AROUND THE HOUSE

DID YOU KNOW?
Insulating and more

In a crawl space where the perimeter walls are concrete and not concrete piers it is best to insulate the concrete walls with styrofoam. Styrofoam, however, is not fireproof and should be covered with a fireproof material such as f.c. sheetrock.

Crawl spaces which are chronically damp are best left unheated, but should be well ventilated.

When insulating the floor joist in an unheated crawl space never use plastic to cover the insulation, this will cause rot and the insulation will become wet. Hold the insulation in place with chicken wire.

Glass fiber insulation is the most common type of insulation. It not only comes in balls and loose fill but also ridge board which is resistant to moisture, mildew, fungus and vermin. It can also come in fireproof or non-combustible type. You can also use fireproof sheetrock over ridge board or styrofoam.

Put a moisture barrier, such as a plastic sheet, on the earth under a crawl space to prevent moisture from entering the home, not on the floor framing.

Water and sewer pipes, ductwork and exhaust ducts in unheated crawl space areas should be made of materials that do not rust or break down from moisture.

Sheetrock walls and ceilings in a garage not only prevent fire, if you have fireproof sheetrock, but also prevents automobile exhaust fumes from entering the house. If you have small or large holes in the sheetrock you should patch them as soon as possible.

The R-value of insulation means resistance. The thicker the insulation the longer it takes for the heat to leave the heated area. That is the reason we add insulation to our homes.

Baffles for soffit vents direct the air flow but also prevent soffit vents from being obstructed by the insulation. Insulation up against the sheathing also causes mold to grow from the moist air from outside the home.

Unheated crawl space should be ventilated to remove moisture. In warm, humid climates where moist air may be drawn into a cool crawl space causing rot and wet insulation vents are no longer used. If you seal off the area, electric heat will keep the area in good condition. With properly insulated walls, floors and celing and temperature all year it will cost less than the replacement of insulation and moisture damaged framing.

If you compress R-30 insulation to R-19 in a wall space it is no longer R-30, it becomes R-19. R-30 is 10” thick and R-19 is 6” thick. This holds true for most insulation.

Increasing insulation is not a repair, it is an improvement which can add not only to the value of your home in resale but also health and comfort.

If you want to add natural fertilizer and air in your lawn and garden purchase 1,000-2,000 worms, depending on your lot size. Within a few years you’ll not only have the best lawn, but every time it rains you will have more birds in your yard than your neighbors. No more chemicals for your lawn. The worms will fertilize as well as loosen the soil for the growth of grass and shrubs.

If you vent your bathroom fan into the attic and then outside, the pipe that carries the moisture laden air should be insulated. If not, the moisture will condense inside the pipe and eventually into the attic.

<u>Insulation should never</u> be installed over knob and tube wires – it will cause a fire.

<u>Insulation should never</u> cover recessed lighting – it can generate heat and cause a fire. Special covers should be provided over recessed lights. You can also purchase special lights that allow for insulation over them.

The main water line shut-off valve should be located and tagged.

Everyone in the home should know how to shut off the water in case of leakage. It should have easy access and be operable.

If the main valve is rusted open, cracked or leaks it should be repaired or replaced.

If you have a pressure regulator valve the pressure should never be more than 80 psi on the main water line. If it is over 80 psi it will cause leaks at fixtures, appliance hoses and possible broken pipe joints.

Copper water piping will last indefinitely unless unusual water conditions such as high corrosive mineral content or manufacturing defects.

Well water should be tested on a regular basis. You should always do this before you purchase a home.

Well water coming out of the ground in northern climates is usually between 50-55 degrees.

Well water recovery tests should be done by a licensed plumber or well driller. This is a test of not only how many gallons the well can pump but more importantly how many gallons and the amount of time it takes for the water to recover in the well. *Example:* If you pump approximately 100 gallons out of the well and it takes several hours for it to recover – this would not be sufficient for a family. Always check with your local or state authorities to know what the requirements are especially if you are buying this house.

If you measure only with an instrument for how many gallons flow through a pipe (this is not a recovery) it only measures how many gallons flow through the pipe at the time it is being measured.

If the well pump comes on and off very quickly this means the pressure tank is full of water and air was absorbed into the water. (If your pressure tank has a diaphragm that separates the air from the water that would not apply). Air should be pumped into the pressure tank as soon as possible to prevent damage to the pump.

Sometimes a cottage will get its water supply from lakes, rivers or cisterns (large holding tanks filled with rain water or delivered water). Often a charcoal filter with an ultra-violet light may make the water potable (drinkable), but have it tested first before you drink it.

If your water pipes hammer when valves are shut off too quickly damage to pipe connections can result in leakage. By adding air chambers past the faucets in the house the air can absorb the water in the pipe, acting as a cushion and the hammering will stop.

Most 30 gallon gas or oil hot water systems are sufficient for a family of four, however you may require a 40 gallon electric hot water system for the same family of four. This has to do with the recovery rate – oil is the fastest to recover, gas second and electric third.

The life expectancy of a hot water heater is between 8-12 years, but there are exceptions to both sides of the years. Well water with its mineral content can change the life expectancy of many appliances.

Compliments of:

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