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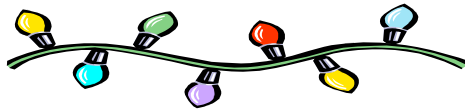
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Exterior Illumination Bathroom Vent Fans

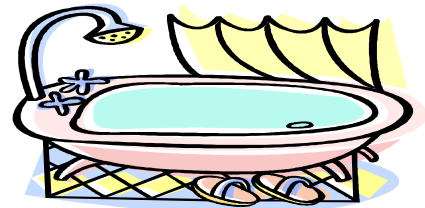
In planning for exterior holiday lighting, one aspect that's often not taken into consideration is the demand and availability of electricity. Some exterior receptacles may share a circuit breaker with other locations inside the house. This can limit your lighting options. Although simple to install, read the documentation that comes with your lights. Most lighting strings will tell you how many can be safely connected together. And always ensure your product has the "UL" (Underwriters Lab) stamp on them. It's also a good idea to check the Consumer Product Safety Councils website at www.cpsc.gov for product recalls. Typically, holiday lights are very cheaply produced in mass quantities, this can lead to sloppy production and fire or safety hazards.

For safety, think about having an electrician replace any standard receptacles with GFCI receptacles, and installing one of the new "While in use" style covers. Typically this will cost less than \$100, and could save a life.



All bathrooms with a shower or tub/shower combination should have an exhaust fan to help reduce mold/mildew issues. This fan should vent directly to the exterior, not to the attic. If you're considering installing or replacing an existing fan, I would recommend spending a little extra for the higher cfm fan versus purchasing the cheapest one on sale. The higher the cfm, the more air that is moved.

If you have an exhaust fan that is controlled by a switch, that switch can be replaced with a timer switch. Best results of running an exhaust typically occur when it continues to run for another 10 minutes after the shower is turned off. By having a timer switch installed you won't have to remember to go back and turn it off.



Ice Damming

The two most common causes of ice damming are poor attic ventilation and insulation. This allows for warm air to escape the living space and warm the roof decking. This melts the snow from the roof, but when it reaches the eave, it re-freezes as there's no warmth from below. This can cause water to back up under the shingles and create moisture problems along exterior walls and in attics.

Insulation should be about 12 inches deep (R-38). Ventilation performs best when both soffit and ridge vents are installed. This will allow for cooler air to flow in through the soffits and warmer air to be pushed out through the ridge. Sometimes soffit vents can get blocked by insulation, in this case installation of baffles between the trusses is recommended.



Don't forget to have your Furnace serviced by a licensed Heating contractor. This is like getting a tune-up for your car. Not only does it help to make your furnace more reliable and last longer, but it can help it to run more efficiently also.

Don't wait 'til the weather gets too cold.

