

THE INSPECTORS JOURNAL

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Don't like what is happening to the economy, our state, our country?

Get out & **VOTE** tomorrow!!!!

November 11th Veterans Day

Honor those who have served, are serving & those who have gone before us!



November 25th

Happy Thanksgiving



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When to Inspect an Attic

By David Brauner, Editor

Editor's Note: Inspecting an attic can be tricky business. Here is what a few inspectors have learned over the years about when and how to inspect an attic.

Fritz Kelly, inspecting for 12 years in Arizona, has a problem common to inspectors: "I declined to go into an attic the other day. The access was in the master bedroom closet, full of clothes, etc. When I attempted to open the scuttle cover, it was obvious there were about 15 inches of blown in insulation covering it. I was able to access another portion of the attic so I knew approximately how much insulation was up there," said Kelly. "I wrote up that I didn't access that portion of the attic due to excessive insulation on the hatch cover. I suppose I could spend half an hour or so covering their clothing and cleaning up but what do you do when the cover is heavily caulked in place and you will damage drywall removing it? I usually report that the seller needs to provide access but with these short sales, the inspection period is usually very short."

Rick Hurst, inspecting the Dallas/Ft. Worth area for 23 years, says he also uses caution when inspecting an attic, from experience. "Several years ago I removed a panel on the ceiling in a master bedroom closet and down fell a large amount of Rockwool insulation all over this lady's clothes, including a mink coat," said Hurst. "She wanted me to pay a cleaning bill of over \$450. I was hesitant at first but paid the bill feeling at the time that I was at fault. Now, if the panel is not fully accessible, I write it up as such and move on. I tell the client that if the homeowner will remove items that are blocking my access, I'll be happy to come back for a return trip charge. I take pictures of the panel being blocked or that is otherwise non-accessible and put it in my report."

Useful Language

To address this issue, one inspector said he uses language similar to the following: "Inaccessible. Sometimes loose insulation has been blown over the access hatch, in which case it will not be opened. This situation should be rectified after taking possession of the house." Or "Inspector can only review this area if access is made available to the inspector."

And "If concerned, client should verify acceptable heating/cooling bills from homeowner. Client has the right to interview the homeowner to assume proper insulation and attic ventilation by confirming if homeowner has ever observed ice damming, icicles on eaves or abnormal melting of snow from the roof compared to other homes in the area- all of which are signs of improper insulation and attic ventilation. If available, client may wish to obtain design specifications, blue prints, permits, etc. to determine insulation, ventilation, and structure."

Jack Feldmann, inspecting in Tennessee since 1989, says he often goes the extra mile. “It’s a tough call. I have also paid a cleaning bill,” said Feldmann. “However, I have taken clothes out of the closet with the help of the real estate agent. I’ve put an old sheet over the clothes, and many, many times I have cleaned up the insulation that fell down. Sometimes when there are two access points, I can climb over to the other side and get in that part of the attic anyway. I don’t have a problem cutting a caulk line to get access. I need to get in and it can be re-caulked. Same thing for electrical panels. Most of the time, I will cut wallpaper or caulking to get into one. Many times I have to chip out paint from the screw heads to open it. If you don’t go in the attic or anywhere for that matter, document it well in the report as to WHY you didn’t go in there. Photos are a plus.”

Jon Errickson, inspecting Twin Cities, Minnesota for two years, says he takes gear along for just such an occasion. “I carry a six by six foot tarp to put down under my ladder to hopefully catch most of the insulation that falls,” said Errickson. “The only attics that I don’t go in are the ones where the ceiling has the ‘popcorn’ texture and it seals the attic scuttle. But I tell the buyers I’ll come back and look if they don’t mind me cutting in to that to get access.”

