



# Spring Home & Garden

April 27, 2022 | A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE

GASCONADE  
COUNTY

**Republican**

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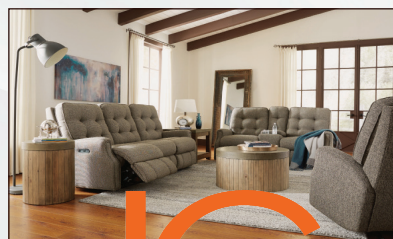


## 'Goats on the Go' clear the hillside

Rhonda Devault's "Goats on the Go" business includes a collection of hungry workers as she provides landscaping clearing services with her team of Kiko boar crossbred goats. Based out of the Strain-Japan area, Devault was in her third grazing season in August 2021 with the all-female crew of goats ranging in age from 3 to 5-years-old which were clearing a hillside lot for Gary and Ricky Hacker in the Peaceful Valley Lake community. The Hackers had acquired the overgrown lot beside their home in 2015 and were clearing off invasive vegetation between their house and boat ramp. Devault, a 1986 Owensville High School graduate, also has "Sheep on the Go." Her Tuckerridge Farms, LLC, operation is insured and she provides fencing which operates off of solar chargers and trailered shelter. She provides water for the animals. They eat off the land they are clearing of invasive plants such as multi-flora rose and bush honeysuckle.

PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER

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**TO CONTACT** Rhonda Devault about hiring her "Goats on the Go" service, email her at Rhondadevault@gmail.com or call 573-308-8421.

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## Missouri Tomato School set for May 19, 20

**T**he Missouri Tomato School will be Thursday and Friday, May 19 and 20, at Woods Chapel United Methodist Church, 4725 NE Lakewood Way, Lee's Summit, Mo.

This state-wide tomato school brings together top experts in the field with regional experts and successful local tomato farmers to teach growers and serious hobbyists how to better grow Missouri's top selling vegetable. Out-of-state growers and ag educators are welcome.

Day one begins at 8:45 and will be in a socially-distanced classroom format. Day 1 presentations include: Tomato nutrient management, top ten best practices for tomato harvest and postharvest storage, tomato disease management, hydroponic tomato cultivation, beneficial insects vs pests, growing tomatoes in protective structures, using essential oils to control pests and comparing yields of grafted and non-grafted tomatoes

Day two will be a farm tour with on-site education at Redfearn Farm in Independence from 9 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. This conference features national and regional presenters including:

See **Tomatoes**, Page 5B

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## Did you know?

It's no secret that a good-looking lawn can entice buyers when selling a home, but homeowners may not realize just how much they can benefit from even the smallest investments of time and money in their home exteriors. According to the Top Agent Insights Q2 2019 Report from HomeLight, low-cost outdoor home improvements to a landscape provide sizable returns on investment. For example, the report found that a \$268 investment in a lawn care service can lead to a \$1,211 increase in home value at resale. Similarly, \$340 worth of fresh mulch can increase home value at resale by \$769. More than 85 percent of real estate professionals who participated in the HomeLight survey recommended other small and simple projects, including removing dirt, grime and cobwebs from a home entrance and trimming trees and shrubs prior to putting a home on the market.

### Tomotes • from page 4B

Dr. Rick Snyder, Mississippi State University — Dr. Snyder recently retired after serving 33 years as Extension/ Research Professor at the Truck Crops Experiment Station in Crystal Springs, Miss. His educational background includes a B.S. from the University of Connecticut, an M.S. from Ohio State University, and Ph.D. from Cornell University, all in horticulture. His areas of specialty include commercial production of greenhouse tomatoes and other vegetables, as well field vegetables. Dr. Snyder hosted the well-known Mississippi Greenhouse Tomato Short Course for 28 years and is a highly sought speaker on all aspects of greenhouse tomato production. He continues to be a greenhouse columnist for American Vegetable Grower Magazine after 29 years and still enjoys speaking to growers' groups and doing some greenhouse consulting during his retirement.

Dr. T. Casey Barickman — Dr. Barickman is an Associate Research Professor at Mississippi State University's North Mississippi Research and Extension Center specializing in plant physiology and vegetable production systems. Dr. Barickman has over 16 years of experience in horticulture research studying plant physiology. His research focuses on environmental stress and genetic interactions that affect plant growth and development, vegetable nutritional quality, and nutrient management for vegetable production systems. Dr. Barickman's lab blends applied and basic research to provide science-based management recommendations to vegetable growers in Mississippi.

Registration for the in person program is \$30. Registration includes lunch on day one, all presentations and handouts, and the farm tour on day two.

Complete conference information and a registration form are available at <http://www.webbcityfarmersmarket.com/training> or by calling 417 483-8139.

The Missouri Tomato Conference is sponsored by the Webb City Farmers Market, University of Missouri Extension, and Lincoln University Co-operative Extension. It is underwritten by a specialty crops grant from the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

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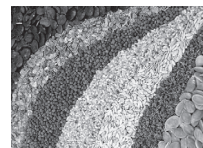
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## If your yard could talk: Six things it wants you to know

Backyarding is the trend born out of necessity during the pandemic as people moved indoor activities including working, entertaining, exercising and vacationing into their family backyards. Homeowners invested in their outdoor areas in record amounts, spending time, sweat equity and money to ensure they utilized every square inch of their yards for expanded living space and an oasis for relaxation and stress relief.

According to the recent “Yards Study” Harris Poll, more than two-thirds of Americans who have a yard (69 percent) say doing yard work — either maintaining it or adding/updating features — is one of the ways they like to de-stress these days. This is especially true among parents of kids under 18.

“Over the last few years, families have used their yards more than ever before, and the Harris Poll indicates a vast majority of those who have a yard plan to invest even more in their yard in the coming year,” says Kris Kiser, president & CEO of the TurfMutt Foundation. “Since backyarding is now part of our everyday lives, we have some advice — from the yard, if

you will — for families to take into account this spring.”

The TurfMutt Foundation offers these messages from your yard — if your lawn and landscape could talk.

### Plant more, early and often

Adding trees, bushes, grass and flowering plants is a good yard investment, but they often take time to grow. Plant as early as recommended to enjoy the benefits faster. Remember the Golden Rule of backyarding: “right plant, right place.” Location, maintenance, sunlight and watering needs should all be considered, as well as your climate zone.

