so in an effort to make their homes better align with modern styles and sensibilities. Regardless of why a homeowner chooses to renovate, the need to do so is often evident to the naked eye, especially when the time comes to update home exteriors.

Curb appeal is often discussed in regard to the effects it can have when selling a home. But curb appeal is equally important for homeowners who aren't putting their homes on the market. A well-maintained, aesthetically appealing home is a source of

pride, while a home with fading curb appeal can make homeowners feel a little sheepish. Homeowners who want their homes to maintain their curb appeal can look for signs that it's time to update their home exteriors.

- **Curling shingles:** The roof may not be the first thing people think of when pondering curb appeal, but a damaged roof can contribute to problems that ultimately affect the exterior and interior of the home. Multiple curling shingles indicate it's time to replace the roof. The sight of curling shingles is not pretty, but the larger issue in such instances is the potential for costly water damage when water gets in through the affected shingles.

- **Dated entry door:** Many home improvement experts insist they can determine when a home was built or most recently renovated simply by looking at the front door. Steel and glass doors are popular in modern homes, so homeowners with front doors with ornate designs and oval glass inserts can likely benefit from an upgrade to their entryway. A modern front door can make a statement and real estate experts note

how popular updated front doors are among buyers.

- **Unightly landscaping:** It's not only the physical components of the home that may suggest an update is necessary. Homeowners without a green thumb may have exterior landscaping that has seen better days. If a spring or summer day spent tending to your landscaping is not your ideal weekend pastime, then consider replacing unightly landscaping with low-maintenance plants or hardscaping. These alternatives to more needy

plants can create curb appeal without requiring any extra work for homeowners.

- **Cracked driveways/walkways:** If the driveway looks like a busy road at the end of snow plowing season, chances are that's adversely affecting the impression people have of your home. In addition, cracked walkways indicate a need for renovations, as these areas are front and center when welcoming guests.

Updating a home's exterior can restore curb appeal and help homeowners feel better about their properties.



KraftMaid Cabinetry

Hannapel
KITCHEN | BATH | WINDOW | DOOR

Dowagiac 805 Spruce St. (269) 782-7788	Kalamazoo 370 North 9th St. (269) 372-0340	Niles 204 South 11th St. (269) 684-4050	Portage 8800 Shaver Rd. (269) 323-0660
		St. Joseph 4025 South M-139 (269) 429-1707	South Haven 72201 CR 388 (269) 639-7788
		Sturgis 26626 West US-12 (269) 651-5388	

Hannapel.com



FIREPLACE SPECIALISTS

*Free Quotes
Installation
&
Service*

Hearth & Home
Design Center, Inc.

HEAT & GLO
No one builds a better fire

heatilator
The first name in fireplaces

QUADRA-FIRE
NOTHING BURNS LIKE A QUAD

www.hearthandhome-sb.com

51129 SR 933 N • South Bend, IN • 574.272.3030

Create your native plant garden

Gardening is a worthwhile endeavor that not only passes the time, but can be a form of exercise and relief from the daily grind. Gardens also provide ample opportunity to experiment, as individuals can produce everything from vegetables to bountiful blooms.

Recent years have witnessed a growing emphasis on eco-friendly gardening that aims to reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides in an effort to protect the planet. One way to do so is to rely on native plants.

What are native plants?

Native plants are indigenous to particular regions. The National Wildlife Federation says native plants grow in habitats without human introduction or intervention. Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with local wildlife over thousands of years, which the NWF notes makes them the most sustainable options. Native plants help the environment and thrive with little supplemental watering or chemical nutrients.

Natives vary by region

Native plants vary by region. In arid climates, certain succulents may be native because they don't need much rainfall to thrive. In lush wetlands, succulents might be out of place.

Start native planting

The NWF offers native plants for 36 different states that can be shipped right to customers' doors to help replenish native varieties. In addition, gardeners can visit local gardening centers to select native plants. Small and independently owned centers often feature knowledgeable local staff whose expertise can prove invaluable to individuals seeking native varieties.

It's important to keep in mind that native varieties may look less cultivated than more exotic blooms and foliage designed to sell for their unique appearances. Wildflowers and native grasses may be the types of native plants found in abundance, which may grow up and out quickly. These other tips can help the process.