Michael O’Handley, inspecting in Washington since 1996, says, “I move blown-in all the time. I also cut the caulk on access hatches when I need to. Just have the selling agent call the listing agent and make it clear to the seller, through the listing agent, that you have no intention of re-caulking or paying to have it re-caulked. If the seller refuses to allow you to do it or says you have to re-caulk it or pay to have it re-caulked, decline to cut the seal and exclude the attic. It only takes a couple of minutes to hang some old sheets over the stuff in the closet (shoes are great for anchoring the sheets in place on top of stuff), leaving the floor the only thing that will get dumped on and I have a six by six foot tarp for that. Most of the time the installers around here have formed a dam around the hatch with batt insulation and have cut a large piece of batting to sit on the hatch, so the only thing that falls through is a little over-blow. However, occasionally there aren’t any dams and I’ll get a little cascade. I just collect most of it when I come back out, toss it up into the attic, and vacuum up the residue,” said O’Handley. “For the stuff that inevitably falls down, I have a hand vacuum that I bought for four dollars at a thrift store. It’s powerful with a beater bar on it. It will compact a large amount of loose-fill into its little cloth bag in seconds and leave the place nice and clean. In 13 plus years I’ve never gotten a complaint from a homeowner or had to pay a cleaning fee and I’ve discovered literally hundreds, maybe thousands of things in attics that would have earned me poor reviews from clients if they’d been discovered after the clients moved in.”

Dave Hill, inspecting since 2005 in Arizona, has this take: “I carry several small clips to hold a sheet in place to cover clothes and catch that darn loose fill. I usually state/disclose that I only inspect from the

(2)

HVAC platform in the attic since most joists are covered with insulation. They can have a handyman come out and do a further evaluation as desired. I don’t risk going through the ceiling unless I see something that warrants closer inspection,” said Hill, adding this important tip: “I always wear a bump cap. Like a hardhat but similar to a baseball-style cap. My head hit an ‘air nail’ in the sheathing once and after that I never enter without head protection. My LED headlight is attached to the cap so I have light wherever I look.”

Michael Patton, inspecting throughout Cincinnati, Indiana & Northern Kentucky for nine years, has his own way of doing things. “Currently I do not carry sheets or tarps, I probably should but don’t. One easy, fast trick that I have been using is to make use of the plastic dry cleaners bags. I pull out a couple of the clothes with the bags over them and hook the hanger perpendicular to the rod and drape the clothes/bags across the other clothes. Usually enough of these are in the closet to provide adequate protection of the hanging clothes. Yes I still have to clean up the floor on occasion but this prevents me from having to go back and forth to the truck with the tarps and sweepers etc.,” said Patton. “For the most part, I will open just about any ceiling hatch; yes I have cut them open and yes I have had trouble getting the big Styrofoam-backed panels back in place. Yes, I have emptied closets out, muttering under my breath the entire time.”

To Inspector or Not

Jim McMillan, inspecting in North and South Carolina since 1998, says he weighs the liability of each inspection choice. “With many of my inspection-related tasks I weigh what my liability potential is if I do certain things. To me, liability means ‘money out of pocket,’” said McMillan. “Whenever I encounter a circumstance that could be a safety hazard or an accessibility concern, I consider as many of the consequences of my actions as possible and make a call on inspecting or not. This includes safely accessing attic and under floor crawlspaces, electrical panels, utility areas, roofs, etc. If, in my mind as a professional, there is a legitimate issue, I will explain to the client or agent what the issue is, ask if the agent or owner has means (within reason) of resolving the issue while I am doing my inspection, and if not, I make the appropriate reference in my report with pictures. In North Carolina the inspection is required to be completed in a single day for reporting purposes. If there are areas or components that I cannot inspect within that day I will offer, *for a fee*, to return and inspect inaccessible areas or components at a later date.”

McMillan continues, “We are being paid to perform a service, and often (due to competition and the economy) that pay is not what I think it should be. However, I still feel that I should do absolutely as much as I can for my clients in order to educate and inform them. As long as we are professional in our demeanor, honest in our actions and reporting, and comply with any inspection regulations that are in affect in our respective states, it is my belief that we have the right to choose not to inspect or access areas/components that in our opinion can’t be safely or adequately inspected.”

