

The Brillo Pad

Jan/Feb/Mar 2008
First Quarter Issue



Are You Ready for Spring?

If and when Old Man Winter finally dies down and spring breezes in, don't forget to give your home a do-it-yourself home inspection, which can save money on repairs in the long run.

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EXTERIOR

- Scan the roof for any missing or damaged shingles, paying special attention around chimneys and vents.
- Inspect gutters and downspouts to see that they haven't pulled loose and that they aren't clogged. Make sure downspouts are extended at least 4 feet away from the foundation.
- Check the paint and caulking around the house. Be sure all of the caulking is intact to stop leaks around windows and doors.
- Inspect the siding and scan all brickwork for cracks.
- Check that there are no bushes or plantings within a foot of the air conditioning unit, and make sure there aren't any animal nests inside the unit.
- Check the dirt grading around the foundation. The dirt should slope away from the foundation at least 6 inches in the first 10 feet.
- If you have a deck or porch, check for rotting materials, mold and make sure all nuts and bolts are tightened. If the deck shakes or sways, extra bracing should be added. Decks and porches should be cleaned and sealed every two to three years.

BASEMENT

- Grab a flashlight and scan everything in the basement. Check the water and sewer pipes for leaks, look at the basement walls and floor for large cracks or mold, and look for signs of pests or rot.
 - If there is any water in the basement, it should be addressed immediately.
 - Be sure to check for rust on the hot water heater. Spring is a good time to service hot water heaters and all heating, ventilation and air conditioning units (HVAC). All HVAC systems should be professionally inspected and serviced twice a year, and a hot water heater should be serviced at least once a year.
 - If there are cracks in the walls, take a picture with a ruler next to them, or measure them and monitor any changes. Cracks approaching 1/4 of an inch or larger should be assessed by a professional.
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of:



Are You Ready for Spring?...Continued

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ELECTRICAL

- We do not recommend that homeowners tinker with the electrical panel, that's a job best left for an electrician. If there is any buzzing or humming from the panel, call a pro immediately.
- If any circuits are repeatedly being tripped, it may mean the panel is being overworked, especially in older homes that don't have a high amp capacity.
- Check for any frayed electrical cords in the house, and make sure that extension cords aren't being used as permanent wiring.

PLUMBING

- Start where the water supply enters the home. Turn the main water valve off and on, checking for any leaks. Grab a flashlight and scan all visible pipes for leaks.
- If accessible, check the areas below bathrooms to ensure there aren't any leaks into ceilings, basements or crawlspaces.
- Work your way through the entire house, checking all valves, fixtures and appliances.
- If there is low water pressure, it could mean there is a leak or a rusting pipe.

WINDOWS & DOORS

- Open and close all doors and windows. Tighten the screws in any loose hinges, and lubricate with a silicone spray if any are squeaking.
- If any windows or doors rattle during high winds, they are no longer sealing out the outdoors.
- Seal any peeling paint or cracked caulk, which may let moisture into the house.

ATTIC

- Shine a flashlight into the attic eaves and look for any signs of pests. If you find any, contact a professional immediately.
- Look for any streams of light coming in through holes in the roof.
- Make sure there is enough insulation for summer and winter. If there is too little insulation, you could get ice dams in the attic and roof.

If your home needs repairs that you are not comfortable handling or if you have safety concerns, give us a call.

Happy Spring!



2008 Milwaukee/NARI WI Remodeler's Awards

Brillo won the following awards for projects submitted in 2007. More information is available on our website.

Silver Award: Kitchen \$60,000-\$100,000



Before



After

Silver Award: Bath \$30,000 - \$60,000



Before



After

Silver Award: Bath Over \$60,000

Unused porch turned into Master Suite.



Before



After

Gold Award: Commercial Specialty

Also winner of the 2008 NARI National Contractor of the Year Regional Award - Commercial Specialty Category



Before



After

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New Brochure and Website

We recently had our brochure revamped by a professional graphics designer and the results are spectacular. Our website administrator is designing a new website using the layout of the brochure. We expect to launch the new www.brillohomeimprovements.com in April. Stay tuned for launch details because there will be chances to win some pretty cool prizes...

Brillo Barbeque 2008

Our 30th anniversary party was a success and due to some very positive feedback, we are proud to present Brillo Barbeque 2008:

- WHO:** You and your significant other, or a friend or two.
- WHAT:** A barbeque-type picnic with food and drink.
- WHEN:** Saturday, June 14th, 2008 from 11:00am to 3:00pm - stop by or stay all day.
- WHERE:** Brillo Headquarters at 5315 N. Lovers Lane Road in Milwaukee.
- WHY:** To thank our clients for their business (also an excuse to mingle and be merry).