November/December Basic Home Maintenance Course

As extra money continues to disappear from our pockets, our homes still need to be kept in good condition. Neglecting the minor repairs will only lead to more expense and lessen a home’s value in the future. Have you wanted to make those basic home repairs but didn’t know where to start? This five-class series Basic Home Maintenance Course will show you how. Beginning Tuesday, November 16th from 5:30 – 7:30pm. The remaining dates for the course are Tuesdays, November 23rd, and 30th, and December 7th, and 14th. Some of the topics to be covered are: saving on your heating and cooling bills, basic plumbing repairs, interior and exterior maintenance, landscaping and lawn care, indoor air quality, common household pests, etc. The fee of $20.00 includes all materials and handouts for this five series course.

Tired of Spending Too Much on Winter Heating?

As thermometers drop and energy prices climb, local residents can learn no- and low-cost ways to save on energy bills by attending the free educational workshop, Saving on Your Energy Bills, scheduled for Tuesday, January 25, 2011 at 5:30 pm. In addition to learning how to implement energy-saving measures in their homes, participants will have the opportunity to sign up for home energy audits at a special workshop price. The standard cost of $500 will be reduced to $100 and participants can have a qualified Home Energy Rater conduct an audit of their home and make energy saving recommendations on a personal level. Only individuals attending the workshop will qualify for the reduced audit price.

Baking the Healthy Way this Holiday

Have you been wanting to adjust some of your favorite holiday dishes or baked goods to make them healthier? Do you want some new recipes to try that fit into a Diabetic or Heart Healthy eating plan? Bring your lunch and join us on December 14th from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm at this hands on class where we will try some healthy holiday recipes as well as learn ways to make our favorite recipes healthier. Class size is limited so register early. Registration fee is $5.00 and covers items for the recipes as well as handouts.
Scrubitize Your Holiday Spending

Did you know it takes the average consumer six months to pay off their holiday bills? Although you may be thinking it won’t happen to you, it is easy to get caught up in the material buying of the season. To avoid the trap, set a self-imposed holiday budget.

While drawing up a budget may sound cheap, the exact opposite can be true. Thinking about how you'd really like to celebrate the holiday can make the season more, not less, meaningful. **If you haven’t started yet, now is the time to begin planning.** Waiting until the last minute won’t give you time to find the best deals or the items on sale.

First, list the friends and family members with whom you typically exchange gifts. Then, decide if anyone can be cut. For instance, perhaps you can pick names within your family or agree not to exchange gifts with some friends. Once you have the list, assign a dollar value to each person.

**Try gifts from the heart**

Handmade gifts also can stretch your budget. They may not be appropriate for everyone on your list but use some imagination and you may be surprised what happens.

Try a basket of inexpensive items, nicely arranged. Or, combine homemade goods, like chocolate chip cookies, with a purchased item, like a holiday platter, for an appealing gift at a reasonable price. Some family members or friends may appreciate your time more than an expensive gadget. Rather than get a new coffee maker for your great-aunt, could you take her to the movies or help her run errands?

**Avoid the credit traps**

Don’t buy large items on time. The stores wouldn’t offer the credit if they didn’t expect to make money on it. Another deal to avoid is any offer to skip a credit card payment over the holidays. You’ll end up paying much more in the long run.

**Shopping for children**

Children are bombarded this time of year with catalogs and television commercials featuring the newest and “greatest” toys. To avoid the excessive shopping it will help if catalogs are tossed before they are seen and television commercials are muted so they are not heard. Ask them to identify the items they really want and that are within your budget.

**Additional costs**

- If you'll be traveling over the holiday, start looking for bargains now.
- When it comes to holiday cards, doing it yourself can pay off. Consider sending a letter on brightly colored paper.

Holiday get-togethers also are part of the fun. Instead of a fancy dinner, get together for a potluck, dessert or brunch. Even less expensive, pop popcorn and watch a holiday movie.
ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU BALANCE OUT THOSE HOLIDAY FEASTS

It seems like simply reading the names of those holiday treats can cause the pounds to arrive like unwanted gifts. As hard as we try not to, many of us eat too much, or miss a few workouts during the holidays. Here are some ideas to keep those extra pounds from creeping up. HOUSE WORK is one of the best ways to work in a workout and get the house clean at the same time. SHOPPING is great exercise. Carry your own packages and make extra trips to the car. DO A GOOD DEED — increase your holiday activity by making goodies for your friends and family, then take a brisk walk to deliver your goodies. DON’T BE A COUCH POTATO — get to the end of your seat and bend your legs off the floor while you watch the game or exercise during commercials. KEEP MOTIVATED by getting a group together for a walk after a meal or a game of football.