Pre Inspection Tip

Daniel Rogers, inspecting Southeast Virginia since 1991, says he does a bit of ground work *before* the inspection that pays off. “The first thing everyone gets from me is an appointment confirmation e-mail. This goes out to the client and agents for both sides. It includes all the pertinent inspection information like day and time, price, payment expected, copy of inspection agreement, what to expect the day of, etc. It also states that utilities have been confirmed to be turned on during the phone call. Also, all areas must

be accessible, like the attic, furnace, water heater, electric panel and crawlspace and I ask that they please make any necessary arrangements with sellers to make this happen,” said Rogers. “When I arrive at the home, I make a quick walk through to size things up. If I see any inaccessible areas I let them know that they'll need to provide access by the time I get back in and then I go outside and get started. I will not take any liability risk but I do help within reason to get the job done. The opportune word is ‘help,’ meaning that I might hang the sheet, cut the caulk line, clear most of the area. However, I solicit and engage and recruit the hearts and minds of the other parties too. If it's not reasonably accessible, then I take photos and document it as an inspection limitation and recommend re-inspection upon access clearance. I even document houses that are dark and cluttered because I know that no one ever remembers that and they'll act like: ‘How could you miss that?’ Easy, look at the photos.”

For inspector Ted Menelly, inspecting for 20 years throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth area, charging to go back, for a fee, makes better sense than the removal of clothes from the closet, cutting a sealed hatch open, etc. “It is not just a matter of covering clothes most of the time. It is trying to squeeze into a closet and set the ladder up and not mash the clothes or push them out of the way,” said Menelly. “I don’t think we are inconveniencing a client by charging them to go back. We are the ones being put out. We are the ones taking a risk of damaging great Aunt Mable's blouse that someone puts a \$1,000 price tag on. If the question is how far should we go to make one client happy, in cases where something can be damaged or you are having to move personal items, etc., the answer for me will always be - not that far at all. That \$1,000 for Aunt Mable's blouse is three to three and a half average inspections. We go out of our way on most inspections to accommodate our clients but there are limits. It is our job and our livelihood. We cannot afford to give away the next three to four inspections.”

Disclaimer: This article is meant to be used for informational purposes only. It is not the intent of this article to provide inspection advice, or advice for any specific fact, situation or circumstance.

About the Author

David Brauner is Editor of Working RE Magazine, and Senior Insurance Broker for OREP.org, providing a E&O insurance to home inspectors for over 9 years. (Minimum premium \$1,250 includes coverage for most services and multiple employees. Email: info@orep.org or call toll free: 888-347-5273.

Thanks to InspectionNews.net.



News Release: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

New England Regional Office

October 1, 2010

Contact: David Deegan, (617) 918-1017

Glastonbury, Conn. Company Faces Fine for Reporting Violations

(Boston, Oct. 1, 2010) – A Glastonbury company faces a fine from EPA for failing to file required chemical inventory reports, in violation of federal right to know laws.

EPA has proposed a \$61,000 penalty against Highway Safety Corp., which does business under the name of Connecticut Galvanizing, for failing to file a Toxic Chemical Release Inventory form for zinc compounds manufactured at the facility in 2006, 2007 and 2008. These reports are required under the federal Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA).

Connecticut Galvanizing operates a hot-dip galvanizing facility at in Glastonbury that galvanizes large metal objects such as guard rails, light posts and other highway equipment. The case was identified through a routine inspection by EPA in Dec. 2009.

TRI reports also ensure that health studies based on TRI data are valid and help authorities carry out comprehensive planning to reduce industrial pollution around a facility.

More information:

- [Toxic Release Inventory \(http://epa.gov/tri\)](http://epa.gov/tri)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - EPA

October 13, 2010

**New York Air Monitoring Firm, Supervisors Found Guilty of
Fraud and Conspiracy**

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Justice Department announced today that a federal jury in Utica, New York has found Certified Environmental Services, Inc. (CES), two of its managers, Nicole Copeland and Elisa Dunn and one of its employees, Sandy Allen, guilty of conspiring to aid and abet Clean Air Act violations, commit mail fraud, and defraud the United States. The defendants were also convicted of substantive Clean Air Act violations and mail fraud counts. Defendants CES and Elisa Dunn were convicted of making false statements to federal law enforcement.

