

Remodeler's Scratch Pad

News and Notes from the Around the House Crew

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<http://www.MyPowerCouple.com>

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Uses for Old Paint

Most home owners have an area set aside for storing the materials left over from painting projects. Over time, the cans accumulate until they become quite a large pile.

When it is finally time to sort through this collection, what can you do with all the ones you no longer want to save?

Oil-based paints and stains must not be disposed of in your household trash. We have identified a local company that will

accept, for a fee, this material and dispose of it properly. Alternatively, many communities have one or more hazardous waste collection days to collect materials like this to avoid having them show up in the trash.

There are many more options for latex-based paint.

We have a friend with rental property. He is happy to take any color and sheen of latex paint. He mixes them

all together in a 5-gallon bucket to do re-paint his apartments.

Your local high school theater program is likely to be happy to take paint to decorate their sets.

If none of these work for you, you can put dried latex-based paint in the trash. If there isn't much in the can, simply remove the lid and allow it to dry. For larger quantities, look for a package in your local home center that will hasten the drying process.

Coupon Fantasy

If you have been chiding yourself for not cutting coupons so you can save at the grocer's, the Food Network's Dave Lieberman has some comforting news for you. He says most coupons are used to promote new, more expensive items you wouldn't otherwise buy.

Decide if the coupon is for something you really need.



"Have you thought about how this may affect global temperatures in a few million years?"



If you have a scratch in your furniture, there are many ways that you may be able to make it much less noticeable. Shoe polish, a crayon, or a felt-tipped marker are just some of the products that may make the scratch blend in with the surrounding finish.

Washing Machine Supply Hoses

Few of us think about the hoses that supply water to our washing machine. Over time, these hoses can deteriorate and you can come home to find quite a mess when they burst.

The best way to protect yourself is to turn off the water after each load of laundry. Depending on the location and types of valves, this may be very inconvenient.

Metal braided hoses are stronger and less likely

to burst. Be wary of the new hoses that have a built-in valve designed to stop the water in an emergency. Our sources report quite a few instances where the valve has shut off the water when it shouldn't have.

How to Prevent Falls

Pick up. Move or get rid of anything that you could trip over or bump into so you lose your balance. Most trips in the home are because of throw rugs.

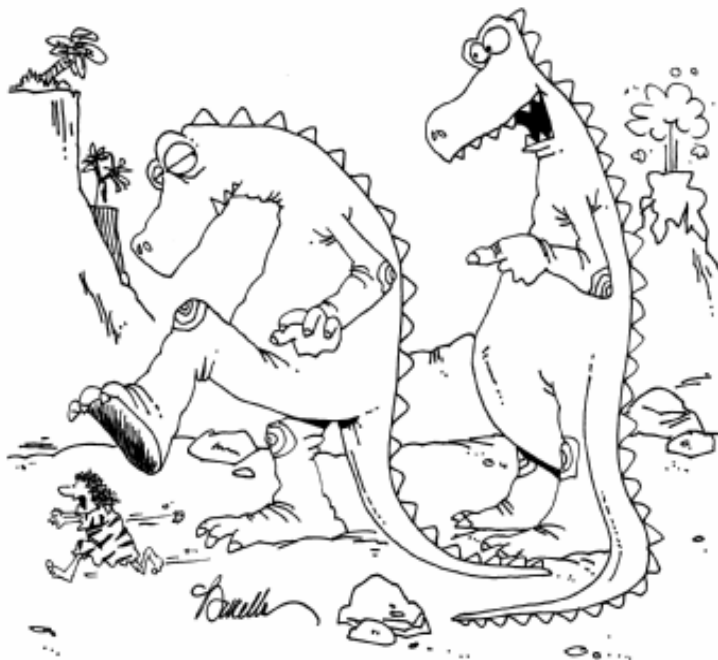
Light up. Use low-voltage night lights so you don't trip over something on your way to the bathroom. Always turn the lights on when going down stairs so you don't misjudge your footing or trip on something left on a step.

Mop up. Immediately clean up spills or water tracked into the entry way.

Gear up. Even the young appreciate a grab bar in the shower or one by the toilet. Put hand rails on both sides of stairs.

Fix up. Repair anything that could lead to a fall, like a loose step.

Your general physical condition counts in fall prevention. Keeping strong with regular exercise will help you stay up if you begin to fall.



"You've got to give me your recipe!"

OK to Write on this 'Fridge

Whirlpool Corp. showed its new Amana Jot refrigerator at the International Builder's Show in Orlando, Fla. It's designed to be written on with the black and blue Crayola dry-erase

markers that come with it. The unit comes in white, costs \$499 and will soon be available at retailers.

Massachusetts Contractor Laws – CSL Licensing

Q: Should my contractor be licensed?

A: Maybe. Only a licensed contractor will be able to get a building permit from your city or town to work on your home.