### You work on me, and I work for you

The more time you spend in your yard, the more health and well-being benefits gained. Backyarding means exploring, appreciating and spending time in your own personal patch of nature, which reduces stress, improves memory, boosts heart health, and offers a host of other benefits for our minds and bodies.



### I have environmental superpowers

Family yards are environmental superheroes — producing oxygen, absorbing carbon, and capturing and filtering rainwater. By becoming a steward of your living landscapes, you can have a positive impact on our environment and help mitigate the effects of climate change on a micro level.

### You're not the only one who depends on me

Your yard is an important part of the connected ecosystem, and adding flowering plants, trees and shrubs give wildlife and pollinators food and shelter. Check your climate zone for landscaping options that support the birds, bees, butterflies and other wildlife that call your neighborhood home.

### Please care for me properly

Only water when necessary. Over-watered grass gets lazy, growing roots in a horizontal pattern. With less water, grass sends its roots deeper — vertically — seeking water. By working harder, grass does a better job of sequestering carbon and releasing oxygen. Install watering solutions — like smart controllers on irrigation systems — that helps conserve water while maintaining your backyard.

### Cutting height

Additionally, find the just-right length to cut your turfgrass (typically between 2-3 inches).

Sign up for Mutt Mail, a monthly e-newsletter with backyarding tips and all the news from the TurfMutt Foundation. To learn more about creating the yard of your dreams, visit TurfMutt.com.

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## How to corral a crabgrass infestation

**A** well-manicured lawn adds undeniable curb appeal to a property. Homeowners who take pride in their lawns should know that they can take that pride all the way to the bank, as investing in a pristine lawn can provide a significant return at resale.

A 2019 report from the real estate experts at HomeLight found that a \$268 investment in lawn care service can add \$1,211 at resale. That's a 352 percent return on investment.

Homeowners can capitalize on a pristine lawn even further by tending to their own lawns. Crabgrass is one lawn problem that can compromise the look of an otherwise lush lawn. Thankfully, crabgrass can be controlled without much effort.



### Identifying crabgrass

Crabgrass is a weed that grows in areas of a lawn that are bare or where the grass is thin. Crabgrass gets its name from its appearance, as it grows from the center outward and mimics the look of crab legs emerging from the center shell.

### The growth of crabgrass

The University of Minnesota Extension notes that crabgrass is an annual plant. That means a crabgrass infestation that's problematic once the mercury rises in the summer will die out in late fall or early winter. But crabgrass germinates in the spring, so homeowners will want to take steps to prevent it long before it becomes an eyesore in summer.

### How to corral crabgrass

The UME notes that application of a pre-emergent herbicide before crabgrass seeds can germinate is an effective way to eliminate it. The timing of that application can be tricky, as jumping the gun and applying the herbicide too early can prove fruitless. The same goes for applying herbicides too late. Crabgrass will likely still grow if the herbicide is applied too early or too late. UME recommends applying a pre-emergent herbicide when soil temperatures approach 55 F.

Home Depot notes that a chemical treatment may be applied after crabgrass has already grown in, but this option requires careful application to avoid killing surrounding healthy grass.

Crabgrass can be pulled out by hand, but such an approach can be physically daunting. That's especially so because crabgrass thrives when the weather is hot and dry. So homeowners who intend to pull crabgrass by hand can decrease their risk of dehydration or heat-related illness by drinking plenty of water and pulling the grass during early morning or evening hours when the sun is

lower and temperatures are more mild.

Crabgrass can compromise the look of an otherwise healthy lawn. But various strategies can

eliminate crabgrass and restore a lawn without much effort on the part of homeowners.

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# Solar energy's growing popularity draws more homeowners with questions



BY EDWARD GEHLERT  
 REPUBLICAN STAFF WRITER  
 egehlert@wardpub.com

**S**olar energy as an alternative source to traditional power generation is becoming more popular in the United States, primarily due to the long-term savings it brings to the average household and the sense of self-reliance it imparts to those utilizing the technology.

Three Rivers Electric Cooperative Manager of Member Services Rich Eisterhold noted that the government is talking about alternative energies, including solar and wind.

“I think that puts it at the front of people’s minds, and prices have fallen within the last several years,” said Eisterhold, a solar power enthusiast who has been with Three Rivers for 34 years.

The dropping cost of equipment and installation of solar energy systems is one of the deciding factors for people who have been toying with the idea of using solar panels to supplement their energy needs.

“One of the earlier systems installed on a home east of here, after a Department of Agriculture grant, came to a net cost of \$5.50 per watt,” said Eisterhold. “So, a 10,000-watt system cost them \$55,000. Today, that same system costs less than \$3 per watt.”

Damage to such expensive equipment is a concern for many homeowners. Though modern solar panels are durable, damage can

See **Solar**, Page 9B

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## Solar • from page 8B

still occur, but homeowner's insurance will cover this in many cases. "Solar panels are pretty tough," said Eisterhold. "They have a tempered glass cover. Solar panels are 100 percent capacity at day one. There is a linear depreciation, so they depreciate half to one percent annually. After so many years of depreciation, if hail destroys them, your homeowner's insurance will replace them."

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), solar power accounted for 3 percent of U.S. electricity generation from all sources in 2021 and is expected to increase to 20 percent by 2050. For perspective, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), roughly 4 percent of homes in the U.S. are powered by solar energy.

Renewable sources of electricity generation accounted for almost 20 percent of the total amount produced in 2021. These sources included solar, wind, hydro, biomass, and geothermal. By comparison, other traditional sources of power generation measured were nuclear (19 percent), coal (22 percent), and natural gas (38 percent). Petroleum sources came in at .5 percent and included petroleum liquids, petroleum coke, other gases, and hydroelectric pumped storage.

When homeowners are researching what system is best for them, Eisterhold advises them first to decide if they want an on-grid or off-grid connection.

"When you're off-grid, your solar is completely independent of anything Three Rivers Electric," he said. "You put your solar system in, put some outlets in, and whatever you plug into those outlets only works when the solar is there or if you have solar and battery.

"If you grid-tie, which is the other option, you buy a special inverter that has the ratings we require," Eisterhold continued. "Once it's installed, you'll connect it directly to your electrical system, the electrical panel at your house.

"When the inverter is connected to the grid, it provides everything to the house first," Eisterhold added. "If your house needs more, it will get solar and Three Rivers at

See **Solar**, Page 10B



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# Home & Garden

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GASCONADE COUNTY **Republican**

## Solar • from page 9B

the same time. If your house needs less than what solar's producing, it will go backward through a special meter that calculates on a monthly basis what you take from the grid and what you send to the grid via excess power. At the end of the month, we'll bill you the difference between what you used and what you generated."