Here are some more interesting ways to burn calories:

- Loading and unloading the car — 10 minutes = 32 calories
- Wrapping gifts or making crafts — 30 minutes = 48 calories
- Bathing the dog — 15 minutes = 56 calories
- General to heavy housecleaning — 1 hour = 191 calories
- Socializing while standing — 1 hour = 127 calories
- Grocery shopping with a basket — 30 minutes = 79 calories

Eat Smart, Move More...Maintain, don’t gain! Holiday Challenge

This holiday season, stuff the turkey-not yourself! The statewide Eat Smart, Move More NC movement is gearing up for the fifth annual free Maintain, don’t gain! Holiday Challenge. Rather than focusing on trying to lose weight - a difficult task at this time of year - this free six-week challenge provides participants with tips, tricks and ideas to help them maintain their weight throughout the holiday season.

When you join you will receive weekly e-newsletters with healthy recipes, tips and information geared to help you navigate the holiday season. Also available is a Holiday Challenge Blog where you can follow other participants through the challenge and an Ask the Expert column where your questions will be answered by experts in nutrition and exercise!

Free on-line sign-up is now open at:

http://www.MyEatSmartMoveMore.com

The challenge will begin on November 22, 2010 and run through December 31. People who sign up early and complete the pre-survey will receive bonus healthy holiday recipes and a shopping list.

Source: Cooking with EFNEP
Recipes for Eating Smart and Moving More Cook Book.
Window Draperies

Over the past several years many homes have had valances and mini-blinds as their only window coverings. Adding draperies to a window has not been as popular as it once was. However, with rising cost in energy prices it may be something to consider once again.

A drapery’s ability to reduce heat loss and gain depends on several factors, including fabric type (closed or open weave) and color. With such a wide variety of draperies available, it's difficult to generalize about their energy performance.

In the summer during the day, you should close draperies on windows receiving direct sunlight to prevent heat gain. According to the University of Florida, medium-colored draperies with white-plastic backings have been found to reduce heat gains by 33%. Draperies also stay cooler in the summer than some other window treatments because their pleats and folds lose heat through convection.

When drawn during cold weather, most conventional draperies can reduce heat loss from a warm room up to 10%. Therefore, in winter, you should close all draperies at night, as well as draperies that don't receive sunlight during the day.

To reduce heat exchange or convection, draperies should be hung as close to windows as possible. Also let them fall onto a windowsill or floor. For maximum effectiveness, you should install a cornice at the top of a drapery or place the drapery against the ceiling. Then seal the drapery at both sides and overlap it in the center. You can use Velcro or magnetic tape to attach drapes to the wall at the sides and bottom. If you do these things, you may reduce heat loss up to 25%.

Two draperies hung together will create a tighter air space than just one drapery. One advantage is that the room-side drapery will maintain around the same temperature as the interior space, adding to a room's comfort.

Source: US Department of Energy

Realistic Expectations Reduce Stress During the Holidays

Holiday festivities can bring joy and fun, but also lots of pressure. Most of this pressure comes from overcrowded schedules, overspending, overtaxed energy reserves and family tensions that come from trying to make this holiday the “Best Holiday Ever”. To help avoid the negative stress that comes with the holidays, we need to let go of this idea. Holidays do not need to be perfect to be enjoyable. Be realistic about what you can and can not do this year.

Underestimate how much you can do in a day as well as overestimate how long it will take you to do your holiday tasks. Decide what is most important to you and plan this schedule with your family. Donald and Nancy Tubesing, co-authors of “Kicking Your Holiday Stress Habits”, suggest letting your answers to the following three questions be your guide.

1. Which holiday traditions are truly meaningful to you, and which are merely habits? Share those meaningful ones with your children and other family members.

2. Which social activities are really pleasurable events and which are obligations? Take the time to plan what you will attend and not try to do every holiday event.

3. Which gifts do you love to select and present, and which do you hate shopping for and feel required to give? Remember that “presence precedes presents” and that spending time with your loved ones during the holiday time can be a far more valuable gift than anything you can buy.

Setting realistic expectations about the holidays and what you and your family can do will be the beginning of making this holiday time a very enjoyable one.
Demand (Tankless or Instantaneous) Water Heaters

The demand (tankless or instantaneous) water heater is increasing in its popularity especially in new home construction. Before replacing an existing hot water heater with a demand heater, a homeowner needs to be aware of the possible pros and cons.

