



The Handyman Herald

News, views, & ideas from John of All Trades

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We're here to help!

Our Contact Info:

Phone:
248.840.0045

Tell us where you live, what you need done, and any symptoms of the problem. Or if you're looking for a quote on a larger project, let us know. We'll call you back ASAP.

E-mail us your questions @
Help@JohnofAllTrades.com

A deck or patio makes summer relaxation priceless

Since there will be no hockey played in these parts this June, how should one spend their extra time?

Or, for those of you that had tickets to Joe Louis Arena for the play-offs, thinking those tickets were going to kill your discretionary spending, what are you going to do with all that extra cash?

I guess that's one way of trying to find a positive out of the fact the Red Wings season ended much too early.

The answer to both of those questions could be the same: spend your money so you can enjoy time outside.

As I walk through Berkley, in the spring and summer, it's apparent that all of us love relaxing outdoors when the weather is great.

I continuously receive calls from people hoping to upgrade that experience at their residence. So, let's take a couple seconds to talk about decks and patios.

The first question you might consider: "Should I add a deck or add a patio?"

Besides the personal preferences that one has for one or the other, here's a few facts to consider.

A plain concrete patio has an advantage of being economical and maintenance free. It should last about 50 years and you really only need to sweep it with an occasional wash-down to keep it clean and up-to-date.

Many people though prefer the look of wood and are interested in something higher off the ground. You can expect that a deck will last about 20 years. You also have a greater amount of maintenance to keep your wood looking good and not show the wear and tear that the elements bring. One should stain and reseal their deck every 18 months.

A third option, which has become more popular recently, uses composite lumber to con-

struct a deck. More costly than regular wood, the pay-back comes since they are expected to last 30 years and are relatively maintenance free. For some people though, they only like the look and feel of real wood.

Finally, there's construction costs. Our company will give you a great quote for whatever way you decide to proceed. We can handle all the pre-work necessary too such as concrete removal.

Your least expensive option would be to install 2x2 concrete squares. Many in Berkley are taking the next step up: installing a unilock brick system. Of course, this is more time-consuming to install and reflected in the price. A wood deck tops the chart, running on-average about 25% more than a patio.

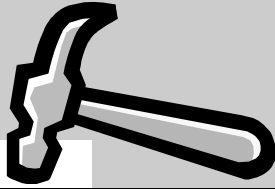
But enough about costs. It's really about enjoyment, isn't it? To borrow a line from a popular TV commercial:

- Charcoal: \$6
- Strip Steak from Hiller's: \$8
- Six-Pack of beer: \$5.50
- Enjoying it all on your new deck or patio: *Priceless.*



From the John

John Larabell



Your checklist to getting your house in order: How can we help?

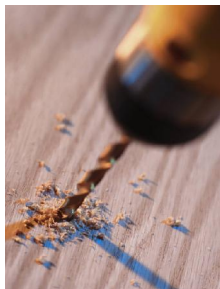
People call the *John of All Trades* office all the time and ask the same question: "Can you _____?" Look through this list and perhaps we can help with some of your home needs. If you don't see something you were hoping to have done — fear not. Give us a call at 248.840.0045. There's a good chance we can help.

Plumbing

- Sinks repaired or replaced
- Toilet repaired or replaced
- Sewer cleaning
- Pipe replacement (galvanized or copper)
- Installation of new bathroom in basement or upstairs
- Faucet Replacement
- Caulking toilets & tubs

Masonry Work

- Brick Repair
- Porch Repair
- Chimney Repair
- Tuck pointing
- Repair or install concrete



Outdoor Services

- Snow removal
- Landscaping
- Lawn Service (Limited area only)
- Flower planting
- Full fertilizing programs
- Spring/Fall Cleanup
- Clean gutters
- Lawn Sprinklers
- Roofs (replaced or repaired)
- Gutter replacement or repair
- Nightscaping
- Roof de-icer installation
- Window replacement
- Siding
- Caulking
- Outdoor lighting
- Garage door installation
- Automatic garage door opener installation



Carpentry Work

- Door installation
- Install moldings
- Install bathroom vanities
- Install kitchen cabinets
- Backsplashes
- Pergo or hardwood floors installation

Finishing

- Painting
- Caulking
- Drywall
- Drywall repair
- Plaster repair
- Refinish hard wood floors
- Tile installation

Electrical

- Back-up generator hook-ups
- Service Changeover (fuses to circuit breakers or replacing an old panel)
- Rewiring of your entire house
- Ceiling fans installed
- Space heaters installed
- Adding lights, circuits, or outlets
- Installing recess lighting/track lights
- Adding power in garage
- Troubleshooting electrical problems
- Troubleshooting phone problems
- Phone line repair
- Phone jack installation

Licensed & Insured.

We proudly accept



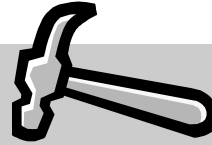
JOHN OF ALL TRADES TIP

When should you trim blooming shrubs?

The safest schedule for shrub trimming is to do so within one month of their blooming. By following this schedule, you will not remove or do damage to the next year's flower buds.

JOHN OF ALL TRADES REMINDER:

After fall, spring is the next best time to repair those patches, dead grass, or bare spots. If the grass is yellow and withered, remove it. Rake or loosen the soil, then sow a quality grass seed in the area—about 10 seeds per square inch. Be sure you have good soil-to-seed contact for the seed to germinate.



Grass cutting gotcha sneezing? Save yourself the Kleenex — we'll do it!

