



The Handyman Herald

News, views, & ideas from John of All Trades

Inside this issue:

Your list to a happy home	2
Preventing ice dams on your roof	3
Consider remodeling your kitchen	3
Street Call: Berkley responds to <i>John of All Trades</i>	3
Valuable Money-Saving Coupons	3
Creating space by energizing your basement	4

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

Heating costs can send a shiver down the spine

Right there, on the front page of the Morning Friendly, blared the headline: "Winter's costs hits middle class, too"

The sub-headline told more of the story. "Average gas increase to be \$55 a month in Michigan."

The rest of the *Detroit Free Press* article told the details that can cause you to start considering whether shivering might be the way to go:

- A colder than normal winter is expected.
- Starting January 1st, Michiganders can expect to pay an average of about \$200 a month to heat a typical 1500 square foot home this winter. That's \$55 more than last year's figure.
- According to the article, a typical natural

gas bill will go from around \$950 in 2004-2005 to more than \$1300 for 2005-2006.

The rising costs of heating a house simply send a cold shiver down most people's spine.

With this issue of the *Handyman Herald*, we tackle this issue. While we can't bring the cost of gas down, we can make sure that your house is doing all the right things to insure that you are not using more gas than you need.

The *Free Press* article offered a simple test that I often use to determine how much of Old Man Winter you are inviting into your house. I recommend that you give it a try or if you would prefer, *John of All Trades* would be happy to come by and work with you.

You want to check your home for air tightness. Hold a lit incense stick on a windy day next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets and ceiling fixtures. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak.

Here are some solutions that you can try yourself or give us

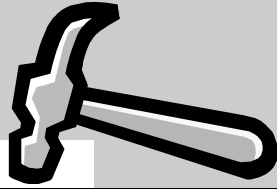
a call:

- Caulk and weatherstrip entry doors and windows that leak air.
- Again, caulk and seal areas where plumbing, ducting, or electrical wiring penetrates through exterior walls, floors, ceilings and soffits over cabinets.
- Install rubber gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on exterior walls.
- Close the chimney damper and put a piece of insulation in an unused fireplace.
- Look for dirty spots in your insulation, which often indicate where air leaks into and out of your house. Cram fiberglass insulation in tight or use spray foam insulation to seal the leaks.
- Install storm windows over single pane windows.

Fighting winter is not a fun battle... but one worthy of the fight!



John Larabell



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

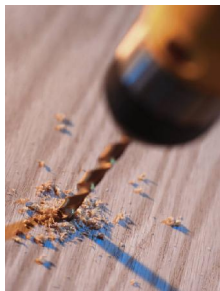
People call the *John of All Trades* office all the time and ask the same question: "Can you _____?" Look through this list and perhaps we can help with some of your home needs. If you don't see something you were hoping to have done — fear not. Give us a call at 248.840.0045. There's a good chance we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



Snow Removal Services Available

Didn't make snow removal plans and tired of trying to dig out yourself?

Let *John of All Trades* come to your rescue. We remove snow for Berkeley residents and still have openings along our route. After the snows in December, it might not be a bad idea to rid yourself (and your back) of some needless aggravation the rest of the winter.

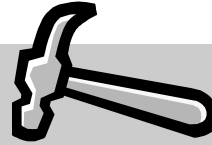
Call today (248.840.0045) to receive a free estimate.

Think Positive! Think Spring!



It's never too early to think about projects you want to implement come summer time. Get a jump on the construction and maintenance season. Contact *John of All Trades*.

We'll give you a quote for new sprinklers, landscaping, windows, roofs... or even large projects like a new deck. The snow will be more bearable when you know you've made plans to make Summer 2006 one to remember.



Kitchen remodels improve resale value

Did your husband or wife give you a new kitchen for Christmas? No? Well, maybe Christmas comes in January.

Kitchens are one of the biggest areas in a home in which you may significantly increase your resale value.

Make 2006 the year that you start enjoying the room in which everyone spends time in every day — the kitchen.

Of course, you can do a lot of the planning yourself. Decide the look that you want. Do you wish to replace the cabinets? Appliances? Floor? Sink? Countertops?