Eisterhold noted the inverter is smart enough to know that it's tied to the grid. "If the grid fails, quits, or goes on outage, the inverter shuts down in three cycles," he explained. "It does this in a blink. It shuts off, so it's not generating while we're on outage. This protects us, it protects the linemen ... it protects everybody."

However, being on-grid and pushing power back to your electric company does not mean you will get a check each month if you generate more energy than you use.

"Homeowners will never get a check in the state of Missouri," said Eisterhold. "We follow state statutes. That statute says we will give you a credit. If you have excess energy, we'll take the avoided cost — the average cost of fuel spent by our generators, typically two-and-a-half cents — at the end of the month, if you've generated 100 more than your house needed, we will give you a credit of \$2.50 that will stay on that account for that month and will expire if you haven't used it after 12 billing periods."

Eisterhold is referring to Missouri State Statute 386.890, commonly called the "Net Metering and Easy Connection Act," which outlines that when a renewable energy system is connected to the grid, the customer receives full retail credit for their generation to offset their electricity bill. Any excess generation beyond their monthly usage is credited to the customer at a wholesale rate.

Another deciding factor for those contemplating solar energy is the tax rebate that is still available from the government.

"Through the end of 2022, the rebate is 26 percent," said Eisterhold of the investment tax credit (ITC), also known as the federal solar tax credit, adding that in 2023, that number will drop down to 22 percent.

In 2024, the credit will only be available to owners of new commercial solar energy systems, with credit being phased out for residential solar energy systems.

See **Solar**, Page 11B

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**Solar** • from page 10B

In December 2020, Eisterhold installed solar panels on his home. He decided on a solar system because he had always been fascinated by solar technology and wanted to experiment with it.

“In my particular case, it was new, and it was cool, and I was interested,” he said. “I also knew if I spent the money, I would get some kind of return out of it. For me, it was an experiment.”

Eisterhold’s solar energy system is capable of supplying his home with 100 percent of its power needs. For the average home to achieve this feat, the cost may seem daunting to many.

“Without a lifestyle change, it’s well over \$100,000 because of the batteries, which are very costly,” said Eisterhold. “With a lifestyle change, and if you’re willing to live without backup heating means, etc., I would guess a system that was \$50,000 with some batteries would accomplish a lot for your home.”

These up-front costs make most people nervous about installing solar energy in their homes or business. Still, Eisterhold says that if the systems are sized correctly with the right specifications, they will eventually more than cover the initial

investment.

“Essentially, we charge \$.085,” he said. “We have to make some assumptions, but if you use everything your system generates, and the system is 10,000 watts, and your net cost after the tax credit is \$20,000, that system will generate about \$1,100 per year. So, that’s 16-18 years, and it’s paid for itself.”

Eisterhold cautions everyone to do their research before deciding on the system they feel is right for them and encourages people to visit [www.threeriverselectric.com](http://www.threeriverselectric.com), where a lot of information is already provided.

“Solar works great if it is done correctly,” Eisterhold. “There are rules to follow. We have a list of rules on our website. We have a lot of information under Net Metering in the Programs tab. It tells you how to do your research and what considerations you want to make. If you follow these steps, it will give you a lot of information. We are always here to help.”

Eisterhold also recommends [pvwatts.nrel.gov](http://pvwatts.nrel.gov) (without [www](http://www)), which is operated by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), a national laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, operated by the Alliance for Sustain-

able Energy, LLC.

The website allows users to pinpoint their exact location and provides information on the type of system specifications that should be used and the estimated power generation per year.

“Our experience with the NREL website shows that it is pretty accurate,” said Eisterhold. “Typically, I would just use the zip code for the location. Generally, you’re just looking for the latitude, which we’re at 38 degrees.”

It is important to note that Three Rivers Electric does not install solar panels or any equipment for the system, including the inverters.

“If you are tying to the grid, our involvement is compliance,” said Eisterhold. “You send us your information, and we review your application and your drawings. If they meet our criteria, we’ll approve the installation. Once we approve, the installer goes out and does his work with the homeowner. When it’s all finished, they’ll call us back for a final review. We go out to the site and review that what you told us you were going to do you actually did, and if they match, we will set a special meter that measures both power sources.”

One of the most important choices a

property owner will make is selecting who will be the installer of their system. Eisterhold warns that there are a lot of “fly-by-night” companies and strongly encourages using local installers.

Currently, there are just over 100 users of solar energy across Cole, Franklin, Gasconade, Maries, Miller, Moniteau, and Osage, the seven counties serviced by Three Rivers Electric Cooperative. This number is only for Three Rivers accounts and does not include Ameren customers.

The first modern silicon photovoltaic (PV) cell was developed by Gerald Pearson, Daryl Chapin, and Calvin Fuller in 1954 at Bell Labs in the United States. These were the first solar cells that had the ability to convert enough energy from the sun into electrical power to run common equipment of the time period.

Today, solar energy continues to see advancements in the field. New materials are constantly being developed and integrated with emerging technologies to create systems that are affordable, efficient, and durable.

Though the technology has been around for more than 65 years, there has been a resurgence of interest lately in solar energy as a cheap and renewable resource.

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## Telling signs three common insects are infesting a lawn

**W**ell-maintained laws are a byproduct of hard work. That hard work is a point of pride for homeowners who spend countless hours throughout spring, summer and fall tending to their lawns.

All that hard work can be compromised when uninvited guests, namely insects, show up in a lawn. Insect infestations can turn a normally pristine and lush green lawn into a brown and sickly eyesore. Identifying which type of insect is damaging a lawn is the first step toward returning that lawn to its green glory. These are three common lawn insects and signs that they're infesting a lawn.

### 1. Grubs

Grubs like to feast on the roots of grass right below the surface. Michigan State University Extension Turf & Landscape reports that grub damage can appear from March to early May or from mid-September to early November. The lawn and garden experts at GardenTech® note that wilted grass blades are often the first indi-

See **Insects**, Page 13B



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**Insects** • from page 12B

cator of a grub infestation, which is followed by patches of brown turf and eventually death. Crows, skunks and moles eat grubs, so the sight of them in a lawn could indicate an infestation.