- Plan and prepare the site by removing weeds and turning over the soil. This will give seedlings an opportunity to take root without competition from weeds. Seedlings will give gardens a faster head-start than waiting around for seeds to germinate. However, gardeners can start seeds indoors and then move them outside once they are seedlings.

- Avoid planting native plants in rows, as that's not how they're likely to grow naturally. Vary the placement so the plants look like they sprouted up haphazardly.

- Gardeners can still exert some control over native gardens prone to growing a little wild. Borders and paths can better define the growing areas.

- Grow Native!, an initiative from the Missouri Prairie Foundation, suggests planting two to four species in broad sweeping masses or drifts. Mix grasses with flowering plants. The grasses produce dense, fibrous roots that can prevent weed growth.

Native plants should require minimal care. Keep an eye on them and supplement with water if conditions have been especially dry.





CUSTOM CABINETS & FURNITURE



Customer Satisfaction is our Top Priority

2227 Plaza Drive Benton Harbor, MI • (269) 926-9663 • StrouseWoodworks.com

SALES EVENT  **Cub Cadet**  SALES EVENT

UP TO \$200 OFF

SELECT CUB CADET® MODELS¹

Offer Valid 5/18/23 - 6/17/23



CC30H
Compact yet powerful, the CC30H features a 30" single-blade stamped deck, 10.5 hp² Briggs & Stratton single OHV engine, hydrostatic transmission, easy step-through design, high-back seat and cruise control.

SAVE \$150³



XT1™ LT42B
Experience strength built into every detail with the XT1® Enduro Series®. The XT1 LT42B features a 42" stamped twin-blade deck, 19 hp² Briggs & Stratton® single OHV engine and a cut-and-sew, adjustable 15" high-back seat.

SAVE \$150³



ULTIMA™ ZT1™ 50
The ZT1 50 features a continuous 2" x 2" tubular steel frame, 50" AeroForce™ fabricated deck, 23 hp² Kawasaki® FR691V V-twin OHV engine, automotive-inspired 20" high-back seat and comfortable handgrips.

SAVE \$200³

INDEPENDENT DEALER
Cub Cadet

YOUR INDEPENDENT DEALER – EXPERT SERVICE. LOCALLY OWNED.
The advice, service, selection and support you need to find the right fit for you.



210 E John Beers Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 556-1052
www.hollywoodsmallengine.com

¹ Offer applies to select mowers. Valid 5/18/23 to 6/17/23, only at participating retailers and on www.cubcadet.com, and in the U.S. only. Savings amount may vary depending on retailer/dealer inventory; contact retailer/dealer for details. May not be combined with any other discount or offer and does not apply to prior purchases or purchases made before or after the promotion dates. Discount does not apply to tax, freight, or shipping and handling. If you return the merchandise, the value of this promotion is not refunded or credited to your account. No cash value, except where prohibited by law.

² Gross hp per SAE J1940 as rated by engine disclaimer at 3600 RPM.

³ As required by Kawasaki, horsepower listed in accordance with SAE J1995 and in accordance with SAE J2723 and certified by SAE International.

Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or unit specifications. Specifications subject to change without notice. © 2023 Cub Cadet

BRUNKE-GEIGER

Heating & Cooling

"Where Integrity Is #1"

With this coupon

\$100.00 OFF

NEW LENNOX AIR CONDITIONER

(expires 6-1-23)

- Lennox Home Comfort Systems
- Peerless Water Softeners
- Bradford White Water Heaters





PREMIUM SERVICE
PREMIUM PRODUCTS
PREMIUM SATISFACTION

8946 First Street • Baroda, MI 49101 • 269-422-2375

BRUNKEGEIGER.COM

The basics of fertilizing a lawn

Spring marks the return of lawn and garden season. Lawns often bear the brunt of winter's wrath, so spring is a great time to nurse them back to health, and fertilizing can be an essential component of that process.

Fertilizing a lawn can be intimidating. An array of fertilizers, with each seemingly designed to address a different issue, can make homeowners' heads spin when visiting

their local lawn and garden center. However, fertilizing is a very simple task that any homeowner can tackle. In fact, fears about fertilizing are often unfounded and can be overcome with some basic knowledge of the process.

