

The Handyman Herald

News, views, & ideas from John of All Trades

Winter 2007

Volume 2, Issue 3

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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

Growing up while our community grows

This is the seventh issue we've produced of this newsletter. At first, a high percentage of homes in Berkley received it.

With our last issue, we really expanded our circulation. All homes in Berkley and Huntington Woods received a copy of this publication.

Our phones rang off the hook.

In case you were wondering, that's a good thing!

Of course, there were the typical phone calls that were all about business — people stating the problem if something was broken or the goal of a remodeling project and asking for a price. Those are part of just about any conversation you have.

So many more though were peppered with comments that made you take a minute to pause and reflect on what you're doing.

We had people thank us

for the service we provide. They didn't realize that there was anyone in the area willing to take on small and mundane tasks.

Yes, we still do the small repairs that a lot of places think take up so little time that it is not worth the effort. Yes, we're willing to do jobs that you used to do with your eyes closed when you were 40 but can't do any more now that you're 75. Yes, that's why we offer our free "change your light bulb program" to those that can't easily do something as simple as removing a light bulb over the kitchen sink.

I'll let you in on my business philosophy. I didn't have to get an MBA to learn it either.

It's this: if you treat people the way you hope to be treated (or the way you hope someone would treat your parents if they're getting up there in age), you'll be just fine.

Getting a small repair job is not going to have me buying a condo on some Caribbean island. But it will help me land another job down the road. People remember that you helped them out with a small job and when it is time for a bigger job that takes more

time and costs a lot more, they usually only call one number.

(In case you were wondering, it's the number on the left hand side of this page!!)

Another thing we heard from a lot of people who called was how much they like doing business with a person who lives in the community and whose life is affected day in and day out by the little things that go on in our community that maybe are too small or insignificant to be noticed or covered by the *Free Press* or Channel 4.

Those kind of comments really struck me last December as I rode down 12 Mile during the Berkley Christmas Parade with my family. No, I'm not some major celebrity in my spare time and I'm certainly not Santa Claus. But our *John of All Trades* truck pulled a float for the Boy Scouts and when you're the owner of the company, you get the honor of driving it.

Seeing the streets alive with smiling faces in the bitter cold reminded me that yeah, this place ain't so bad. It's my community and I'm proud to be a part of it.



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
- 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

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PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTATS

If you still have a dial on your thermostat, it might be time to invest a small amount of money for a big return. Programmable thermostats are available at local hardware stores and the big box retailers for as little as \$35. They allow you to precisely heat your house to a temperature of your liking. By programming them, you can save energy costs overnight and while you are away during the day and no one may be home. It's amazing what a difference they can make. You'll note on our backpage that a programmable thermostat is one of the recommendations from the State of Michigan in ways to save on heating costs. Want to save more? See page 3 for a special coupon from *John of All Trades*.

Plan ahead for summer



When the first scents of spring hit, everyone wants their summer projects finished. Spend some time during the winter months to plan what you want to have done when the weather turns nice. Sprinklers? A new deck? A new roof? A patio? Nightscaping? Landscaping? There's a million things we could list. Give us a call now. We'll come out and visit you, provide you with a free quote, and if you decide you'd like to move forward, we'll get you on our schedule so that your projects get done fast... first... and so you can enjoy the summer months without worry!



THE HIT LIST

From cars to kitchens — going green is the rage. Here's how to create a kitchen that's eco-friendly

CONSIDER THIS:

According to U.S. Department of Energy estimates, lighting, refrigeration and cooking are responsible for 41.5% of a home's energy consumption. Add to that regular kitchen activities like water heating, plus space heating and cooling and you begin to get an idea of how critical the kitchen really is. There's an old saying about how a home's life centers around the kitchen...so today we focus on a few tips to help you have a green kitchen. Whether remodeling or looking to make just a few changes, consider John of All Trades for creating a kitchen living space that is lively, fun, and environmentally sound.



#1 KITCHEN RECYCLING CENTER

Available pre-assembled or in cabinet retrofit kits, kitchen recycling centers make it easy to manage your recyclables. They can accommodate any kitchen style and cabinet size. They are available in a full range of cabinet materials.



#2 BUY ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

While it is cheaper to buy a dishwasher, refrigerator, or oven that does not contain the ENERGY STAR seal, you'll often realize the savings in as little as one year since they use 10 to 50% less energy and water than standard models.