**2. Chinch bugs**

The experts at BobVila.com report that chinch bugs are not necessarily problematic when their populations are limited to around 10 to 15 bugs per square foot of lawn. In such instances, chinch bug populations are generally controlled by ants and ladybugs. However, extreme heat and drought, problems that have plagued various regions in North America in recent years, reduce the populations of bugs that feed on chinch bugs, thus increasing the population of these unwanted guests that feed on grass. Garden-Tech® indicates that damage from chinch bugs is most visible between June and September. That damage begins with grass taking on a purple tinge before it turns yellow and then brown after wilting.

**3. Cutworms**

The lawn care experts at Scotts® note that cutworms are moth larvae that hide in the thatch layer of a lawn during the day before emerging at night to feed on grass blades. Patches of brown grass between one and two inches in width is a sign of cutworm infestation. Homeowners who notice a growing number of birds pecking away in their lawns may have a cutworm infestation, which can be confirmed by peeling up a section of damaged grass and looking for cutworms, which are brown, gray or black and tend to be around two inches long.

The good news is that grub, chinch bug and cutworm populations can be controlled. Local turf specialists can recommend strategies to curtail such populations and help homeowners restore their lawns to full health.

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## How to prepare landscapes for new plants

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— Margaret Atwood



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New plants can add much to a landscape. Whether they’re replacing plants that are no longer thriving or being added to supplement an existing landscape, new plants are an affordable way to give a home’s exterior a whole new look.

Much consideration is given to which plants to add to a landscape. That’s understandable, as homeowners want to choose plants that will thrive and won’t compromise the health of surrounding plants and trees. Before planting or even choosing plants, it’s important to plan for new additions to a landscape. Preparing the landscape can inform homeowners about which plants to purchase and can ensure they thrive after planting.

- Document sunlight exposure. Plants have different needs, and one of the biggest differences between species is the amount of sunlight they need to thrive. According to Penn State Extension, plants

See **New plants**, Page 15B

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## New plants • from page 14B

characterized as “full sun” require six or more hours of sunlight per day, while those considered “partial sun” need between four and six hours of sunlight per day. Plants designated as “partial shade” need two to four hours of sun per day, while “shade” plants need less than two hours of sunlight a day. Documenting sunlight exposure in advance gives homeowners an idea of which plants should be planted and where they should be planted. Jot down these observations in a journal over several weeks and then choose plants that will thrive in each area.

- Test the soil. A soil pH test is a simple and quick way to determine the acidity of soil. Soil pH levels will indicate how likely a plant is to thrive in a given spot. High levels won't necessarily mean an area should be avoided, as some plants thrive in acidic soils. Additional soil tests can determine other characteristics, such as the nutrient levels of soil and the amount of organic matter it contains. Each of these variables can help homeowners make the right choices as they introduce new plants to their properties.

- Consider local wildlife. If local wildlife makes its presence known on a property, homeowners may want to take proactive steps prior to planting anything new. A new fence might prevent animals like deer from getting in, but that likely won't do much to repel smaller animals like squirrels, rabbits or foxes. If wildlife is a concern, homeowners can seek advice at their local garden center about which plants certain animals are likely to ignore. Homeowners who want to attract wildlife can do the same in reverse, choosing plants wildlife will be drawn to. Homeowners who want to deter wildlife should erect fencing or other barriers prior to planting.

- Clear space if necessary. Plants grow up and out, and cramped quarters can make it hard for new plants to thrive. Some may thrive but only at the expense of other plants. If necessary, clear space prior to planting to ensure plants have ample space to grow.

Some pre-planting landscape preparation can ensure new plants thrive.

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## The basics of container gardening

**G**ardening is a rewarding hobby that has been linked to health benefits like reduced stress and improved mental well-being. Gardening also can lead to an inviting home landscape full of attractive blooms and/or delicious foods. Backyard gardens have long been planted after clearing a plot of land, tilling and amending the soil, and planting rows of favorite crops. However, gardening can be less labor-intensive and even more successful when people consider the many benefits of container gardening.

### What is container gardening?

As its name implies, container gardening is growing plants inside of containers. These containers can be flower pots, rectangular deck boxes or even large raised garden beds.

### Pros to container gardening

One of the advantages of container gardening is that plants can be moved in and out of sunlight to ensure the right growing conditions. This isn't as easily achieved when gardens are stationary. Also, beginner gardeners may be more able to control soil conditions inside of a small container rather than a vast ground-based garden, which will require a good deal of manual labor. Pots and boxes also can be grouped together to create eye-popping displays, usually at lower costs than the sheer volume of plants that would be needed to fill out an expansive landscape.

### Cons to container gardening

Container garden plants will not have direct access to the ground, so they need gardeners to create the ideal growing conditions. Developing the right care formula can be challenging. The home and garden resource The Spruce says that drainage is an important factor in container gardening, and most containers do not offer enough drainage holes. If water cannot escape the soil, the roots of the plants can rot and die.

See **Container gardening**, Page 19B

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## How to pick the right trees for your property

Trees benefit a landscape by serving both aesthetic and utilitarian functions. A home surrounded by healthy green trees can be a sight to behold, and those same trees can benefit surrounding plants and wildlife at the same time.

As appealing as trees are, not all trees and landscapes make for the perfect match. The Arbor Day Foundation notes the importance of planning when designing a landscape. Planning ensures the trees homeowners ultimately choose for their properties will grow well in the soil and moisture present in their yards.

Careful consideration of a handful of variables can help homeowners determine which trees will make the best fit for their properties.

- **Height:** Homeowners must consider the projected height of a tree before planting it. Avoid trees that will bump into anything when fully grown, as that can adversely affect surrounding greenery and pose a safety hazard. The ADF's tree sizing guide can be accessed at <https://www.arborday.org/trees/rightTreeAndPlace/size.cfm> and serves as an invaluable resource for homeowners who want to plant new trees around their properties.

- **Canopy spread:** Trees grow out as well as up, so it's important to consider their potential width at maturity as well. The ADF sizing guide can help homeowners get an idea of how wide a tree is likely to be at maturity. Trees that spread out quite a bit don't necessarily need to be avoided, but it's important that they're planted far enough apart so they don't adversely affect surrounding plants. In addition, wide trees that are planted too close together can make the landscape appear crowded, taking something away from its aesthetic appeal.

- **Growth rate:** Growth rate is an important variable because it can affect how quickly homeowners will see changes in their landscapes. Homeowners who want to plant for privacy can consider trees with quick growth rates or purchase more mature trees that are already near full growth. Those who are not in need of instant transformation can try trees with slower growth rates, which the ADF notes typically live longer than fast-growing species.