- Identify which type of grass is in the yard. The home improvement experts at HGTV note that turfgrass is divided into two categories: cool-season grass and warm-season grass. A local lawn and garden center can help homeowners identify which type of grass is in the yard, and this often depends on location. Fescue, bluegrass and perennial ryegrass are some examples of cool-season grasses, while Bermuda, bahia, St. Augustine, and zoysia are considered warm-season grasses. Identifying which type of grass is in the lawn is important because that will indicate when to fertilize. Cool-season grasses are typically best fertilized in early spring, while warm-season lawns can benefit from an application just before especially warm temperatures arrive.

- Survey the lawn to identify which spreader to use. A small yard or a thriving lawn with only a few bald or unsightly patches may not need a full application of fertilizer. In such instances, a hand spreader can suffice. For larger lawns and areas, a broadcast spreader is the ideal option. Spreaders have multiple settings, and the fertilizer package will indicate which setting to utilize when using the product.

- Test the soil prior to purchasing fertilizer. The lawn experts at Pennington® note that a simple soil test can reveal soil pH and

phosphorous and potassium levels. Soil tests can be purchased at most home improvement stores and lawn and garden centers, and they can help homeowners determine which fertilizer will most benefit their lawns.

- Water the lawn prior to fertilizing. The experts at Scotts® recommend a good watering a few days prior to fertilizing a lawn. Such an approach ensures the soil is ready to accept the fertilizer once it's applied.

- Follow the instructions carefully. Detailed instructions are typically provided on fertilizer product packaging. Once homeowners have identified and purchased the product they need, they can simply follow the instructions on the packaging, including how and when to water after application, which can make fertilizing less intimidating.

Fertilizing in spring can help a lawn recover from the previous summer and winter, ensuring it's lush and green when summer entertaining season arrives.



ROOF CLEANING! HOUSE WASHING!

SAFE, NON-PRESSURE, SOFT WASH APPLICATION



BEFORE



AFTER

SCHEDULE NOW!



FREE ESTIMATES!

- Complete Exterior Cleaning • Roofs • Siding
- Walks • Drives • Remove Black & Green Algae
- Moss • Mildew • Lichen

LICENSED - INSURED - OWNER OPERATED

CALL OR TEXT 269-757-2050 • WWW.SPRAYAWAYMICHIGAN.COM

Thinking Spring?

Call to schedule a **FREE estimate and replace that OLD Air Conditioner before the HEAT of Summer arrives.**

FEEL AT EASE WITH MCGHEE'S
7301 Red Arrow Highway, Stevensville
269-466-0123

TAYLOR RENTAL

We're more than just products at work

\$10 OFF
Any Rental of
\$20 or more
Exp. 5-20-23
Doesn't apply to lawn & garden overnight special

Renting Equipment Will Save You MONEY!!

<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">LAWN & GARDEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERATORS GAS & MANUAL • BRUSH CUTTERS • GARDEN TILLERS • CEMENT/DIRT HAULER • HEDGE TRIMMERS • LAWN EDGERS • LAWN ROLLERS • LAWN VACUUMS • LEAF BLOWERS • LOG SPLITTERS • MOWERS - BRUSHWEED • SOD CUTTERS • POST HOLE DIGGERS • STUMP GRINDERS • THATCHERS • TREE PRUNERS • WHEELBARROWS • WOOD CHIPPERS 	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">POWER TOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIR NAILERS • CERAMIC TILE SAWS • CORE DRILLERS • DEMO. HAMMERS • DRILL 1/2" ELECTRIC • GENERATORS • GRINDERS - HAND HELD • GRINDERS - FLOOR • ROTARY HAMMERS • STUD GUNS 	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">PAINTING & WALLPAPERING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIRLESS SPRAYERS • COMPRESSORS - AIR • DRY WALL LIFTS • DRY WALL TOOLS • LADDERS • SCAFFOLDING • WALLPAPER STEAMERS • VENTILATOR FANS.
<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">CONTRACTORS & PROFESSIONALS</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JOHN DEERE -W/TIRES/TRACKS • BRICK SAW - ELECTRIC • CEMENT MIXER • CEMENT TROWEL • COME - ALONG • COMPRESSORS TO 185CFM • DIAMOND BLADES • EXCAVATOR - MINI • LIFTS - PERSONNAL, SCISSORS • LIFTS - BOOM, ARTICULATING • MORTAR MIXERS • PVMT. BREAKERS <li style="padding-left: 20px;">AIR - ELECTRIC & GAS • PLATFORM LIFTS 20' • PRESSURE WASHERS • SCAFFOLDING • TRENCHER - 18" OR 4FT • TREE PRUNER • TRENCHERS W/TRACKS • WATER PUMPS • WELDERS -(110/220 VOLT) • WHEEL BARROWS 	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">PLUMBING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CENTRIFUGAL PUMPS • DEHUMIDIFIERS • DRAIN AUGERS • PIPE CUTTERS • PIPE THREADERS • SEWER SNAKES • SUBMERSIBLE PUMPS • TRASH PUMPS • WATERBED PUMPS 	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; font-weight: bold;">FLOOR CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SANDERS FLOOR OR DECK • NAILERS • CARPET CLEANERS • POLISHERS • GRINDERS • TILE ROLLERS • STRETCHERS • KICKERS