“Falsifying asbestos reports and air quality data is a serious crime and undermines our nation’s efforts to protect human health and the environment,” said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. “Exposure to asbestos can be fatal and the conviction by a jury shows that the American people will not tolerate illegal activity that puts the public at risk of cancer or other serious respiratory diseases.”

“Because of the dishonest and illegal practices of this company, many people were left unaware for years of their possible exposure to asbestos,” said Ignacia S. Moreno, Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Justice. “Companies and employees will be fully investigated and prosecuted when they put the public’s health at risk by violating environmental laws.”

As alleged in the indictment, CES, its employees, and a supervisor from a former asbestos abatement company, Paragon Environmental Construction, conspired over the course of nearly a decade to falsify lab results used to prove that asbestos removal was done properly. In numerous instances asbestos removal companies represented that homes, schools, and other buildings were free of asbestos contamination when asbestos debris remained behind. Owners of local homes and buildings were unaware that asbestos had been left behind from sloppy abatement work because air quality reports were falsified by CES. Due to the false lab reports, people that lived or worked in the buildings were potentially exposed to asbestos, putting them at risk for developing cancer. EPA investigators have notified affected building owners of the asbestos problem so proper cleanup can be conducted..

The conspiracy and substantive Clean Air Act and false statements counts of the indictment each carry a maximum possible term of incarceration of five years and a fine of \$250,000. The mail fraud counts each carry a maximum possible term of incarceration of 20 years and similar fines.

The conviction is the latest in a series of asbestos removal cases that EPA and the Justice Department have brought to trial. For example, in June 2010, the owners of Kodiak Construction Service were sentenced to a combined total of more than 13 years in prison after being found guilty of numerous asbestos related violations. Another example is the four year sentence and requirement to provide restitution to victims of more than \$850,000 for the operator of J & W Construction, Inc that violated the Clean Air Act through illegal asbestos removal and disposal activities.

Asbestos has been determined to cause lung cancer, asbestosis and mesothelioma, a fatal disease. EPA has determined that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

More information on asbestos: <http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/>



NEWS from CPSC

Office of Information and Public Affairs

Washington, DC 20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 5, 2010

Release #11-001

Firm's Recall Hotline: (800) 661-7146

CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

Trisonic Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs Recalled Due To Fire Hazard

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Name of Product: Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Units: 124,000

Importer: Eastern America Trio Products Inc. of Flushing, N.Y.

Hazard: Light bulb may overheat and catch fire.

Incidents/Injuries: The firm has received four reports of incidents, including two fires that resulted in minor property damage.

Description: This recall involves Trisonic 15-, 20-, 22- and 25-watt compact fluorescent light bulbs with the model numbers TS-EN 15W/SP, TS-EN 20W/SP, TS-CFL 22WB or TS-EN 25W/SP printed on the base of the bulb.

Sold at: Discount stores in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut from January 2008 to December 2008 for between \$1 and \$1.50.

Manufactured in: China

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the light bulbs and contact the company for a full refund.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Eastern America Trio Products Inc. at 800-661-7146 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or visit the firm's website at <http://www.trisonic.com>



CPSC is still interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are either directly related to this product recall or involve a different hazard with the same product. Please tell us about it by visiting <https://www.cpsc.gov/cgibin/incident.aspx>

NEWS from CPSC

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Office of Information and Public Affairs

Washington, DC 20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 26, 2010

Release #11-022

Firm's Recall Hotline: (877) 275-6840

CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

GE Recalls Dishwashers Due to Fire Hazard

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Name of Product: GE Profile™ and GE Monogram® Dishwashers

Units: About 174,000

Manufacturer: GE Appliances & Lighting, of Louisville, Ky.

Hazard: Water condensation can drip onto the electronic control board, causing a short circuit and resulting in an overheated connector. This poses a fire hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: GE has received five reports of fires, four of which caused minor damage to the kitchen countertops where the dishwashers were installed and one caused minor damage to adjacent cabinets and smoke damage to the home. No injuries have been reported.

