

HOMESENSE

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Smart and simple ways to enrich your home living

Fall 2010

\$3.00

SEASONAL SHIFT

Seasonal Changes, Inside and Out

Nature has ways of letting you know what's going on. Like with the change from Summer to Fall, the signs are there. The leaves on the trees lose their Summer green, leaving behind the red, yellow, orange and brown that you think of as the Fall landscape. The days get shorter, thanks to the way the earth moves further away from the sun. And they get a good bit cooler.

Your home also has ways of letting you know what's going on. Energy efficiency is a particularly "hot topic" for cold weather, so use these points as guides to making your home more energy-efficient.

- **Lowering thermostats can lower energy bills.** Studies show that for every degree you lower the temperature on your thermostat, you can save 2% on your heating bill. Keep your thermostat set to 68 degrees when you're at home or lower when you're asleep or away. A programmable thermostat can adjust these settings for you.
- **Reducing air leaks also reduces energy use.** Windows and doors

should be sealed properly to keep warm air in, cold air out. Other common air leak locations are floors, walls, ceilings, ducts, fireplaces, plumbing and electrical outlets. **A home energy survey can show you how you're losing warm air without realizing it.**

- **Humidifiers can add moisture.** The air you're breathing inside your home is also subject to seasonal change. For example, if you've got dry skin, cracked finger tips, and a scratchy throat, the warmth in your home may be drying out your air. By maintaining the right humidity levels, you'll also feel warmer at lower thermostat settings – thus, aiding your energy efficiency goal.
- **Have your heater checked.** As heater use kicks in, one of the most serious concerns you face is the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. This is an odorless, colorless gas that can build up when heaters aren't properly ventilated, causing serious illness. Make sure your heater is checked each year by a professional. Call us to schedule a time.

MY WORD

The Classroom

By Scott Kellam

Hello Friends,

It's great to be back in touch after a busy Summer. Hope you're enjoying yourself.



For a lot of families, Fall ushers in a new "learning season." As kids head off to new classrooms and new experiences, sometimes you can't help remembering your own school days.

During my time in school, I learned a lot – and forgot a lot – but apparently I'm in good company. As Albert Einstein once said, "Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school."

I can relate. I don't always remember the history dates, mathematical equations, or scientific theories that showed up in the textbooks. But somewhere along the way, I learned some basics that have stuck with me year after year.

For example, there will always be someone who knows more than I do. And there will always be someone I can help.

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Your Quick Call Comfort Hotline:

757-430-0358

www.kellammechanical.com

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Is Illness in the Air?

Worse Than Being Drunk?

The dangers of texting and driving are real.

During a study conducted last year by *Car and Driver*, participants were asked to hit the brake when a red light appeared on the windshield. In the worst-case result of that study, as one participant was sending a text, it took him an **unbelievable 70 feet longer** to hit the brake than when he was driving unimpaired. Reading an email added 36 feet. And both figures were even worse than being drunk which for this participant added “only” four feet.

Likewise, a Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study found that texting truck drivers were **23 times** more likely to be involved in a crash than non-distracted drivers.

The National Safety Council cites public opinion surveys that repeatedly show that Americans consider distracted driving a serious safety concern. Texting and driving bans are being enacted in communities across the country. And Oprah’s in on it too, asking guests and viewers to sign a “no phone zone” pledge.

So take this call to safety seriously. Talk to your kids, your spouse – even yourself – and keep your eyes on the road, your hands on the wheel and your mind away from that message that can wait.

Sometimes, when you’re sneezing, nursing a sore throat, maybe a headache, you’d just like to curl up at home and recuperate with a cup of hot tea. Oddly, however, the very home where you seek soothing comfort could actually be the source of your symptoms.

One of today’s more serious health concerns has to do with the air quality inside the home. It’s affected by a lot of potential sources: pet dander, dust, cooking smoke, scented candles, cleaning solutions and more.

To preserve your health, be aware of the stuff that’s in your air. The contaminants that filter in can make you uncomfortable. They can also prompt allergies, asthma attacks and other respiratory issues. Some unseen gases can be so dangerous they put your life at risk.

No Odor, No Color Can Equal Big Danger. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a particular concern. Because it’s odorless and colorless, you might not know it’s there. But it’s very dangerous and can cause sudden illness and death. Again, the symptoms are the same that other common illnesses create:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Chest pain
- Confusion

To preserve your health, be aware of the stuff that’s in your air.

CO is found in many heating systems. As fumes build up, you can be poisoned by breathing them in. Make sure you have a CO detector and have your heating system inspected before the cold season.

Breaking Mold’s Hold. Mold, another big problem for homeowners, grows in warm, damp and humid conditions – which means damp or wet spots in your home can be breeding grounds for mold. The

mold spores that are emitted into the home can cause allergic reactions and asthma attacks, even fungal infections or irritation to eyes, skin, nose, throat and lungs. Your best defense against mold is to control the moisture in your home.

Get Your Free Report. There are other indoor air concerns too – some of which should be addressed by a professional (like lead paint removal) – while some homeowners just need guidance and a place to start. We’ve got that for you in our free report entitled, “*Best Bets for Breathing Better.*” **Call us and we’ll send you a copy.**

“Quotable”

“For man, Autumn is a time of harvest, of gathering together. For nature, it is a time of sowing, of scattering abroad.”
- Edwin Way Teale

Search for Your Home's Hidden Dangers

Home life can be busy in Fall, and that often means more people are gathering there. Yet there are many hidden dangers that can cause illness or injury before we know it. So give your home a once-over for safety issues that you may have overlooked, and take steps to keep your family and friends secure.