2524 S. M-139, Benton Harbor, MI

(at exit 28, Off I-94)

Phone: (269) 925-2125

www.taylorrentalofmichigan.com

M-F 7:30-5:30; Sat 8-1; Closed Sunday

The benefits of planting native species

Spring and summer present ideal growing conditions for many plants, making these seasons an ideal time to tend to lawns and gardens. Though it's easy to succumb to the temptation of exotic plants, avid gardeners and eco-conscious planters recognize the significance of native plants.

Novices may not realize that native plants are much better for a landscape and the local ecosystem it calls home. Recognition of the many benefits of native plants can make for healthier lawns and gardens and a healthier planet as well.

- Native plants are built for local climates. One of the issues gardeners who plant exotic plants run into is keeping those plants thriving when weather turns harsh. For example, exotic plants may require extra watering in areas that experience drought or even long periods without precipitation in spring and notably summer. The United States Environmental Protection Agency reports that at least 40 states anticipate water shortages by 2024. Planting native plants can help to combat those shortages by reducing the need to water plants if conditions become dry in late spring and summer.

- Native plants save money. It's also important to note that native plants save homeowners money. Because they're capable of thriving in local conditions, native plants tend to require less watering, which can help homeowners reduce their utility costs. But native plants also require less upkeep, which means homeowners can save on potentially

costly, not to mention eco-unfriendly, pesticides and other amendments in order to maintain the look of exotic plants. And though it's not always the case, exotic plants tend to cost more at nurseries than natives.

- Native plants save gardeners time. In addition to saving money, native plants don't require as much attention. Though spring and summer is a great time to be in the yard, it's also a great time to be out and about. Because native plants thrive in local conditions, gardeners won't need to spend much of their free time tending to them. Exotics tend to require a lot of extra attention and effort, especially when conditions become harsh. Spending more time outdoors in harsh weather does not appeal to most gardeners.

- Native plants blend in with an existing landscape. Native plants look natural within an existing landscape, adding some instant aesthetic appeal without breaking the bank. When planting exotics, homeowners may feel a need to redesign their entire gardens to create a certain look (think Japanese garden). That can quickly consume a budget and take up a lot of free time in both the short- and long-term.

Planting season marks a great time to revitalize a landscape. Choosing native plants when doing so pays numerous dividends for homeowners and the planet they call home.



KEEP YOUR FAMILY **COOL & COMFORTABLE** THIS SEASON!



QUALITY COMFORT
HEATING & COOLING

SPRING INTO SUMMER WITH A **\$89** 10 POINT A/C TUNE UP

Call Today! **269-266-7331**

We specialize in **ROOFING**

Mark Bingaman - Owner



BING'S CONSTRUCTION CO., LLC

Licensed & Insured • Benton Harbor, MI

269-470-8482

GOTCHA COVERED

Bringing our 20 years of experience to the Southwest Michigan/Northwest Indiana Region

www.gotchacovered.com/harbor-country



Transform your space with superior quality custom window treatments by Gotcha Covered!