Description: This recall involves the GE Profile dishwashers manufactured between July 2003 and December 2005 and GE Monogram dishwashers manufactured between January 2004 and December 2006. They were sold in white, black, bisque, stainless steel and with custom panels. The recalled model and serial numbers listed below are located on the inside on the front left side of the dishwasher tubs.

Brand	Model Number Begins With:	Serial Number Begins With:
GE Profile	PDW9200J, PDW9280J	MF, RF, SF, TF, VF, ZF, AG, DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH
	PDW9800J, PDW9880J	MF, RF, SF, TF, VF, ZF, AG, DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH

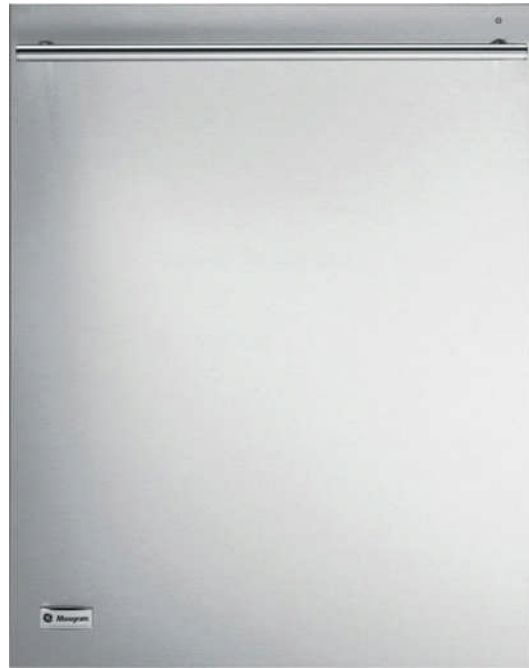
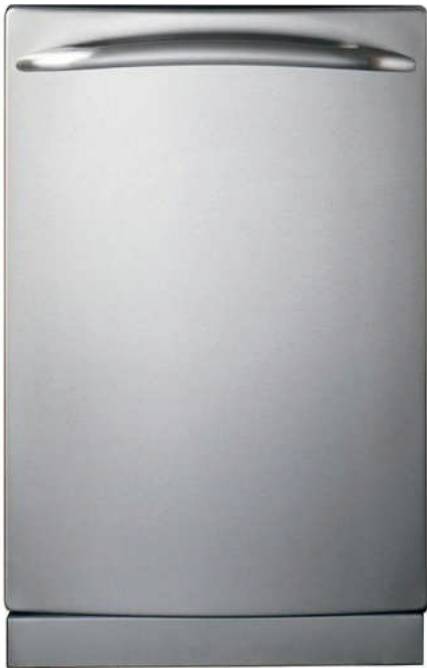
	PDW9700J	MF, RF, SF, TF, VF, ZF, AG, DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH
GE Monogram	ZBD6800K00, ZBD6800K01, ZBD6800K03, ZBD6800K10	AG, DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH, AL, DL, FL, GL, HL, LL, ML, RL
	ZBD6880K00, ZBD6880K01, ZBD6880K03, ZBD6880K10	AG, DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH, AL, DL, FL, GL, HL, LL, ML, RL, SL, TL, VL, ZL
	ZBD6890K00, ZBD6890K01, ZBD6890K03, ZBD6890K10	DG, FG, GG, HG, LG, MG, RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH, AL, DL, FL, GL, HL, LL, ML, RL, SL
	ZBD0700K00, ZBD0700K01, ZBD0700K03, ZBD0700K10	VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH, AL, DL, FL, GL, HL, LL, ML, RL, SL
	ZBD0710K00, ZBD0710K01, ZBD0710K03, ZBD0710K10	RG, SG, TG, VG, ZG, AH, DH, FH, GH, HH, LH, MH, RH, SH, TH, VH, ZH, AL, DL, FL, GL, HL, LL, ML, RL, SL, TL, VL

Sold at: Retail stores nationwide, appliance dealers and authorized builder distributors from July 2003 through December 2006 for between \$750 and \$1,400.