- **Requirements:** Different trees require different amounts of sun and moisture and different soil components to thrive. Homeowners can have their soil tested to determine which trees will thrive in it. Local garden centers can be a great resource for homeowners who want insight as to which trees will thrive in their local climates.

Trees serve many functions on a property. Choosing the right trees for a landscape requires careful consideration of a host of variables.

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**Container gardening** • from page 16B

It's not enough to add stones or gravel to the bottom of containers. Drill additional holes in the bottom (1/2-inch in diameter for small or medium-sized pots; one inch in diameter for larger pots). Also, be sure to check on soil moisture so that watering can be adjusted. During hot stretches, plants may need to be watered more frequently.

**Plan for plants that play well**

Grouping plants together can create visually stunning combinations. However, it is important to choose plants that require the same amount of light and moisture. Look at plant tags when visiting the garden center and select complementary plants, or ask a store employee. Mixing different plant shapes, colors and leaf textures, as well as plants of various heights, can help containers look filled out.

**Feed plants accordingly**

Plants need nutrition to thrive in containers. Quality potting mixes will contain fertilizers, but nutrition will wane over time. Every couple of weeks, container plants will need either fresh potting mix or granular fertilizer added to feed them. Oregon State University Extension Services suggests using a slow-release fertilizer or worm castings several times throughout the season.

Container gardening is a great way to add plants to smaller patios, reduce the workload involved in maintaining expansive gardens, and customize conditions for optimal growth.

*"A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust."*

— Gertrude Jekyll

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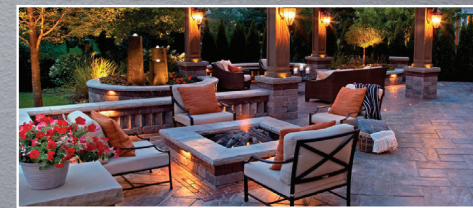
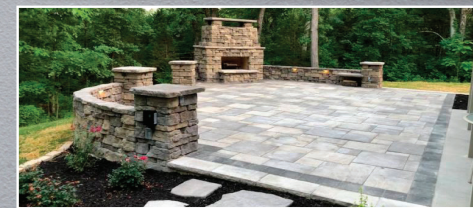
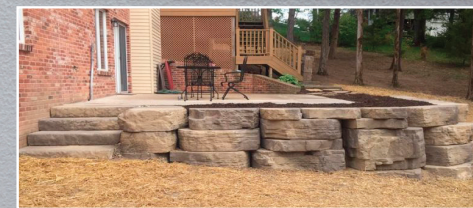
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## Signs a roof needs repair or replacement

**M**any homeowners believe a roof is a once-in-a-lifetime investment. But roof damage can force homeowners to replace a roof regardless of how much time has lapsed since the roof was installed.

The average life span of a roof depends on when the roof was installed and the materials it is made from. According to Central Homes Roofing, three-tab shingles may last between 10 and 15 years, architectural shingles can endure for 15 to 20 years, and tile may last between 35 and 50 years. RPS Metal Roofing indicates a metal roof may last as long as 70 years. However, climate and color of the roof also will affect its longevity.

Homeowners would be wise to consider these factors when determining if a roof is in need of repairs or replacement.

- **Roof age:** The age of the roof is a major factor in determining if it will need to be replaced or if repairs can be made to isolated damage. Individuals who live in neighborhoods where neighbors are now replacing roofs will likely find it is time to consult a roofing company. Homeowners also can check to see if they have any receipts that indicate the roof's installation date so they have an idea about its age.

- **Grain in gutters:** Roofing shingles are designed to overlap, and sealant keeps them steady. Friction, weather and atmospheric changes can impact sealant and cause degradation. Gutters with grainy material in them could indicate worn out sealant and shingles.

- **Ridge damage:** Ridges are spots where two separate areas meet and often are im-

See **Roof**, Page 21B

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**Roof** • from page 20B

portant to the structural integrity of the roof. If the roof ridge is showing signs of wear, it could be time to repair or replace it.

- **Curled shingle edges:** If shingle tabs are curled or cupped, the shingles may need to be replaced. But if curling is extensive, a whole new roof may need to be installed.
- **Bald spots or lost portions of the roof:** Missing granules and missing shingles are reasons to consult a pro for a roof evaluation.
- **Leaks indoors:** Homeowners who find dark streaks or moisture in the attic may discover that water is penetrating the roof underlay. Water often comes in around chimney flashing. Other water signs are blistering and bubbling in walls.
- **Incoming light:** Look up through the attic and see if any light is coming through the roof, which may indicate there are cracks or holes in the roof.
- **Aesthetics:** If a homeowner doesn't like the look of the roof from a design standpoint, a replacement also may be warranted.

Roofs can last many years, but the presence of certain signs indicates replacement or repairs will be necessary.

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Seasonal produce makes it possible to enjoy the freshest fruits and vegetables. Various fruits and vegetables are in-season at different times of the year, and Nature's Path Organic foods provides this month-by-month list of in-season items.

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**February:** Asparagus, avocado, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, celery, kumquat, lemon, lettuce, spinach, turnips, tangelos, tangerines

**March:** Asparagus, avocados, blood oranges, chard, grapefruit, green onions, kohlrabi, lettuce, spinach, turnips

**April:** Basil, broccoli, cauliflower, cherries, cucumber, mushrooms, nectarines, passion fruit, raspberries, tomatoes, turnips

**May:** Apricots, Asian pears, beets, black-eyed peas, broccoli, carrots, dry onions, eggplant, figs, okra, plums, potatoes

**June:** Apricots, avocados, cherries, beets, cabbage, corn, lemons, melons, nectarines, peppers, Valencia oranges

**July:** Apricots, basil, cucumber, eggplant, figs, grapes, melons, peaches, plums, summer squash, tomatoes

**August:** Basil, beets, cabbage, carrots, chili pepper, collards, grapes, green beans, kale, melons, persimmons, potatoes, sapote, tomatillos, turnips, winter squash

**September:** Basil, apples, Asian pears, beets, Brussels sprouts, carrots, celery, oranges, corn, guava, kale, pineapples, tomatoes

**October:** Apples, basil, cabbage, carambola, celery, cherimoyas, eggplant, kiwi, okra, pomegranates, potatoes, raspberries, yams

