

# HOMEXPERT

Simple ways to improve your home comfort, safety and value.

Spring 2008

\$3.00

## MY WORD

### Foul & Fair Weather Friend

By Steven Heidler & Mick Heidler



Dear Friends,

Well, here we are again. The temperatures are a little warmer, and signs of spring are starting to find their way into the neighborhoods.

If you're like me, you enjoy the start of a new season. The change of scenery does us all good. We have a chance to catch our breath as winter gray fades into a cool breeze across a budding landscape. But not for long... because then it's back to work for you!

In any seasonal change, we want to make sure we get our top customers ready for the days ahead, and the milder months are a good time for tending to matters that most people put on the back burner during the year. That includes your plumbing system!

As you surely know, the warmer months see lots more water use – whether it's nurturing your lawn, maintaining the pool or keeping the kids clean! So before the heavy load hits, call us and let us give your plumbing system a thorough inspection. Just think of it as a little “spring cleaning” that

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- Let There Be Light
- Safe Driving Practices
- First Place a *Bad* Thing?

## MONEY WISE

### Fitting the Flow of Modern Life... in the Bathroom

**W**hat's the latest in bathroom trends? A few themes have been emerging in recent years:

#### Showers are the new tubs

Though garden tubs in master baths have been the rage in new home construction for awhile, busy home-

owners have started to ask, “Who's got time to soak in the tub?” While the functionality of showers takes on more attention, look for lots more options than the single showerhead behind a vinyl curtain.

Spa-like features include multi-functioning shower-heads, multiple body sprays, hand showers with adjustable jets – all for immersion, massaging and relaxation.

**A flush beats a full house** - The government called for low-flow toilets in new homes in the mid-1990s because it was hard to argue with the numbers: they can save up to 22,000 gallons a year for a family of four. Homes with water-

guzzling models built prior to that time are ripe for replacement. Plus, you also have options now in faucet aerators and showerheads for even more water savings.

#### Safety is still first

The bathroom is the site of 70% of accidents in the home, so follow these precautions. Minimize slips with non-skid bathmats in tubs or shower stalls and non-skid rugs on tile floors, and reduce the risk of falls with grab bars near the tub or shower or near the toilet. Many designs and finishes fit well with bath decor, fixtures and accessories.

Also, set your household water heater no higher than 120°F. And if you have an older shower system that produces “shower shock” – a temperature change following a water pressure change from a flushed toilet, new dishwasher cycle, etc. – consider installing a pressure-balanced shower valve to keep shower temperature consistent, comfortable and safe.

Give us a call if we can help!



**Your Quik Call Comfort Hotline:**

**410-268-7191**

[www.heidlerplumbing.com](http://www.heidlerplumbing.com)

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## Practice Safe Driving Strategies

Driving is serious business with potentially serious consequences when things go wrong. Each year in the U.S., an estimated 50,000 people die in crashes and 22 million are injured.

**Watch the Time** – Crashes occur more often during weekday rush hours, but the more severe crashes are likely to occur between midnight and 3 a.m. on weekends. That's when drunk drivers tend to take the wheel – and also when sober drivers who take the wheel tend to get sleepy.

**Anticipate** – Know what's ahead of you and what's around you. Your ability to react is greatly improved if you see what's happening for several cars up the road. Remember, in driving, "meeting in the middle" is never a good idea. When changing lanes on a multiple lane highway, pay attention to whether a driver two lanes away has the same idea you do!

**Slow Down** – Going above the speed limit increases your risk of being involved in a crash because it cuts into your reaction time. Also, the physics of a heavy object traveling at a high rate of speed increases the crash's potential to cause damage.

**Don't Run Red Lights** – For some drivers, "green" means "go," but "yellow" means speed up! Stop when it's your time to stop – and watch for red light runners when it's your time to go.

**Avoid Distractions** – Yes, that means get off the phone. Put the sandwich down. Stop applying your makeup. Let the kids work out whatever they're yelling about. And pay attention to what you're doing!

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## HOME WISE

### Let There Be Light

When Thomas Edison invented the incandescent bulb over 125 years ago, he probably didn't foresee a frenzy to outlaw his invention – especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But it appears that the bulbs are facing a forced retirement as Congress rallies to ban them in the face of rising energy costs.

#### So what's the big deal?

Well, about 90% of the energy these bulbs create is wasted as heat. And when energy is wasted, your energy dollars are being wasted.

That's why Congress is proposing a ban on incandescent bulbs by 2012. New light sources will be required to maintain at least a 70% efficiency standard, and so far the frontrunner is none other than the readily-available compact fluorescent bulb.

By changing just one incandescent bulb to fluorescent,

homeowners can save up to \$50 in energy costs over the life of the bulb. The estimated savings for the United States is \$40 billion from 2012 to 2030. Plus, the switch can also cut carbon emissions by 51 million tons annually – a significant step in slowing global warming.



Australia, Ireland, Canada, and the European Union are in the process of ins-

tituting similar energy standards, making the possible implications of higher efficiency even greater.

See? Even the small things that we do add up to huge impacts for our planet. So do your part and let us help. Give us a call and we'll be happy to review your options for energy efficient lighting, plus share even more ways to help you save energy.