If a contractor wants to work without a permit or suggests that you “pull your own permit,” you probably don’t want this contractor. He may cut other corners while performing the work. In addition, you won’t be protected by many of the consumer laws of the state. They will consider you the general contractor and he your sub contractor. You will be responsible for making sure all the work is performed “according to code” as well as for arranging all the inspections with your city or town building department.

It is possible that your home owner’s insurance may not honor a claim if they find that any work was done on your home without the proper permits and inspections.

Not all contractors are required to be licensed. For example, your painter is unlikely to be a licensed contractor (and is not required to be in order to paint).

Massachusetts has a new building code. Licensing requirements are changing for trades like roofers, masons, etc.

Q: My contractor’s truck says “licensed” on it, isn’t that good enough?

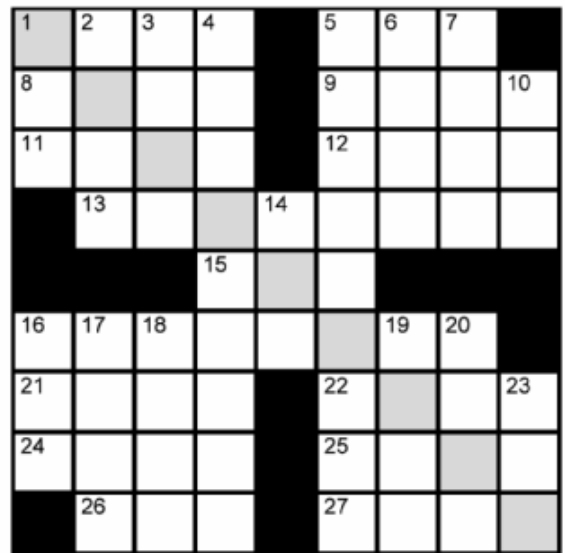
Flower of the South

Across

1. Computer memory units
5. High school class
8. Need for fishermen
9. Regrets
11. Jason's ship
12. "Cogito, ___ sum"
13. It isn't silver or gold
15. Long, long time
16. Some baby toys
21. Cosmetic additive
22. Hokkaido people
24. Poet Angelou
25. ___ tide
26. Battle of Britain grp.
27. Opens a door

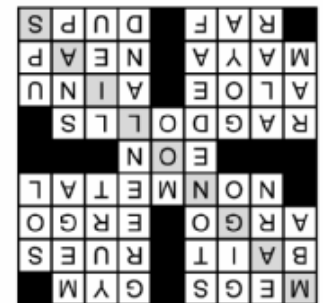
Down

1. CEO's degree
2. Make, as money
3. Garbage in, garbage out
4. Unhearing
5. Largest island in the world
6. Circular domed dwelling



7. Prefix with phone
10. Costa del ___
14. Jersey call
16. Battering device
17. Winged
18. Spanish painter
19. In ___ of
20. A breeze
23. Bull markets

The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.



A: It pays to be skeptical. Many contractors register as a Home Improvement Contractor (see last month’s newsletter) and advertise that they are licensed. We have even heard of contractors saying they were licensed because they had a driver’s license!

Your contractor should provide you with his Construction Supervisor’s License number (as well as his Home Improvement Contractors registration number).

For more information about licensing requirements or to check a contractor’s license or registration, see: <http://www.mass.gov/bbrs>

“The race is not always to the swift, but to those who keep on running.”

- Anonymous

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Get Better Locks and Use Them

OK, so you're in a hurry to go on a short errand and you rush out the door without thinking. Mistake. Even the best locks can't protect you from burglaries if you don't use them.

If you do remember to lock the door, doing it won't help much if you don't have a good lock. The National Crime Prevention Council estimates that only half of us have dead-bolt locks on all of our entry doors. That means ALL doors, not just the front door.

Windows should be locked as well. Many a

News From the Crew...

You may have noticed that our WWW site and e-mail addresses have changed from aroundthehouse.org to MyPowerCouple.com.

We've decided to move to this new domain name as it is easier to

remember and fits better with the new marketing campaign we have launched.

You should have received at least one "Original Power Couple" postcard mailing already.

thief or home invader is willing to climb through a window to gain access.

The National Crime Prevention Council has other advice on prevention:

Trim bushes close to the house so a burglar can't hide there.

Never hide a key on the premises. Crooks are experts at finding them. Instead, leave a spare key with a trusted friend or neighbor.

Make friends with your neighbors. They will keep an eye on your place and call the police

when suspicious activities occur.

Light the entrances to your home, including the front door, the back door, the sliding door and any others.

Stop mail and newspaper deliveries when you leave for a vacation or a business trip. Piled up newspapers are an obvious tip-off that the house will be empty and a burglar can take his sweet time deciding what to steal or whether to call a moving van and clean the place out.

The old domain is still ours and still works to get to our WWW site and to get e-mail messages to us. Feel free to use either method to reach us.

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