Manufactured in: United States

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled dishwashers, disconnect the electric supply by shutting off the fuse or circuit breaker controlling it and inform all users of the dishwasher about the risk of fire. Contact GE for a free in-home repair or to receive a GE rebate of \$200 for the purchase of a new GE Profile dishwasher and a GE rebate of \$400 for purchase of a new GE Monogram dishwasher.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact GE toll-free at (877) 275-6840 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or visit the company's website at www.geappliances.com/recall
Samples of some of the colors and models included in this recall





WEB Sites of the MONTH

More information about EPA's International Priorities:

<http://www.epa.gov/international/topsix.html>

More information on AirNow International:

<http://www.airnow.gov>

More information about the EPA's work with China:

<http://www.epa.gov/international/regions/Asia/index.html>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2010

EPA Grants E15 Waiver for Newer Vehicles

A new label for E15 is being proposed to help ensure consumers use the correct fuel

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today waived a limitation on selling fuel that is more than 10 percent ethanol for model year 2007 and newer cars and light trucks. The waiver applies to fuel that contains up to 15 percent ethanol – known as E15 – and only to model year 2007 and newer cars and light trucks. This represents the first of a number of actions that are needed from federal, state and industry towards commercialization of E15 gasoline blends. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson made the decision after a review of the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) extensive testing and other available data on E15’s impact on engine durability and emissions.

“Thorough testing has now shown that E15 does not harm emissions control equipment in newer cars and light trucks,” said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. “Wherever sound science and the law support steps to allow more home-grown fuels in America’s vehicles, this administration takes those steps.”

A decision on the use of E15 in model year 2001 to 2006 vehicles will be made after EPA receives the results of additional DOE testing, which is expected to be completed in November. However, no waiver is being granted this year for E15 use in model year 2000 and older cars and light trucks – or in any motorcycles, heavy-duty vehicles, or non-road engines – because currently there is not testing data to support such a waiver. Since 1979, up to 10 percent ethanol or E10 has been used for all conventional cars and light trucks, and non-road vehicles.

Additionally, several steps are being taken to help consumers easily identify the correct fuel for their vehicles and equipment. First, EPA is proposing E15 pump labeling requirements, including a requirement that the fuel industry specify the ethanol content of gasoline sold to retailers. There would also be a quarterly survey of retail stations to help ensure their gas pumps are properly labeled.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 mandated an increase in the overall volume of renewable fuels into the marketplace reaching a 36 billion gallon total in 2022. Ethanol is considered a renewable fuel because it is produced from plant products or wastes and not from fossil fuels. Ethanol is blended with gasoline for use in most areas across the country.

The E15 petition was submitted to EPA by Growth Energy and 54 ethanol manufacturers in March 2009. In April 2009, EPA sought public comment on the petition and received about 78,000 comments.

The petition was submitted under a Clean Air Act provision that allows EPA to waive the act’s prohibition against the sale of a significantly altered fuel if the petitioner shows that the new fuel will not cause or contribute to the failure of the engine parts that ensure compliance with the act’s emissions limits.

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/regs/fuels/additive/e15/>

10 Quick Tips to Winterize Your Home

With winter coming, I thought it was important to review a few simple tips to help you winterize your home and save some money in the process. Most of these tips are really simple, cost little, and can help reduce your energy bill – thus helping both your wallet and the environment!



Insulate your attic. One of the easiest ways to save some money is to ensure that you have at least 12 inches of insulation in your attic. Hot air rises and through the attic is where it'll go unless you sufficiently insulate it. The rule of thumb is that if you can see your ceiling joists (the wooden beams), you don't have enough because those are often shorter than 12 inches.

Turn off exterior water lines. Chances are you won't be using any of the water faucets outside of your home, so shut the valve that allows water to those exterior bibs. This prevents the water inside from freezing and cracking your pipes.