Call us today for your free in-home consultation.

(269) 231-5373



Mention this ad to receive

20% off
your first order!

Budget-friendly ways to freshen up your home's exterior

As any homeowner knows, renovation projects tend to cost a lot of money. The average cost of a home renovation is difficult to gauge, as such endeavors run the gamut from complex projects like a kitchen overhaul to simpler ones like painting a room inside a home. Indeed, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry notes that scope is what drives the cost of a renovation project.

Though there might not be an "average cost" of a renovation project, homeowners can expect to spend thousands of dollars on proj-



ects that are not very small in scale. Navigating such an expense at a time when inflation remains high might be difficult for some homeowners looking to maintain the appearance of their home exteriors. However, there are many budget-friendly ways homeowners can tend to the exterior of their properties.

- **Power washing:** Power washing won't break the bank but it can revive the look of a home. Power washing removes dirt and grime from the siding of a home and a power washing can be used to clean porches, walkways and patios as well. Hardware chains like Home Depot and Lowes typically rent power washers, but homeowners who don't want to do it themselves can hire a professional for a few hundred dollars, if not less. Power washing after winter can be a good idea, as the elements can take a toll on a home's exterior. A good power washing before spring and summer entertaining season can thus give a home a fresh, clean look without breaking the bank.

- **Furnished front porch:** A furnished front porch can serve as a welcome sign to neighbors and provide a great place to relax with a morning cup of coffee and a good book. Homeowners with a small porch won't need to bust their budgets to upgrade their front porch furnishings. Some small chairs with bright cushions, a small table and a rug underfoot can revamp an entryway at low cost.

- **Window box installation:** Installing window box planters is another cost-effective

way to brighten up a home's exterior. Homeowners can hang window boxes outside windows on the front of their homes and then fill them with brightly colored flowers to add an inviting pop of color to their home exteriors. The experts at Better Homes & Gardens urge homeowners to take weight into consideration before buying window planters. Keep in mind that soil and developed plants can be heavy, so look for a sturdy box as well as one that has drainage holes.

- **Replace hardware:** Another simple way to freshen up a stale exterior is to replace hardware. Door knobs, knockers, house numbers, and even the mailbox can appear dated after a while. Replacing these items is inexpensive and quick but can have a profound impact on how the exterior of a home appears to residents and visitors.

Exterior renovations need not break the bank. Various simple and inexpensive tweaks can quickly revitalize the exterior of a home.



Johnathon Scott, Owner
269.923.9223
ModernGutterSolutions@gmail.com

- 5" Seamless Gutters
- Gutter Guards
- Fully Insured
- Free Estimates
- Veteran Owned And Operated

TRUE VALUE AT VALUE SHEDS • ST. JOSEPH
BEST WARRANTY - BEST MATERIALS - BEST WORKMANSHIP - BEST VALUE



10 YEAR
WARRANTY
ON ENTIRE
STRUCTURE

Certified Amish Craftsmanship
The Most Trusted Name in Sheds

40 YEAR
WARRANTY
ON ALL
METAL ROOFS

True Value at Value Sheds
OPEN M-F 10am-5pm • Sat 10am-2pm

VALUE SHEDS • 269-921-0929
4032 M-139 ST. JOSEPH, MI

Garden Center NOW OPEN

Welcome Spring
April 22nd thru April 29th

REGISTER TO WIN DAILY PRIZES IN BOTH
THE GARDEN CENTER AND FLOWER SHOP!

Grand Prize
Drawings on
April 29th

FREE GIFT
for guests!
(while supplies last)

Crystal Springs

GARDEN CENTER

Mon-Fri 9:00am-5:30pm • Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm
Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm (Garden Center Only)

1475 Pipestone Rd.
Benton Harbor, MI
(269) 925-1167
www.crystalspringsflorist.com



MULCH MULCH MULCH



FREE MULCH DELIVERY

(WITH 10 YARDS OR MORE WITHIN 10 MILES)

WWW.CULBYS.COM

200 TYPES OF STONE • 9 TYPES OF MULCH

**1010 S. Blue Creek Rd
Benton Harbor, MI**

269-944-1881



Off Napier 1 Mile E. of
Lake Michigan College to
Blue Creek Rd.

