

THE HELPFUL HOME

NEWSLETTER

Issue #21

Spring 2008

Some information about this newsletter



Here is your Spring issue of the Helpful Home newsletter, from **STONEHOLLOW, Inc. FINE HOME INSPECTIONS**. My Cabin fever will only subsist with the emergence of bulbs sprouting and warm weather showing itself daily. Sometimes spring really seems to take too long to get here, and I know just like that, it will be a memory. So grab it by the tail, and let's get our homes ready for the next season. Each year we look forward to taking our home to the next level. In the garden we are planting more shrubs, adding lime and fertilizer to the lawn, getting ready for a new rear driveway and new front gates. Inside we are painting guest rooms and looking with scrutiny at some of the carpeting. I am always amazed at the length of the wish list that sprouts each year. Some of the projects are fun, but many seem like the house just needs improving just for the sake of it. It almost seems like my house wants to show itself off. The more I spend the more it wants to be the biggest and the best of those on the street! Frankly with the way the economy has been dragging its feet, some of these projects may well have to wait... but hey it's Spring, lets get outside and do what we can.

How about you...? Let us know what projects you are taking on. Call us on the Radio Show (Saturday mornings from 8-9 am on 1400/1350 am) and let's chat about your progress. Remember Stonehollow is performing Energy Audits, Safety Inspections, Infrared Evaluations for both water leaks and energy loss, Consulting for people keeping an eye on the quality of

renovations and Pre-listing Inspections for people considering selling their home. We've got over 25 years of experience in this field, and many great ideas to share. Let us help you determine if your home is safe and operating properly. In this issue we have a new Spring Checklist and some additional info about our ever growing services...Send e-mails to us at: steve@stonehollow.com and let us know how we can better assist you. If you would like an annual subscription please see the last page for more information.



Have you ever seen a basement bulkhead with skylights? Found this in Darien. The neat part is it really let in lots of light!

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The Spring Helpful Home Check List:

Remember: If it's not safe for you to do some of these suggestions, or you simply do not understand how to do them, please hire a professional. I want your home to be safe, but there's little point if you overdo it, get hurt, or break something. Know your limits.

Exterior Stuff

What I can't believe is how much crap ends up on the roof and in the gutters after the wind and dreary weather of winter. Either you have to get up there to clean it off, or hire someone to make sure the roof surfaces are clear.

Gutters: Are the drain screens clogged? Are they there at all? Carefully clean out all debris and rinse the gutters with a hose. If you didn't do this in fall or winter you probably have a clogged gutter system now. Don't wait longer for this.

Drainage: Make sure the leaders divert rainwater away from the foundation. Try to avoid water pooling close to the foundation.

Chimneys: Make sure your chimney caps are still in place and there is screening to avoid animal entry. (Mine blew off this winter).

In the yard

Play Areas: Lubricate the hardware. Tighten any bolts, power wash, sand splintered wood and coat with a good wood preservative.

Irrigation Systems: Make sure in-ground systems are powered up and checked for leaks. Leaks can be a hidden cost when you get an unexpectedly high water bill. Many of our municipalities charge a sewer assessment based on your warm season water usage. Why not splurge and go buy yourself a nice hose nozzle.

Pools: Make sure swimming pool gates are self-closing and the fences around them are still intact. Covers should be folded & stored in a dry

place. Make sure they are completely dry and stored where rodents won't gnaw on them.

Interior Things

Safety items: Every Season Check batteries on smoke, heat & carbon monoxide detectors, Make sure all fire extinguishers are charged, and hang them in plain sight. Talk to your family about fire safety, have a fire drill and set up a logical meeting place for your family to gather in an emergency. Remember **CO alarms** last 5 years, Smoke Detectors have a life of 10 years and Fire Extinguishers about 12. If they are older than that, replace them.

Spring cleaning: Change or clean duct filters, open up and check the dryer lint lines and make sure your bath and oven vents are clean.

Windows: Make sure there are weep holes to allow moisture to drain out of the window wells to avoid rotting. Lubricate the sashes or operators.

Have you read my appliance book? What to look for, and know about appliances.



[The Professional Inspector's Guide to Residential Appliance Inspection](#)
Price: **\$49.95 plus Tax & Shipping call 203-327-6824 to order.**

Are You Listening?