Once you've decided what you like, then turn to *John of All Trades*. We love making people's kitchen dreams come true. We can assist you with any decisions you may need help on.

Then turn the project over to us. Before you know it, a new look will greet you every morning when you turn on the coffee maker.



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

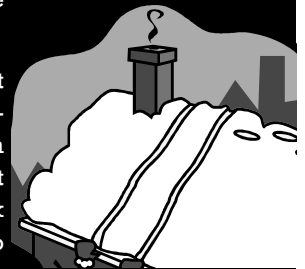
Remove built-up snow from your roof

Ice dam leakage into your house can be avoided with preventative work

When the snow starts to build up this winter, make sure you are properly protecting your biggest investment: your family — not to mention your house.

Removing snow from your roof will keep your roof from getting too heavy and help prevent ice dams.

An ice dam is a ridge of ice that forms at the edge of a roof and prevents melting snow (water) from draining off the roof. The water that backs up behind the dam can leak into a home and cause damage to walls, ceilings, insulation and other areas.



As the dam grows, it is fed by the melting snow above it, but will limit itself to portions of the roof that are on average below 32 degrees. The water above backs up behind the ice dam, remains a liquid, and finds cracks and openings in the exterior roof covering and flows into the attic space. From the attic it can flow into exterior walls or through the ceiling insulation and stain the ceiling finish.

Contact *John of All Trades* to rake your roof and help prevent ice dams. We will remove about 8-12 feet of snow from the bottom portion of your roof. This will prevent ice from building over the gutters. A typical Berkley one-story house or bungalow costs about \$70 to clean. The savings though can be enormous compared to if water starts invading your living quarters.



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: 4/30/06

New Year's Resolution
John of All Trades

\$750

SERVICE CHANGEOVER

Stop blowing fuses in 2006 —

Update your electrical system

(For Most Berkley Homes) Expires: 3/31/06

The John of All Trades Newsletter

4292 Thomas Avenue
Berkley, MI 48072

Phone: 248.840.0045
Email: Help@JohnofAllTrades.com

www.JohnofAllTrades.com

We Care... for Berkley!

Inside:

**Preparing your house for winter
and other useful items!**

Creating a livable, viable basement opens up new living space

People love living in Berkley for the location, the friendliness of their neighbors, the schools, and for many other reasons. One reason most do not live in Berkley is because they have a huge home — especially in comparison to some in northern Oakland County.

So, often times, home owners face that question as their family grows: should I stay or should I go — knowing that they'll be leaving an area they've grown quite fond of that's central to anything in metro-Detroit.

With the home market difficult, many families are now opting for maximizing their existing space. A perfect example is the basement. Could the basement become a family room, a home office, the computer room for surfing the Internet? Can it become bright and exciting versus dark and dingy? Here's a few thoughts:

- Make 2006, the year you weed through the clutter of boxes. You probably don't need all the books, papers, souvenirs, plastic cups, and

files that have piled up in your basement. Create some room.

- Consider overhauling your basement with a complete new look.
- Partition off the washer and dryer. Enclose the furnace and hot water tank. With the remaining space, create a fun room that people will enjoy spending time in.
- Drywall your basement. Replacing cinderblocks with drywall does a few things: first, the look will be drastically improved. Second, you can add insulation between the walls to create a warmer downstairs that will save you money in the long run from those ugly winter heating bills.
- Add glass block windows. In addition to removing drafty conditions, glass block windows reflect more sunlight into your basement than standard regular windows and provide added security.

- Paint your ceiling or add a drop ceiling. People would be amazed at what a difference a painted ceiling makes to the overall look of the room. An exposed ceiling should be done with a power sprayer only.
- Tile the floor. Depending on your budget, adding tile or imitation tile will add a touch of class to your basement. Tile holds up better in a basement than carpeting — especially if you should ever have any flooding... which leads to...
- On a yearly basis, have your sewer lines checked to make sure they are clean to avoid any nasty problems.

Not willing to take on this whole project yourself? *John of All Trades* can help turn your basement into space that you can use for something other than... storing boxes!