Spring HOME IMPROVEMENT GUIDE

- Curb Appeal
- Remodel or Move?
- Sticking to a Budget
- Learn DIY

PLUS Information on Ductless Systems and Home Automation
Kevin Westcott has been in the Plumbing, Heating & Cooling industry for over 34 years. From humble beginnings, Kevin worked alongside his father who taught him how to fix & install systems and to operate a business with honesty, integrity, and professionalism – the core values of Family Plumbing & Heating.

Before making any decision or taking any course of action, they look at what is right first for the customer, then the employee, and finally, the business. This formula has served them well because today Family Plumbing & Heating is a leading business in Northern Michigan.

No matter how much technology improves, modern convenience can’t take the place of reliable, responsive service from professionals you trust. Family Plumbing & Heating’s goal is to make you comfortable from the time your call first comes in all the way through the installation of a technologically-advanced, energy-efficient home comfort system.

No matter how modern the conveniences become, some things never change. And the one thing you can always count on is the commitment to their customers. Call Family Plumbing & Heating when you need professional help – they use the latest technology to solve your Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning problems, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

989-732-8099
Familyplumbingandheating.com
519 W. Second St., Gaylord
Curb Appeal

Think of curb appeal as your home’s first impression. In fact, the curb appeal of any home can help (or hurt) the property values of the entire neighborhood.

According to the National Association of Realtors, 63 percent of homebuyers will drive by or schedule an appointment after viewing a home they like online. While you might not be in the market to sell, the “saleability” of your home should always be on your mind. Improving your home’s curb appeal can be done in the following three steps.

AN HONEST ASSESSMENT
Walk to the street and look back at your house. What do you see? Take an honest look at your home. Take a notepad and pen with you.
Write down projects that need to be completed. It is helpful to distinguish projects you want to start, versus repairs that need to be made to existing structures or areas.

A GOOD SCRUB DOWN
Dedicate a weekend to cleaning out the gutters. It is also important to examine the siding of your home. Is it in good shape? Pressure-washing house siding can strip away any green growth or mildew hanging out in the cracks — making it look bright and new.
Spray for any weeds creeping up the driveway or walkways, and sweep the front porch. Keeping your property clean is an essential aspect of home improvement.

A GENTLE SPRUCING
Your entryway is always a focal point. Make it stand out by painting your front door a bright, fresh color. Visit your local home improvement store or nursery and pick up potted plants and hanging baskets for the front porch.
If you have a large front yard, or own a home in a new development, consider planting a tree. Another easy upgrade to your landscaping is installing outdoor lighting.
Opt for budget-friendly solar lighting fixtures. They rely on the sun for power, which means no digging up the lawn to bury electrical lines. This also makes installation a breeze. Line walkways, highlight shrubbery and anything else that makes your home stand out from the crowd.
Remodel or Move?

Before you decide to move up to a bigger home or one with a more modern floor plan, consider remodeling.

A remodeling project can cause some short-term upheaval in your life, but a move also can be a disruption. Before you decide to shop around for a new home, consider talking to a contractor about how your home could be changed to better suit your needs.

**HAPPY REMODELERS**
While homeowners often wait until they’re planning to sell to remodel, many report that they’re happy staying put after a major remodeling project.

According to the National Association of Realtors’ 2015 Remodeling Impact Report, 64 percent of homeowners said they experienced increased enjoyment in their home after completing a remodeling project, and 75 percent said they felt a major sense of accomplishment.

“Realtors know that certain home upgrades and remodels can be beneficial to get more buyer eyes on a property, potentially bring in more offers or gain more equity from a home,” said NAR president Tom Salomone. “But remodeling projects are just as valuable to homeowners who simply want to get more joy out of their dwellings.”

Judy Mozen, president of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, said, “Remodeling projects can greatly improve both the value of and satisfaction with one’s home, which are great things no matter the reason for a project.”

**LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?**
When you bought your home, you probably researched taxes and nearby schools, parks and shopping, as well as less tangible items, such as a warm connection amongst neighbors. In short, you bought your home for a reason, and even if some of those reasons no longer hold true (such as sufficient space), a good remodeling job could help you fall back in love with your once-beloved home. You have probably made many memories in your home. Speaking to a professional remodeler could help open your eyes to possibilities you hadn’t considered before, and allow you to stay put in your home and make even more memories there.

**VALUE ADDED**
You could find that a remodel adds unexpected value to your home. According to the NAR report, Realtors listed the interior projects that yield the biggest returns at resale as hardwood flooring refinishes (with 100 percent of the project’s cost recovered), insulation upgrades (95 percent), new wood flooring (91 percent) and converting a basement to a living area (69 percent). Outdoors, Realtors listed top resale-value projects as new roofing (105 percent of project cost recovered), a new garage door (87 percent), new vinyl siding (83 percent) and new vinyl windows (80 percent).
Home Automation: Evolution® Connex™ Control.

Complete comfort control and energy savings, plus exceptional service from your Bryant® dealer.

COMFORT AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The Evolution® Connex™ control puts you in command of your comfort when you want it, where you want it and how you want it.