Tune in to WSTC 1400/WNLK 1350 am or on www.stonehollow.com go to the radio archive page, and hear us on your computer! Steve Gladstone...& sometimes Matt, Sandi and Mark are on the air Saturday mornings on "Around the House" from 8 to 9 am. Steve & his guests discuss home issues, maintenance, and safety. And you can call in. It's fun to listen, and you'll learn how to do things around your home. Tune in each week for trivia questions, prizes, lots of useful home info and we may just have the answer to the question you've wanted to ask.

Photos of things we see on inspections:



Remember Harvest Gold Appliances? Some houses still have this and Avocado green.



A fan in the attic can draw the moisture and odors out of multiple bathrooms, but not venting it to the outside really leaves the job unfinished.



This retaining wall is going to require replacing.

Help Your Friends...

Know someone looking to buy a home? Tell them we'll get them the best home inspection services. If we don't serve their area, we will refer a great home inspector who can help. **We promise to help your friends with the most important purchase of their lives!**



A pretty grand entry to get to the unfinished basement.

Stonehollow is the "protection" you need when buying or selling.

We are recommended by many banks, mortgage lenders and lawyers. Realtors who know we are very picky, and that we spend the time looking carefully at a home also often give out our name. Many sales agents may think hiring a blind inspector will make for an easier transaction, but the careful evaluation by a trained team of inspectors will always protect the buyer, seller and sales agents from lawsuits and anger about missed items after the sale is done. If you have heard we are tough, and very thorough...think what you would want in an inspection if your own kids were buying a home. There should never be a double standard when it comes to important purchases. All our inspectors are State Licensed, Have taken State and ASHI certification Exams maintain on-going continuing education and we will do our best to let you know the true conditions of the home. For 25 years we've been protecting buyers, sellers and Realtors in Fairfield, Putnam and Westchester Counties.

Safety & Maintenance Audits

Are you doing all you can to keep your home safe and working at its best? Call us for a home safety and maintenance audit. We will show you how to "soup-up" your home and get the most bang for your buck. We'll help you find & eliminate unsafe conditions and explain the

sometimes-confusing equipment that is heating, cooling, or trying to protect your home. Do you often wonder if bad things are happening in the attic, eaves and/or the crawlspace? Our trained inspectors will get into those areas and double check them for your safety. We look at the chimneys, heating systems, water heaters, and your electrical panel boxes, as well.

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The Great House Project...

Over the last few weeks we've been working on some smaller projects around the home. We visited the wonderful lighting showroom at The Stamford Lighting Fixture Company in Springdale. We bought some desk and table lamps. It's amazing what change nice lamps can create when it comes to making your home feel warm and cozy. They had great Tiffany style lighting that looked really neat. We also bought a very pretty ornamental iron wine rack for the dining room. As Mark's Bar Mitzvah nears, we are trying to get the lawn and landscaping under control. This week I power washed around the house and made several dump trips throwing away yard debris and branches. Next week I'll be power washing the deck and cleaning the Winter grime off the siding. Is this never-ending work or just obsessive-compulsive behavior? Help!

www.stonehollow.com
e-mail us at:
steve@stonehollow.com

More Spring Tips

Put up reflective or highly visible house numbers on your home or near the street. Each year emergency vehicles are delayed from finding the emergency because the address of a home is difficult to locate. This could save your life or the life of someone you care about. If you bring your garbage cans to the curb on a weekly basis make sure the can has your house number painted on it. This will help identify your house and help keep the can from wandering.

Those new hose reels are pretty cool. You can roll up the hose when you are not using it but make sure the reel can accommodate the length of hose you buy. I've found that buying a 75 foot or 100 foot hose makes so much better sense than buying shorter lengths. I always try

to buy the best quality hoses and avoid materials that look like they will kink. I hate when that happens! Also look at the fine print; many hoses nowadays are made with chemicals that are toxic and unsafe to drink from. Beware...

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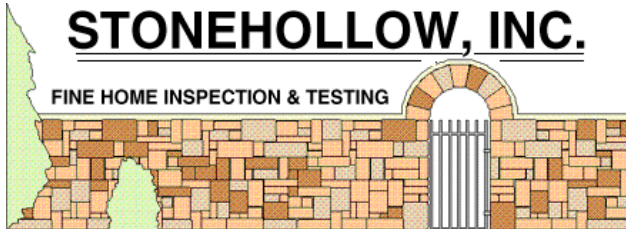
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1400/1350 "Around the House w/ Steve Gladstone"

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