With spring upon us, the lawnmowers are making noises all throughout the city. The grass is growing on us again.

But as sure as a trip to 12 Mile and Clark's Ice Cream or Dairy Queen are part of the rites for Berkley residents, so too are allergies from cutting the grass. For others, its not the sneezing and sniffles that come with cutting the grass, but simply the lack of time to do the job right — including cutting the grass, edging, and using the weed-whacker to make your yard look like it is properly cared for. For older people, a simple job of cutting the grass may become more difficult with age.

For whatever reason, contact *John of All Trades* to handle your lawn cutting needs. **A standard-sized Berkley lawn costs \$18 per cut.** We'll edge the yard one time; weed-whack it the next time to ensure it stays looking top-notch. If you have a place to compost, we'll bag the grass for you too. Spring and fall clean-ups are extra. Contact us and we'll take care of your lawn all summer.

Berkley's Handyman serving Berkley's Residents

John of All Trades is the *We Care for Berkley* Company. Here's a look at all the streets in which we've provided service and care to the good families of Berkley.

Bacon	Eaton	Phillips
Berkley	Edgewood	Prairie
Beverly	Ellwood	Princeton
Buckingham	Franklin	Robina
Cambridge	Gardner	Rosemont
Cass	Griffith	Royal
Catalpa	Harvard	Sunnyknoll
Columbia	Kenmore	Thomas
Cornwall	Kipling	Tyler
Cumberland	Larkmoor	Wakefield
Cummings	Mortenson Blvd.	West Blvd.
Dorothea	Oakshire	West Eleven Mile
Earlmont	Oxford	Wiltshire

Your home's A1 utility player: The backup generator

It's been three years since our city, our state, and many parts of our country went dark. Remember the Blackout of August 2003?

Immediately afterward, Congress and other politicians vowed to fix the system so this could never happen again. As the political storm clouds moved on to other issues, many of the problems that created that outage are still here today.

What can you do? Run for political office. March on Washington or Lansing. Open your windows and yell "I'm mad as heck and I'm not going to take it anymore!" like they did in the classic movie *Network*. Or... install a backup generator for your home.

Sure the generator doesn't solve our country's electrical problems, but it will solve your home's problems if there is a weather outage or another blackout of some sort. How big and how costly a generator you choose to purchase depends on how much sacrifice you are still willing to make while DTE is out. Lights, furnace, sump pump and basic appliances are considered essential. Running the air-conditioning to keep the house perfectly cool, watching TV and using computers are all considerations that may require a bigger generator.

HOW MUCH POWER DO YOU NEED?
Consider the wattage you'd need when shopping for a backup generator:

- Refrigerator: 700
- Furnace: 400-500
- TV: 200 each
- Computer: 200

John of All Trades installs backup generators including setting up the electrical box at your home to accept another power source as well as running a gas line. Including installation, a base model will run around \$4,000 and proceed from there.



John of All Trades

Save \$10 or \$50

\$10 OFF ANY JOB \$50 OR MORE; \$50 OFF ANY JOB \$300 OR MORE

Indoors or Outdoors — we do it all

Tel: 248.840.0045

Expiration Date: 8/31/06

Summer in Berkley

John of All Trades

FREE

GRASS CUTTING

Your first cutting is on us!

Must commit to at least 5 cuttings

Expires: 8/31/06

The John of All Trades Newsletter

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We Care... for Berkley!

**Inside:
Getting the most out of
the summer of 2006!**

No BASEMENT SWIMMING POOL: Installing a sump pump keeps water out

The hard rains of spring and summer can produce results no one wants: water in the basement. Fortunately, many Berkley residences already have a sump pump. For those that don't — or you're considering replacing your current model, here's some additional information.

A sump pump system consists of four major parts: a ground-water collection system, a sump tank, a pump and an outlet drain. Here's how they work: Ground water is collected by drain rock and drain tile buried along the foundation. Drain tile carries the water to the sump tank that is buried in the basement floor.

Normally, a tank is located at the low point of the basement. Most tanks have a hole in each side for incoming drain tile and all have a sturdy cover. When ground water fills the tank to a given level, a float or some other switching device activates a pump.

Standard sump pumps are electric, powered by household current. There are two main types: submersible and pedestal. A

submersible pump is completely concealed inside the tank. A pedestal model has a column that protrudes up through the tank's cover; the motor is mounted on the column, above the floor level. Both types draw water in through a filter trap (this should be cleaned periodically). They pump water out through a discharge pipe and/or hose. As soon as an automatic pump empties the tank to a certain level, its motor turns off.

Installing a new sump system is a job for John of All Trades. It involves trenching, breaking through the basement floor and laying pipe. Obviously, this work isn't cheap -- expect to pay \$2000 or more.

Replacing a sump pump, on the other hand, can be a fairly manageable job for those who are handy at such things. You just pull the electrical plug and disconnect the pump from the piping. (Always disconnect the power be-



fore handling a sump pump; never handle any live electrical components when standing in water.) If you have a submersible pump, it is usually a good idea to remove it annually for cleaning anyway. If you'd prefer to have *John of All Trades* handle the work, we'd be happy to help.

When you're ready to purchase a sump pump, *John of*

All Trades can help with your purchase decision. First decide between a pedestal and submersible pump. A submersible is out of sight and earshot, an important advantage if the basement is used as a primary living area. It's also much safer if there are children in the house. But pedestal pumps are less expensive and last longer. Because submersibles sit in water a good deal of the time, they have a life span of from 5 to 15 years. Pedestals, on the other hand, may continue to operate for as long as 25 or 30 years.