Wrap your water boiler. Since it'll be cold, it's more important than ever to invest in a water heater blanket and wrap your water heater so it loses less heat into the ambient air.

Open the blinds in sunny rooms. Be sure to keep the blinds open on any rooms that get a lot of sun, even a little bit of extra heat can help keep those bills down.

Get a programmable thermostat. Programmable thermostats can help you save a ton of money by only turning on when you most need it. All HVAC systems work the same way – they are either on or off (there's no low, medium, or high intensity setting). If you can keep your system off when you're not home or when you're asleep, you can save yourself a lot of money. They are easy to install and often break-even (cost vs. savings) within the first year. Here are the things I do to make the HVAC run as little as possible:

- We set the minimum temperature of the home to 55 degrees F.
- The thermostat is otherwise set to 65 degrees when "on."
- It's set to be turned on about thirty minutes before we wake up and shuts off at around 9:30.
- It turns on at around 5:30, which is approximately half an hour before we get home.
- The system shuts down at around 11:00, about half an hour before we go to sleep.

- I work from home now but I haven't worked from home during the winter yet, so I'll have to see how cold it gets... so far it's been fine in the summer (which nothing changes except the temperature settings).

Consider lowering the temperature setting on your thermostat. A lower temperature means the system is on less, so try lowering the temperature a degree at a time. You'll either adjust or reach a point where the temperature is far too low. Either way, you'll find your sweet spot where your wallet meets your body's needs. There's no sense dropping the temperature so low that you get sick, that just doesn't make financial sense. And put on a sweater. 😊

Replace your HVAC air filter. I recently replaced my air filter after the fall season and noticed it was remarkably dirty despite our limited use (Maryland is fairly temperate so we don't use our HVAC system much in the fall). During the winter, when the system will run more often, it's good to replace it monthly so that you don't have a dirty air filter ruining the efficiency of the system.

Flip the switch on your ceiling fan. This one is really easy, just flip the rotation direction on your ceiling fans. As hot air rises in the winter, you want the fan to blow upward and slowly. This circulates the hot air back down into the room. When it becomes warmer, you want the fans to blow downward and quickly to cool you off.

Install window insulators. Window insulators are simply plastic sheets you tape up over windows to add an extra layer of protection from the cold. This is especially effective if you have drafty windows as the heat from your home can easily escape from those spaces. If you have especially drafty or old windows (especially if they're single pane), consider replacing them. Window replacements fall under the renewed energy tax credits for 2009 explained next.

Home energy improvement tax credit returns in 2009. In 2007 and 2008, you could get a [tax credit for energy saving home improvements](#) of up to \$500 (calculated based on what on the home improvement. We took advantage by replacing our 20-year old drafty windows and sliding doors with Energy Star compliant versions. It had expired on 1/1/08 but the [federal tax credits for energy efficiency](#) have been brought back through the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (that's the bailout bill) and is valid on all improvements made during 2009 (2008 improvements will not receive this credit). The limits for the credit remain the same, \$500 over 2006, 2007, and 2009 (which means we've already used our allotment); but this makes it available for people who didn't take advantage of the credit the first time.



BARGAINEERING

<http://www.bargaineering.com/articles/10-quick-tips-to-winterize-your-home.html>

CT Licensed Home Inspectors,

Renewal is coming in June 2011

The "CT Law Seminar" Online!

This is the Required "Ct Law Course" (3hours) for license renewal each cycle.
Take it in the confines of your office or home. No travel time or travel expenses
Top Quality at the Least Expense price anywhere!

On our web site: Click on "Select a State", "Connecticut", click on ****Click here before taking the "CT Law Course" for procedures to take the course"* then select: [Connecticut Law Seminar Purchase Page](#)

Get your Continuing Education Certificate Now!

IPG Members: \$35 Interns: \$40 Licensees: \$45

Course Developed by Bernie Caliendo (former CT Licensing Board Chairman 03-08) with impute and review by Attorney Kent Mawhinney

This course meets the minimum requirements as set forth by the CT Home Inspection Licensing Board

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