

August 2008 Newsletter

Just in time for today's record-high energy prices, our latest **Video Clip** is "**Rear Window: Alfred Hitchcock Looks at Energy Savings**", which provides a suspenseful look at ways to reduce your home energy costs, based on the classic Hitchcock film. It can be found at: www.home-wizard.com/RearWindow.asp (7 min 26 sec.)



Rear Window: Alfred Hitchcock Looks at Energy Savings

In our latest "info-tainment" video, the "*Not Ready For Housework Players*" bring you a Hitchcock-ian look at ways to save on the your energy costs with a parody of the classic film *Rear Window*. Like our convalescent hero, Mr. LB Jeffreeries, many homeowners may not be aware of energy-saving techniques, but they are truly a mystery worth solving. With energy costs on the rise, we all can benefit from learning new ways to save energy around our homes, especially during the summer months when both electrical air conditioning loads and electricity pricing are their highest.



This month's video provides an entertaining look at the kinds of real things you can do around your home to help reduce your hefty power bills.

The video also mentions how it can be very beneficial to have an energy audit conducted to determine how your home uses energy, and what changes can be made to lower your consumption. A detailed audit is something that should be performed by a trained professional with knowledge and experience in this type of evaluation.



It will help you know what your auditor should be inspecting so you know what to ask for in the assessment. A good energy

auditor will examine your insulation and windows to determine how much heat they lose. They can use infrared devices to detect the sources of heat and cooling losses around your home. They can also recommend different ways to operate appliance that will be more energy-efficient. And they can also suggest when it is economical to replace appliances with higher-efficiency models that are specifically designed to consume less power.



Alfred Hitchcock was a master of the suspenseful thriller, and hopefully our parody of "Rear Window" can help you take some of the suspense out of opening your monthly energy bill and thrill yourself with a significant reduction in your energy costs.

We think you will enjoy our latest video, which hopefully you will find both entertaining and informative. To see it now, just click the following link:

<http://www.home-wizard.com/RearWindow.asp>

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Dry Humor: Nothing Funny About Preventing Dryer Fires

Laundry is one of those chores that's made just little more difficult because we know it's never really going to end—no matter how many loads you do, sooner or later there's going to be more. If you are fortunate enough to have your own dryer, you will want to properly maintain it to keep it operating safely for a long time.

Significant problems can result from allowing too much lint to build up in and around your dryer. Lint can lead to more than just fuzzy clothes; it can create a fire hazard. **There are an estimated 15,500 dryer fires every year, killing ten and injuring ten more.**

If you look behind your dryer you'll find a hose, about four or five inches in diameter, which vents through the wall and outside your house. This hose ends in a "flap vent" that will swing open automatically while the dryer is running, and then close when the machine shuts off. Inspect this vent and the rest of the hose for lint and clean out any dirt or obstructions. Seal any joints you find with duct tape. Also, debris can accumulate behind and beneath your dryer, so wipe those places clean. The lint trap itself also needs regular scrubbing with a soft-bristled brush and a mild soap or detergent to make sure it hasn't gotten clogged.



In addition, check that your machine is balanced, so that it sits squarely on the ground. Unbalanced dryers that rock back and forth as they operate will put unnecessary wear and tear on their component parts.

To learn more, see our online Maintenance Library page on Clothes Dryers at :

<http://www.home-wizard.com/maintenance/clothesdryer.asp>

Sealing the Deal . . . On Your Driveway

If Benjamin Franklin had written "a stitch in time saves nine" today, he might have been talking about his asphalt driveway. Catching driveway cracks when they are small can save you bigger dollars later. So re-

sealing your driveway on a regular basis can payoff for you in the long run.

To re-seal your driveway, first clean your driveway with a high-pressure hose, and repair any damaged places with asphalt patching material you can purchase at your local hardware store. Add in some gravel where necessary. Then apply a layer of blacktop sealant to the surface of your driveway using a disposable bucket and a large squeegee or wide broom. This may be a task you want to hire professionals to do for you, as it can be messy and difficult for some people to do themselves. You'll want to re-seal your driveway about once every four years, depending on your climate, to maintain the condition and attractive appearance of your home's driveway.



For more information, visit online library at:
<http://www.home-wizard.com/maintenance/driveway.asp>

The Green, Green Grass of Home

It's easy to see why many homeowners devote so much time and concern to taking care of their lawn. A lush green lawn is the centerpiece of an attractive, well-kept yard, and particularly in the summer months when plants are at their best, it can add so much to the visual appeal of your home.

So during the summertime, it's a good idea to make sure your grass is well fertilized and protected from insects, two measures that will do a great deal to improve the health and appearance of your lawn. By doing this, your grass will be better able to thrive in the heat, and will not deteriorate under the stress of damage caused by insects. The amount of effort and cost of supplies will vary depending on the size of your lawn. Doing this in mid-summer during the month of August will encourage the growth of a healthy, attractive lawn to beautify your home year-round.



For more information:
<http://www.home-wizard.com/maintenance/lawn-care.asp>

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