#3 USE FLUORESCENT BULBS

This certainly does not qualify as a major point in a remodeling project, but it certainly is green. Even if you do not replace your lighting when remodeling your kitchen, replace standard incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents. They are more expensive, but they last longer and save on your energy costs.



#4 LOW-VOC KITCHEN CABINETS

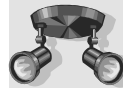
Consider resurfacing or refacing existing cabinets. Cabinets that are made with particleboard or fiberboard are likely to contain urea formaldehyde and are not resistant to moisture. However, sealing them with low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) paint or stain or laminating with a new surface will seal the substrates.

#5 ECO-FRIENDLY FLOORING



Products manufactured from rapidly renewing forests can provide you with a beautiful, affordable and durable floor—and an environmentally responsible choice. Bamboo, cork, and eucalyptus mature in roughly half the time (or less) that it takes hardwoods, grown in colder climates, to reach market size.

#6 PROVIDE TASK LIGHTING



The cost of a control to provide task, safety, or mood lighting can often be offset by the first year's energy savings.



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: 3/31/07

Save on your heating bills!
John of All Trades

\$60

THERMOSTAT & INSTALLATION

We'll install a new programmable thermostat in your home.

Expires: 3/31/07

Getting your home to be Energy Efficient

Here's some tips to save you money on costly heating bills

The Energy Office of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth produced a small brochure entitled "Energy Efficiency Tips for Heating."

Since we are still a few weeks away from "thinking spring" and planning a trip to watch the Tigers play, it is helpful to review this list.

If there's anything on this list that you can't do yourself but would like to pursue, please give *John of All Trades* a call.

1. Install an automatic setback thermostat to lower the temperature to 60 degrees at night and when no one is home.
2. Set water heater temperature at 120 degrees. When you leave on vacation, turn down the temperature on the water heater.



3. Fix leaky or dripping water faucets.

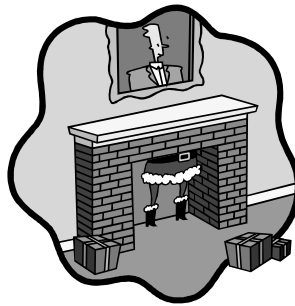
4. Clean or replace air filter on the furnace once a month.



5. Make sure air vents are not blocked.

6. Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors. Add a sweep to the bottom of doors that let cold air in.

7. Install gaskets behind electrical outlet cover plates located on exterior walls.



8. Install glass doors on fireplaces and keep the flue damper closed when the fireplace is not in use.

9. Plant windbreaks to shield your house from the winter wind.

10. Install low flow shower heads.

11. Insulate water pipes to the first horizontal pipe runs off the water heater and provide heat traps on both cold and hot water lines. All hot water pipes located in unconditioned basements/crawl spaces should be insulated.

12. Install water heater blankets in accordance with suppliers' specifications.

13. Consider installation of an instantaneous (tankless) water heater.

14. If you use an electric hot water heater, place it on an insulated pad.

15. Insulate and provide joint sealant on all HVAC duct work.

16. When purchasing new windows or a furnace, look for the ENERGY STAR logo which indicates a high efficiency product.



17. Plug air leaks, especially in the attic and basement. Seal around electrical wire boxes and plumbing cutaways. Seal around recessed lighting fixtures, but use caution because insulation should not be placed near lights.

18. Caulk around outdoor faucets, wire and pipe holes and where different siding materials meet.

19. Upgrade ceiling insulation to R-49 and wall insulation to R-19 if possible. Install R-19 insulation in rim/band joists and R-10 insulation on basement/crawl space walls.



Some of the suggestions are common sense — but it's good to be reminded of them. By following these suggestions, you can watch your bills start to fall.

OUR "HOME FOR SALE" GIFT CERTIFICATE

You may have heard about our Gift Certificate program for people selling their home. It is the talk of the town based on feedback we've received.

We're offering Gift Certificates to people selling their home that are transferable to the new owner. It allows you to counter that they can receive \$250, \$500 or \$1000 in home repairs from the hometown handyman to make any upgrades they desire once they move in.

In such a competitive market, it could be a factor that helps you sell your home and it may ward off some of the nit picky complaints that always come with every home inspection.

John of All Trades

Phone: 248.840.0045

Email: Help@JohnofAllTrades.com



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Internet @

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