## HEARD BY OUR EDITORS

- Since almost 50% of the energy used in homes is for heating and cooling, by moving your thermostat down 2° in winter and up 2° in summer, you could save almost 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide.
- Planting a tree can absorb a ton of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere over the life of the tree, as well as reducing energy costs with its shade.
- Properly inflated tires can improve gas mileage by more than 3%, keeping 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere for every gallon of gas saved.
- It takes 10 times more energy to produce frozen food than it does fresh food.

## Tips for Handling Stress

**S**tress is a part of daily life, and it always will be unless we plan to stay out of traffic, get along well with everyone we know, greet monthly bills with joy, relish staff meetings, look forward to long lines in grocery stores, and delight in news coverage. Well, you get the picture.

To better handle the unavoidable frustrations of life, keep the following tips in mind:

- **Practice good habits** - Nothing helps keep stress in line more than following the age-old prescription of getting regular exercise, maintaining a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, limiting alcohol and quitting smoking.
- **Take a relaxation break** - During the middle of a busy day, taking a brief break can help you recharge your batteries. For example, watch the clouds float in the sky, count your blessings, or read an inspirational thought.
- **Release the tension** - Squeeze a stress ball for a few minutes. As your muscles relax, the tension releases. You can also try an easy yoga technique, such as breathing slowly. Focus your attention on your breath, making the out-breath twice as long as the in-breath.
- **Sip on something soothing** - Instead of soda or coffee, drink green tea with theanine, which has relaxation-inducing qualities. Or choose black tea,

*Stress is a part of daily life, and it always will be*

which studies have shown to lower the stress hormone cortisol. Also, a glass of cold water can really get your blood moving too, while reducing the fatigue of dehydration.

- **Get organized** -

The clutter in your house or on your desk can be a real energy zapper, while a clear work space clears your brain for good ideas.

- **Maintain a positive environment** - Remember “the power of positive thinking”?

It makes sense that being positive helps with a good mental outlook. You, too, are influenced by attitudes and actions of others. Avoid those who wear you down with constant complaints and negativity.

- **Learn to say no** - We face many opportunities to say “yes” to worthwhile activities. But the true strength of purpose sometimes comes in saying no. Make good choices about how you spend your time, and learn to let go of activities that don’t fit your priorities.

### “Quotable”

*All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope.*

~Winston Churchill

News

Flash

## What Do You Mean First Place Isn't A Good Thing?

**M**ost of the time we love to come in first place. After all, who doesn't love to be a winner? But sometimes coming in first is nothing short of embarrassing – especially when it comes to pollution.

Even though the United States only makes up 5% of the world's population, we account for 25% of the world's total carbon emissions. That makes us the number one global warming polluters.

Global warming directly contributes to severe climate changes that are already affecting us. Because of higher temperatures and earlier snow melts, the U.S. fire season has increased by 78 days over the last 20 years. Droughts have caused a fresh-water crisis.

As members of a global community, we share the responsibility of caring for our planet. And there's never been a better time to step up. Here are a few tips for reducing your carbon footprint:

**Walk or use a bicycle** instead of your car whenever possible. You'll save money on gas and improve your health at the same time.

**Filter your tap water** instead of buying bottled water. Bottled water is not only expensive, it produces large quantities of container waste.

**Compost your food scraps.** It reduces waste that ends up in a landfill, and in the process you create free fertilizer for your lawn or garden.

We've only got one planet, so let's do our best to take care of it. If we don't, the generations behind us may not get the chance to clean it up after us.

## MY WORD (...from page 1)

will be time well spent when the summer heat rolls in.

Do you have anything else on the back burner – like leaking faucets and toilets? Fixtures you're ready to replace? Please know we're here to make your life easier,

and we're ready to tend to any plumbing detail that comes your way. So let us here from you – now, and whenever you need us.

Looking forward to visiting you soon.

Sincerely,



Steven Heidler & Mick Heidler

P.S. Check out the special offers on this page for some super discounts. We hope you'll be able to use them, but if you aren't, please feel free to pass them on to your friends. We'd love to help them out too!

### HomePoints

You can reduce your utility bills by up to \$145 a year by using a low-flow showerhead.

## I'd Like to Borrow Several of Your Friends

Now what kind of question is that? You'd think I wasn't raised properly. But the truth of the matter is that we here at **Heidler, Inc** enjoy providing superior service and value to our customers (that's you!). And we'd like to offer the same expertise to your friends and family. Just call **Heidler, Inc** at **410-268-7191** and let us know you're sending another friendly face our way and we'll take **\$20 off** your next service. Just our way of saying thank you!

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## Kabobs, Anyone?



Want a permanent solution to your propane problem? Your plumber can connect your gas grill to your home's natural gas lines. No more fumbling around with heavy propane tanks or running out of gas. Call **Heidler, Inc** at **410-268-7191** today.

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## Never Take a Cold Shower Again

Well, not unless you want to. The Forever Hot Water system lets you enjoy an endless supply of steaming water whenever you want – and reduces your energy bills to boot!

How? With traditional water heaters you pay to reheat the same water again and again — even when you're not using it. With Forever Hot Water you pay to heat the water when you need it. And it never runs out! So call us today and find out how you can start enjoying endless hot water — and savings! — now.

Call **Heidler, Inc** at **410-268-7191**.



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