Demand water heaters provide hot water only as it is needed. They don’t produce the standby energy losses associated with storage water heaters, which can save you money.

How They Work

Demand water heaters heat water directly without the use of a storage tank. Therefore, they avoid the standby heat losses associated with the traditional storage water heater. When a hot water tap is turned on, cold water travels through a pipe into the unit. Either a gas burner or an electric element heats the water. As a result, demand water heaters deliver a constant supply of hot water. You don’t need to wait for a storage tank to fill up with enough hot water. However, a demand water heater's output limits the flow rate.

Typically, demand water heaters provide hot water at a rate of 2–5 gallons per minute. Gas-fired demand water heaters produce higher flow rates than electric ones. Sometimes, however, even the largest, gas-fired model cannot supply enough hot water for simultaneous, multiple uses in large households. For example, taking a shower and running the dishwasher at the same time can stretch a demand water heater to its limit. To overcome this problem, you can install two or more demand water heaters, connected in parallel for simultaneous demands of hot water. You can also install separate demand water heaters for appliances—such as a clothes washer or dishwasher—that use a lot of hot water in your home.

Although gas-fired demand water heaters tend to have higher flow rates than electric ones, they can waste energy if they have a constantly burning pilot light. This can sometimes offset the elimination of standby energy losses when compared to a storage water heater. In a gas-fired storage water heater, the pilot light heats the water in the tank so the energy isn't wasted. The cost of operating a pilot light in a demand water heater varies from model to model. Ask the manufacturer how much gas the pilot light uses for the model you're considering. If you purchase a model that uses a standing pilot light, you can always turn it off when it's not in use to save energy. Also consider models that have an intermittent ignition device (IID) instead of a standing pilot light. This device resembles the spark ignition device on some gas kitchen ranges and ovens.

For homes that use 41 gallons or less of hot water daily, demand water heaters can be 24%–34% more energy efficient than conventional storage tank water heaters. They can be 8%–14% more energy efficient for homes that use a lot of hot water—around 86 gallons per day. You can achieve even greater energy savings of 27%–50% if you install a demand water heater at each hot water outlet. For additional information go to the Department of Energy Website at: http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=12820

Turkey Hotline Numbers: You can call our office 8 am to 5 pm or one of these.

Turkey Talk Line: 1-800-BUTTERBALL (288-8372)  Online Assistance: http://www.butterball.com
November 1st - 21st Weekdays and Weekends – 8:00 am - 10:00 pm
November 22nd - 24th 9:00 am-7:00 pm Thanksgiving Day 7:00 am - 7:00 pm
November 26th - December 23rd Weekdays and Weekends 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
December 24th, 25th (Christmas Eve and Christmas Day) 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline – 1-888-674-6854
You may speak with a food safety specialist from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm on weekdays year round. On Thanksgiving - 8:00 am - 2:00 pm or for Online Assistance: http://www.fsis.usda.gov (general food safety, preparation and handling of meat and poultry products).
Countdown to the Holidays

As Thanksgiving approaches, plan your menu several weeks before the holiday. Shopping early will ease the countdown tension for your Thanksgiving meal. Ask these questions to help plan your meal. Do you want a fresh or frozen turkey? Do you have enough space to store a frozen bird if purchased in advance; if not, when should you purchase a turkey? What size bird do you need to buy?

Fresh or Frozen

If you choose to buy a frozen bird you may do so at any time, but make sure you have adequate storage space in your freezer. If you buy a fresh turkey, be sure you purchase it only 1-2 days before cooking. Do not buy a pre-stuffed fresh turkey. **Remember to thaw your turkey in the refrigerator.**

**Safe Thawing Times:**  You need about 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds of turkey.

- 4 to 12 pounds - 1 to 3 days
- 12 to 16 pounds - 2 to 4 days
- 16 to 20 pounds - 4 to 5 days
- 20 to 24 pounds - 5 to 6 days

**Preparation The day before Thanksgiving**

Make sure you have all the ingredients you need to prepare your holiday meal. Check to make sure you have all the equipment you will need, including a roasting pan large enough to hold your turkey and a food thermometer. Wet and dry stuffing ingredients can be prepared ahead of time and refrigerated separately. This may also be done on Thanksgiving Day. Mix ingredients just before placing the stuffing inside the turkey cavity or into a casserole dish.

**Thanksgiving Day**

If you choose to stuff your turkey, stuff loosely. The stuffing should be moist, not dry, since heat destroys bacteria more rapidly in a moist environment. Place stuffed turkey in oven immediately. You may also cook the stuffing outside the bird in a casserole.