**November:** Apples, asparagus, green beans, carrots, corn, cucumber, grapefruits, grapes, mushrooms, yams

**December:** Asparagus, beets, cauliflower, celery, dry onions, green onions, kale, winter squash.

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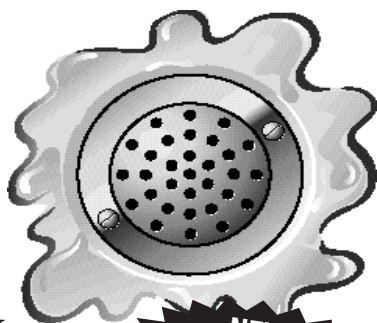
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## Make one call before spring yard projects to avoid injury, utility disruption and repair costs

COLUMBIA — Warmer spring weather has Missourians starting outdoor home improvements, so Ameren Missouri is reminding customers to call 1-800-DIG-RITE or 811 before digging so the projects can be completed safely. Giving utility locating experts three business days to mark underground utilities will keep neighborhoods safe and help prevent outages.

Each year, more than 40 percent of homeowners risk unintentionally damaging buried power, gas and internet lines during these DIY home projects. Outdoor upgrades such as new fences, fresh landscaping and new patios come with a risk of damage to buried utilities. These projects should always start with a call or visit to Mo1Call.com.

“Some underground utility lines are closer to the surface than you think, so it’s important that buried lines are marked before digging – no matter the size of the project,” said Jim Huss, senior director of operations excellence for Ameren Missouri. “With one quick phone call, an expert will mark the location of all your utility, phone and cable lines on the property. This step helps keep your family safe and avoids a serious outage or gas leak that could impact your home or neighborhood.”

Marking utility lines is a free service – and it’s the law. Follow these important steps to stay in compliance and avoid costly property or utility damage:



1. Call 1-800-DIG-RITE, 811 or visit Mo1Call.com at least two business days before starting a digging project. This is a free service where you can easily submit requests to your local utility companies to locate utility lines before you dig. Requests can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2. Wait until a professional locator comes out to mark natural gas, electric, water, sewer, telephone and cable lines. The approximate location of buried utilities will be marked with paint and flags so that you can avoid them. Each utility type corresponds to a specific color of paint and flag, and all of them must be marked before you can dig.

3. Once the site has been clearly marked, proceed to

dig with caution. Make sure to dig carefully around the marks and not on top of them. It’s important to use the appropriate tools to dig with care and follow safe digging practices.

Even if you have had utilities marked for past projects, it’s important to contact Missouri One Call or 811 every time. The lines may have shifted in depth or location due to erosion and root growth since the last project. To learn more about safe digging, visit Mo1Call.com.

To learn more about natural gas safety, visit Ameren-Missouri.com/safety. For homeowners who are planning on planting trees or shrubs, Ameren Missouri offers some helpful advice for picking the right location, as well as tree trimming information.

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Build a potting bench to be headquarters for designing and planting flower gardens and bushes at strategic locations to mark dining, relaxing and playing sections of the yard. Build more outdoor furniture and game boards if needed to “furnish” these areas. Paint exterior doors to add a touch of color. Accent door/entryway areas with benches or garden planters. Repair, clean, and finish or paint porches, railings and fences to refresh their look.

### Products for building

- Woodcraft Magazine Classic Project Plans are detailed guides for building furniture and accessories, including the Full Service Potting Bench pictured here, along with chairs, tables, benches, planters, and more. For a different Adirondack chair design, see “The Haycock Adirondack” project in Woodcraft Magazine Issue 101 (June/July 2021). Plans and Issue 101 are available at woodcraft.com.

Helpful how-to articles on woodcraft.com include <https://bit.ly/RestoreOutdoor> and <https://bit.ly/OutdoorWoodProjects>.

- Kreg 720PRO Pocket-Hole Jig — The latest innovation in pocket-hole joinery, this jig was engineered with features like one-motion Automaxx clamping, which automatically clamps and sets the material thickness setting for pieces 1/2”- to 1 1/2”-thick, GripMaxx anti-slip material construction and a steel-reinforced spine.

- Bosch Barrel Grip Jigsaw — A powerful 7.0 amp, variable-speed motor with Constant Response circuitry maintains the desired speed. Features include an ergonomic body, a tool-less blade-change system, and a blade ejection lever.

- FESTOOL T18 Easy Cordless Drill Plus Set — Expand your drilling capabilities with features like the new generation brushless EC-TEC motor and electronic torque setting for precise screw driving and drilling wood or steel. A metal keyless chuck allows for the use of most drill bits, from 1/16”- to 1/2”-diameter.

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## Tech to make gardening more fun

**M**any people take to the great outdoors to escape the increasingly tech-driven daily grind. Though that's an understandable perspective, gardeners who aren't deploying tech in their home gardens could be missing out on a host of benefits that could help their plants, flowers and vegetables thrive.

Devices like smartphones and tablets have made many aspects of life easier and more efficient, and various tech products can do the same when working in the garden.

- **Plant monitor:** Plant monitors are sensors that can keep tabs on the health of plants and deliver that information to gardeners. Plant monitors often connect to smartphones via Bluetooth and can deliver information on the amount of heat, light and water a plant is getting. Sensors vary in price, and some will provide more information than others. But these sensors are ideal for gardeners who love their plants but often forget to check up on them each day.

- **Garden camera:** Critters and insects are the bane of many gardeners' existence. Determining just what is nibbling away at flowers and plants isn't always so easy, as many animals are savvy enough to restrict their dining to the middle of the night and insects are so small they can be hard to spot. Garden cameras can serve as the watchmen of a garden and gardeners can review footage to determine just who

is compromising all of their hard work. They can then use that knowledge to remedy the situation and give their plants a better chance to thrive.

- **Weather station:** Even the most seasoned gardeners cannot document the conditions outside as effectively as a good weather sensor. Weather sensors track conditions such as temperature, relative humidity and air quality. This information can then be paired with irrigation devices to ensure plants get all the care they need to thrive throughout the season.

- **Garden hub:** Avid gardeners have traditionally had to arrange for neighbors or loved ones to tend to their plants when they leave home for vacation or weekend getaways. Garden hubs can take care of that by pairing with smart irrigation systems that ensure plants are watered even when no one is home. Certain hubs even gather and analyze local weather conditions to develop a watering schedule to ensure plants thrive. These hubs aren't just handy when on vacation, as they can be great for gardeners who want to know things about their plants that are not apparent to the naked eye.