Fire Prevention – Make sure smoke alarms are installed outside bedrooms and on every level of your home, and test them monthly to make sure they're operating effectively. Plan and practice fire escape routes too.

Fire prevention practices should also include:

- Cooking safety – Don't leave unattended food cooking.
- Make it a habit to remove dryer lint, which collects in exhaust ducts and can catch fire.
- Make sure furnaces, fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, space heaters, and gas appliances are vented properly and inspected annually.

Indoor Air – Have you installed carbon monoxide (CO) alarms outside your bedrooms? CO is an odorless,

colorless and deadly gas, and it can be produced by a malfunctioning home heating system. Have your heater tuned and checked prior to the heating season.

Though not as deadly as CO, there are a number of sources of bad "indoor air" that can also affect your family's health and well-being. Dust, pet dander and insect parts circulate through airtight homes, while mold is another hidden threat that can aggravate allergies and asthma. Practice regular cleaning and, if you've got concerns, call for an indoor air inspection for a clear picture of what you're breathing.

Trips and Falls – You can trip and fall at any age, any time. But a few precautions will help. Keep stairways and hallways well-lit and remove tripping hazards, like toys or sports gear. Also, look for tripping hazards in electrical cords and wiring from lamps, appliances or electronics.

Poison Prevention – Lock away medicines and vitamins and keep cleaning solutions, pesticides and other dangerous substances in their original, labeled containers, and out of the reach of children.

DID YOU KNOW?

Easy as 1 – 2 – 3. \$50.00 goes back in your pocket for getting your fall heating system tune-up! Virginia Natural Gas offers you \$50.00 back on your gas account for having your heating system seasonal tune-up. Getting money back for something your system needs anyway is a treat! At your next appointment, our technician will provide you with the service installation verification form for you to submit to

Virginia Natural Gas to receive your rebate. The rebates don't stop there!

- \$500.00 Gas furnace installation (90%+AFUE)
- \$500.00 Tankless water heater (82+EF)
- \$150.00 Tank water heater (.62+)

What are you waiting for? Call today or click on our savings page at www.kellammechanical.com to see our "Easy as 1 – 2 – 3" process.



Making Kitchen Time Family Time

Family memories are built on a lifetime of little moments. But with today's hurried pace, these little moments can seem hard to find. Make a plan to capture what you can, starting with time spent in the kitchen.

By involving kids in preparing the family meal, they'll gain in many ways – from the spirit of togetherness that strengthens the family bond, from the confidence they'll feel for a job well done, and from the practical experience they'll get in meal preparation.

Start with planning and shopping. Talk with the kids about the menus that are coming up, and let them have a say in what's going to be served. Involve them in selections and price comparison.

Keep teaching while cooking. Talk about the different elements that make up a well balanced diet. For example, you could explain why "well-balanced" is not a plate of mashed potatoes, french fries and macaroni and cheese. Talk about the sources of different vitamins and how they're helpful for growing bodies.

Turn off the television, or you'll have a big distraction on your hands while trying to keep the kids focused. The much more valuable "news and entertainment" will be what you learn from your children about their own day.

MY WORD (...from page 1)

Those two facts are a big part of running this business. The team around here is committed to learning more ways that we can make your home more and more comfortable.

Sometimes we do this in a classroom setting of our own, but many times we learn as we serve.

And that leads to the second part: we are committed

to sharing our knowledge with you and are here to help whenever you have a concern. Just give us a call!

HomePoints

Try to cut down on the use of kitchen and bathroom fans during cool weather. These fans cool the air and waste household heat.



Scott Kellam

P.S. Don't forget to check out the special offers on this page for some big savings. If you aren't going to be able to use them, please feel free to pass them on to a friend, neighbor or family member.

TAX CREDITS DEADLINE!

The tax credits for high efficient qualifying equipment is coming to an end. Now is the time to replace your old, energy-sucking air conditioning and heating system while tax credits are still available. Call **Kellam Mechanical** for your free system replacement quote. Systems must be installed by 12/31/10 to receive tax credits.



Time is running out!
757-430-0358

\$49.00 Gas Safety Inspection!

Does your family use gas appliances? Gas water heaters, gas stoves, gas furnaces, gas dryers and gas fireplaces all have the potential to poison you. Schedule your gas safety inspection today and provide a warm and safe environment for your loved ones this Winter. Limited to first 45 callers by 10/31/10. Know someone who needs a gas safety inspection?

Tell 'em Kellam
757-430-0358

OLDEST GAS FURNACE CONTEST!

Enter your elderly furnace in our oldest gas furnace contest and win a **FREE** new gas furnace!

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It is easy to enter.
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your **FREE** review.



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Know someone who wants a free furnace?

Tell 'em Kellam



Contest rules:
Existing unit must be installed
Entry deadline is 10/31/10, installation by 11/30/10
Must purchase air conditioner for complete system
Not to be combined with other offers
Call to get complete list of rules



It's time to get comfortable.



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