**Remember to cook your turkey at 325° to an internal temperature of 165° F.**

**General Cooking Times:**

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<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Unstuffed</th>
<th>Stuffed</th>
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<tr>
<td>8 to 12 pounds</td>
<td>2 ¾ to 3 hours</td>
<td>3 to 3 ½ hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 to 14 pounds</td>
<td>3 to 3 ¾ hours</td>
<td>3 ½ to 4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 to 18 pounds</td>
<td>3 ¼ to 4 ¼ hours</td>
<td>4 to 4 ¼ hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 to 20 pounds</td>
<td>4 ¼ to 4 ½ hours</td>
<td>4 ¼ to 4 ¾ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 pounds</td>
<td>4 ½ to 5 hours</td>
<td>4 ¾ to 5 ¼ hours</td>
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Remember these are only general times the Turkey is not done until the internal temperature reaches 165° F.

**Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey.**

A whole turkey is safe cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F throughout the bird. Check the internal temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. All turkey meat, including any that is pink, is safe to eat as soon as all parts reach at least 165 °F. The stuffing should reach 165 °F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish. When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes. Remove stuffing and carve turkey.

**Storing Leftovers**

Cut the turkey into small pieces; refrigerate stuffing and turkey separately in shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within 3-4 days or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165° F or until hot and steaming.
Making It Through the Holidays Stain-lessly

The Holidays are the time of year when we are at most risk for getting a troublesome stain. Keep in mind the quicker we take care of the stain the more likely we are to successfully get rid of it. Also, air dry items until you have removed as much as you can of the stain. Here are some tips for the most common holiday stains.

- **Candle Drippings**: Scrape off excess wax with a dull knife. Place stain between paper towels. Press with a warm iron from back of fabric. Then, place stain face down on clean paper towels and sponge with a dry-cleaning solvent. Air-dry and launder again using bleach according to fabric instructions.

- **Lipstick**: To remove lipstick, scrape fabric stain with a dull knife. Use a dry-cleaning solvent or pre-treat with detergent or stain treatment. Wash in warm water. Air dry to ensure all of stain is removed.

- **Chocolate**: Pretreat with a liquid detergent or soak fabric in warm water using a detergent containing enzymes. Difficult stains may require using a bleach safe for the garment.

- **Wine**: Rinse in cold water to dilute stain. Soak up to 20 minutes in detergent, weighed with a towel to keep submerged. Launder in hottest water safe for fabric and color. Air-dry and repeat if necessary. On carpets, mix one teaspoon of a mild detergent containing no alkali or bleaches with one cup of lukewarm water. Blot the stained area. You can also mix one-third cup of white vinegar with two-thirds cup of water. Blot. Repeat step one. Sponge the stained area with clean water. Blot.

- **Perspiration**: Dampen stain with warm water and rub with bar soap. Launder in hot water with chlorine bleach, if safe for fabric. If color change to fabric, you can apply ammonia to fresh stains or vinegar to old stains and rinse. Launder in the hottest water safe for fabric and color.

- **Berries or Fruits**: Rinse in cold water to dilute stain. Soak up to 30 minutes in detergent, weighted with a towel to keep submerged. Launder using bleach, if safe for fabric or color safe bleach and the hottest water safe for fabric.

- **Colored Candy**: Rinse in warm water to dilute stain. Wash in warm to hot water and dry as usual.

- **Food Grease and Oils**: Use a dry-cleaning solvent or pre-treat with laundry product by rubbing into stain until saturated. Wash in warm to hot water. Air-dry and repeat as needed.

- **Tree Sap**: Use dry-cleaning solvent and then wash in detergent in warm to hot water. Dry and repeat if necessary.

- **Milk or Dairy**: Rinse in cold water to dilute stain. Soak up to 20 minutes with detergent, weighted with a towel to keep submerged. Wash in warm to hot water and air-dry.

- **Gravy**: Scrape off excess with a dull knife if dried. Pre-treat: Soak with a laundry product containing enzymes or rub with liquid laundry detergent or paste of powder laundry detergent and water. Launder and dry as usual.

Remember, act quickly and air-dry until stain is removed. Call our office if you need more information on stain removal and prevention.

Source: University of Florida
Cranberry Applesauce

Ingredients:
- 4 large cooking apples, peeled, cored & cut into chunks
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions:
Place all ingredients into a 4 quart saucepan. Bring to a boil and cook over low heat, covered, until the cranberries pop and the apples are soft (15 - 20 minutes). Place in a food processor and blend until smooth.

Serve warm or chilled.

Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association

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