People may see their gardens as welcome respites from their devices. But garden gadgets can help plants thrive and make time in the garden that much more enjoyable.



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## Gathering • from page 23B

ing carriage and frame are adjustable.

### Doors and other finishing options

Make exterior home doors and furniture the center of attention with colorful paint that brightens even cloudy days. Refresh the look of garage doors, porches, shutters, railings, fences, and storage buildings with a new coat (and maybe color) of paint.

- GENERAL FINISHES Milk Paint in 33 premixed colors works well for wood doors and furniture, as well as other structures. Be sure to add GENERAL FINISHES Exterior 450 Varnish in satin, gloss, semi-gloss, or flat to enhance the milk paint's durability.

- GENERAL FINISHES Outdoor Oil Finish is ideal for exterior weather conditions and may be used over other brands of exterior oil stain or exterior clear oil finishes for additional protection.

- System Three Marine Spar Varnish is designed for exterior surfaces and provides long-lasting protection against water and marine environments.

- System Three Clear Epoxy Sealer S-1 is a two-part clear, penetrating, waterproof, epoxy sealer. It is completely

waterproof and suitable for use above and below the waterline.

- Waterlox Original Marine Finish and Original Marine Sealer: These premium tung oil-based products work together to penetrate and waterproof wood that lives in the outdoors. Both go on easily with brush, lamb's wool applicator, cloth roller, or a sprayer.

- U.C. Coatings Corporation Nano-Guard Premium Wood Sealer is a clear, non-film forming sealer that allows the wood to age naturally without decay. It deeply penetrates the wood's surface to protect and stabilize wood against weather and caustic conditions.

- To apply coverings by hand, consider Redtree Onyx White China Bristle Brushes (solvent-based finishes) or Redtree Matey Synthetic Bristle Brushes (water-based finishes) available in three sizes.

- For spraying, the EARLEX® Super Finish Max features a built-in 450-watt sprayer, eliminating the need for a hose or motor to move around. Spray milk paint, chalk-style paint, latex paint, enamels, primers, urethanes, stains, and varnishes.

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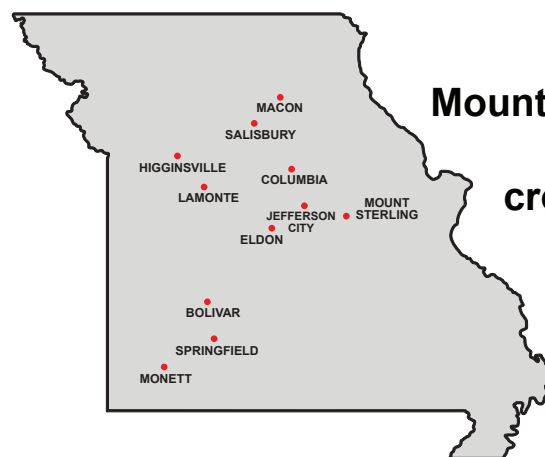


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PHOTO BY DAVE MARNER

**AN OWENSVILLE** High School collaboration between students in the horticulture program and Gasconade County Master Gardeners members over the past few years produced this display of daffodils across from the R-2 School District's campus along Highway 19. Bulbs for the project were obtained through the St. Louis Daffodil Society and the Grow Together campaign.

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## The buzz about bees



**W**arm weather and extra hours of sunlight spark flowering trees and plants to bloom anew. This is the time of year when the air is sweet with the aroma of blossoms and the familiar hum of insects can be heard all around.

Not all “bugs” are the same this time of year. While you probably won’t want ants invading your backyard grill fest, the presence of bees nearby can be a good thing — even if those curious yellow-and-black critters get a little close for comfort from time to time. That’s because almost 90 percent of wild plants and 75 percent of the leading global crops depend on animal pollination, indicates the World Wildlife Federation.

Bees are remarkable creatures in small packages. The following are some bee facts to buzz about, courtesy of the WWF, Save the Bees™, NASA, and the Texas A&M University Honey Bee Information Site.

- There are roughly 20,000 species of bees around the world. Most of them are solitary bees.

- Bees have five eyes. Two of the eyes are large compound eyes with hexagonal facets. The other three are small, simple eyes.

- Honeybees have a move called the “waggle dance.” It is a clever way of communicating to tell them where to go to find the best sources of food.

- Bees can carry up to 122 times their

body weight in pollen and nectar.

- Bumblebees leave footprint scents behind. They are able to distinguish between their own scents, the scent of a relative and the scent of a stranger as they look for food. They also can avoid flowers already visited.

- Should a queen bee perish, the hive workers will select a new young larva and feed it a special food called “royal jelly.” The larva will develop into a fertile queen.

- Bees flap their wings 190 to 200 times per second. They can fly up to 15 miles per hour.

- Female bees can sting; males do not. Losing the stinger will cause the bee to die. The honeybee only can sting once because its stinger is barbed. Bumblebees and hornets can sting multiple times because they have smooth stingers.

- It can require nectar from two million flowers to make one pound of honey.

- Many bees are not aggressive. Simply moving away from them can prevent a person from being stung. Generally, bumblebees and honey bees will only sting by accident or if a nest is being disrupted.

- Wasps are different from bees in that they are mostly known to be predators. They eat other insects and often food that people eat, which is why wasps are more likely to be found around your cookout. Bees tend to be covered in hair, while wasps (which include yellow jackets) are smooth.

Bees are remarkable creatures and should be celebrated as the weather warms up.

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## Why excavation is best left to the professionals

**W**hen shopping for a home, buyers often try to envision themselves living in a given property. Images of family gatherings and holidays may instantly come to mind, but prospective homeowners also may begin to envision changes they would make to a property if they were eventually to call it home.

Changing an existing structure or building an entirely new home on an empty plot of land can be exciting. Such changes typically require excavation, which is a complicated process that may be necessary for projects big or small.

### What is excavation?

Excavation is the process of extracting material from the ground by digging. Earth, rock and other materials may be moved during the excavation process.

### Can do-it-yourselfers excavate?

Skilled DIYers who have participated in excavation projects in the past may be able to handle a project on their own. However, it's important that homeowners recognize that excavation is about more than just digging in the ground. It's a complicated process that requires the use of specialized tools and equipment. In addition, a strong understanding of the land that will be excavated is required for the project to be safe and go smoothly.



### Why hire an excavation professional?

Even the most skilled DIYer might be better off hiring an excavation professional than going it alone. That's true for a number of reasons.