1. HIGH RESOLUTION COLOR TOUCH-SCREEN

Intuitive on-screen prompts and quick-read icons put you in total control. Adjustable brightness optimizes readability in a variety of conditions. And, you can see your dealer’s contact information with just a touch.

2. LIFESTYLE PROGRAMMING

Simple, on-screen prompts help you select comfort settings and corresponding times that best match your lifestyle. Enjoy superior comfort and energy savings with full, 7-day programmability. You can even switch to a separate vacation schedule without re-programming your everyday settings.

3. TOUCH•N•GO® FLEXIBILITY

One-touch access to comfort settings allows you to adjust for greater comfort or energy savings as needed.

4. POP-UP REMINDERS

On-screen reminders tell you when it’s time to change filters, humidifier pads, UV lights or schedule system checkups. TrueSense™ dirty filter detection is not a timer – it monitors airflow to know precisely when your air filter is ready for a change when installed as part of a complete Evolution® System.

5. TAKE CONTROL FROM VIRTUALLY ANYWHERE

Enjoy full access to the Evolution® Connex™ control directly from mobile, tablet and desktop devices with a home Wi-Fi® network and the appropriate software or app.*

*When connected to the Internet through a Wi-Fi network.

Contact Family Plumbing & Heating, your local Bryant® dealer, to learn more about the Evolution® Connex™ control, 989-732-8099.
Sticking to a Budget

It is easy to go over budget with home improvements, but with these easy steps, you can stay in the black.

**KNOW WHAT IS IMPORTANT**

Know what is important to you and what is important for increasing the value of your home. Some projects see a greater return on investment, and certain projects will affect your listing price more than others.

It also is important to know what you value. Oftentimes mid-project, you will find yourself needing to make tough choices on materials or installation costs. Knowing what you are willing to compromise on will make this decision smoother.

**DIY. OR NOT.**

Completing a home project yourself to save money may not necessarily be the best way to go. For example, if you don't have the knowledge or experience, you could end up paying much more in the long run.

While your labor is free, knowledge certainly isn't. It is smarter — and more budget-friendly — to know what you can handle and what is over your head.

**WHEN TO HIRE AN EXPERT**

If you feel like a project is over your head, it is time to start looking for an expert. Be sure to get at least three quotes for each service you need done.

Remember that bids are about more than price. You should care about outcome, as well. Going with the cheapest bid doesn't do you any good if the level of work proves to be less than desired.

**BUDGET FOR THE UNEXPECTED**

Pad your budget. No matter what you think something will cost, unexpected issues always arise, from a hidden pipe that needs moving, to extra shipping charges, to unanticipated permit fees. A safety net of 10 percent of your overall budget should protect you from overextending yourself.
Every homeowner should have basic do-it-yourself skills. Learning to DIY can save you money on tasks from installing a ceiling fan to tiling an entire room.

HARDWARE STORES
Hardware stores big and small offer in-store clinics where basic skills are taught, and you can even learn to complete an entire project. You might find classes such as interior painting and drywall repair or beginning tiling.

Some stores also offer libraries of online DIY videos for a range of projects.

Local hardware stores can be a treasure trove of information. Not only will you likely find experienced home improvement pros behind the counter, but they also might be able to recommend local contractors they trust.

ONLINE SOURCES
Habitat for Humanity offers its Habitat Learns program, a free online training portal for its volunteers, to the general public. Its Residential Construction Basics series, recommended for prospective homeowners, includes training on all of a home’s major systems, as well as construction terminology and processes. Topics include foundations, floor systems, framing walls, roofing, heating and cooling systems, electrical systems, and interior and exterior finishes.

Consider other online training portals that offer a wide range of courses from professional development to craft projects. Udemy.com offers low-cost courses (starting at $10) on topics such as patching walls and building a home automation system. Sites that offer free online tutorials include RonHazelton.com, DIYNetwork.com, and AsktheBuilder.com, as well as Pinterest and YouTube.

LOCAL SOURCES
Check with your local community college to see if a home improvement course is offered. Many community colleges offer non-credit courses through continuing education or community outreach programs.

These courses are designed to provide practical knowledge at an affordable price. Classes are often offered on nights or weekends, making it easy to fit them in around your regular schedule. For small projects, a one-time workshop might fit the bill.

These courses are often taught by local home improvement contractors, allowing you to benefit from their expertise and make connections to local pros.
IT TAKES the guesswork out of ductwork.

And I know the solution. Bryant® Ductless systems are a flexible solution for unique home comfort issues. No ductwork? Hot or cold spots? No problem. These units are:

Versatile: Available in a variety of designs that can be installed almost anywhere.

Efficient: More energy efficient than traditional heating and cooling systems.*

Unobtrusive: Operate quietly, while the sleek designs blend in effortlessly with surroundings.

There is a Bryant Ductless system to fit practically any need. Contact us to learn more.

Bryant. Whatever It Takes.®

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* Based on comparison of published SEER, HSPF and COP ratings for typical high efficiency system.