- **Liability:** Homeowners who hire a fully licensed and insured professional excavation firm can rest easy knowing that they will not be responsible for any damages or injuries that may occur during the project.

- **Permits/requirements:** A professional excavation firm typically files all the necessary paperwork for work permits or can advise which permits homeowners will need to go forward with the project. In addition, professionals will know the local laws regarding building and excavation. For example, homeowners may be unfamiliar with the concept of lateral support, which refers to landowners' right to have their land physically supported in its natural state by adjoining land and underground structures. This is an important concept to understand during an excavation project, and professionals can advise homeowners if a project they want to undertake will violate lateral support laws.

- **Experience:** Perhaps the best reason to work with excavation professionals is their experience. A lack of excavation experience can result in damage to a homeowner's property and surrounding properties, which can prove costly. DIYers may not know the type of soil they have on their property nor recognize the different types of challenges each type of soil can present during an excavation project. Such knowledge comes with experience and is often invaluable.

Skilled DIYers can tackle many home improvement projects on their own. However, the complex nature of excavation makes these types of projects the kind that are best left to skilled professionals.

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## Did you know?

**H**omeowners should give due consideration to whether or not plants are considered invasive species before introducing new plants on their properties. According to the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration, invasive species of plants can lead to the extinction of native plants and animals. Invasive plant species also can reduce biodiversity and cause significant fundamental disruptions to local ecosystems. Though non-native plants are often cherished for their unique looks, homeowners planting new gardens or supplementing existing gardens with new plants are urged to plant only native species. Such an approach benefits plants and also local wildlife that depends on native plant species for food and cover.

**T**he National Association of Landscape Professionals notes that lawns can support a significant number of insects feeding on them because the grass grows much faster than the insects can damage it. But noticeable damage, such as brown patches in the grass, severed roots and grass that is easily pulled up, indicate that insect infestations are significant enough to require intervention. Lawn care professionals can work with homeowners to develop solutions to address insect infestations. Infestation prevention involves a handful of strategies, not the least of which is ensuring a lawn is properly cared for. Such care delivers nutrients to the lawn and reduces its risk of becoming undernourished. Undernourished lawns are more vulnerable to insect infestations and weeds.

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## Guide to outdoor lighting

Lighting is an essential component of interior and exterior home design. Not only does lighting add style and make spaces more appealing, when done correctly, it also makes a home safer and more functional.

Homeowners who plan to utilize outdoor spaces like backyards, front porches and walkways to the fullest should think carefully about lighting. These guidelines can assist with selecting outdoor lighting fixtures.

### Security lighting

Flood lights and security lights are a good investment for those who want to beef up visibility and security around the home. These lights are high-intensity and designed to illuminate large areas. The brightness and reach can serve as a preventive measure to keep animals and even criminals away. Motion-sensor lights will immediately engage if something crosses the path of the sensor. Some lights will remain on from dusk until dawn. Lowes Home Improvement suggests using the correct wattage on outdoor security lights so they flood an area thoroughly without affecting neighboring properties.

### Wall, post and ceiling lights

Outdoor lighting fixtures beyond security options come in a variety of styles, according to Lamps USA. Wall lights are mounted to the outdoor wall of the home. These typically flank doorways or the garage. Post lights are often installed on the posts of decks and porches, or are free-standing on properties, providing visibility but also style. Ceiling-mounted lights may be above doorways or installed in any structure that has an overhead area. Warm-colored temperature bulbs in these fixtures can create an inviting atmosphere that is not too bright and jarring, especially when multiple lighting fixtures are working together. When selecting lighting for wall-mounted fixtures, experts suggest sizing up if you are not sure of the size to pick, as lights will look much smaller in scale from a distance.

### Accent and landscape lighting

A bevy of accent lighting choices are available. Accent lighting is designed to enhance the mood and appearance of certain elements of a landscape. Accent lighting is not intended to add bright light.

See **Lighting**, Page 31B

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Lighting • from page 30B

For example, upward-directed lights can be cast on trees or shrubs to accentuate their shapes. Accent lighting also may call out a structure, such as a garden or a fountain. While accent lighting may be hard-wired, homeowners who want the luxury of changing lighting can opt for solar fixtures, which are more mobile but not as bright.

#### Additional pointers

When shopping for bulbs, consider the number of lumens. A standard 100-watt bulb produces around 1,600 lumens. Security lights should range from 700 to 1,300 lumens for optimal brightness. Other lights needn't be so bright.

Furthermore, ensure that any fixtures that are being used are safety-rated for outdoors. Wet-rated fixtures are designed to withstand direct exposure to outdoor elements, advises the design experts at Schoolhouse, a lighting and lifestyle goods company. Damp-rated fixtures are built for outdoor locations protected from harsh weather. Look for the product details or work with an electrician to choose the right lighting choices.

Lighting can transform outdoors spaces for the better.

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# Spring Brings Color

Hanging Baskets • Ferns • Planters • Bedding Plants • Trees • Shrubs



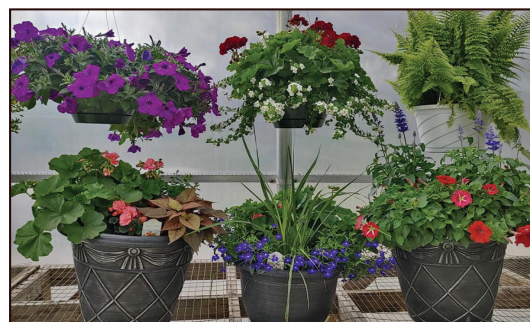
MON.-SAT. 9 A.M. TO 6 P.M.  
SUN. 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

Due to the bridge closure on Hwy 100 you'll need to take Hwy 50 to Loose Creek, Hwy A to Bonnots Mill, turn right onto Hwy C to Frankenstein. We are 5.7 miles on Hwy C.

From Linn

Take Hwy W, turn right onto Hwy A, then right on Hwy C.

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Wind Chimes  
Metal Spinners  
Balloon Spinners  
Door mats  
Garden Flags



### Vegetables & Fruits

Tomatoes	Cantaloupe
Peppers	Watermelon
Zucchini	Peaches & Cream
Cucumbers	Corn
Strawberries	Ambrosia Corn

**1 & 2 CUBIC  
Foot Soil**

Lavender, Lemon Grass & Citronella  
to help keep bugs away!!

Brown, Red and Cedar  
**MULCH**