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April 2012 Guide



A special edition of the
Basin Republican Rustler,
Greybull Standard and
Lovell Chronicle.



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Getting started on spring cleaning

Don't forget to clean and reorganize bookshelves

For homeowners, spring cleaning is one of the annual rites of spring. The return of warmer weather presents the perfect opportunity for homeowners to open the windows, let some fresh air in and tidy up after a few months spent cooped up inside while the weather outside was frightful.

But now that spring has arrived, the time to clean up around the house has come. Homeowners about to start on their annual spring cleaning should consider the following before beginning.

Get the right tools

The right tools won't necessarily be a hammer and nails, but cleaning products that can make spring cleaning more efficient. Rubber gloves, cleaning products (preferably natural products that are good for the environment) and enough garbage bags to discard a winter's worth of clutter should all be on hand before you begin cleaning. If they're not, you'll likely need to make a trip to the store while cleaning, which can be time-consuming and prolong the process.

Take some inventory

Many people have no problem buying new clothes, but they do find it hard to get rid of older items. Part of spring cleaning is tossing old items you no longer use, and that includes clothing. Clothing can take up a significant amount of space, so take some inventory on your wardrobe and decide which items you want to keep and which ones you can afford to discard or even donate.

Address the windows

If the last several months have been especially cold or snowy, then you might not have looked out the windows in quite some time. Unfortunately, those windows might have accumulated quite the amount of dirt and grime while you were huddled inside. When washing the windows, do so on a cloudy day, as the sun can actually cause streaking. In addition, be mindful of what you're using to wipe down the windows post-cleaning. Microfiber rags typically give windows a great shine without any streaking.

The blinds and drapes will also need to be addressed, as they have likely accumulated some dust over

the last few months. Dust the valance and the frame, and wipe the blinds down with a damp cloth. You can also use your vacuum's upholstery and brush attachments to further clean blinds and drapes.

Tidy up the bed

You likely wash your bed linens regardless of the season. When spring cleaning, toss these linens into the washing machine and don't forget to wash the mattress pads and bed skirting as well. While those items are in the wash, flip all the mattresses in your household.

Don't forget the kitchen

The kitchen is not immune to clutter, and it's especially easy for items to overstay their welcome in the refrigerator and the kitchen cabinets. Look for old takeout containers in the refrigerator that have managed to stick around, and throw these out as well as any items that have passed their expiration dates. While items in the kitchen cabinets might not have an expiration date, it helps to remove them from the pantry and then dust and wipe down the shelves. When doing so, discard any items that no longer seem appetizing.

Beat the rugs

Area rugs have no doubt collected dirt and dust over the last several months. Though vacuuming these area rugs might be enough during the year, take advantage of the pleasant weather and take the rugs outside to beat them and rid them of dust and any other particles the vacuum might have missed over the last few months.

Clean the bookshelves

Bookshelves are one the biggest collectors of dust in many homes. Open the windows in the home and then remove books from the shelves. Once the books have been removed, dust the shelves and wipe them down with a damp cloth. And don't forget to dust the books and reorganize titles before returning them to their newly cleaned shelves. Spring cleaning is something all homeowners must do to keep their homes healthy and clean. Spring cleaning is an annual event at many households, and a few simple strategies can make it go much more smoothly.

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Business picking up for the lumberyards, building centers

By **DAVID PECK**
Lovell Chronicle

What a difference a year makes. One year after last year's wet, rainy spring, warmer weather has lumberyards and building centers hopping as homeowners jump into spring and summer projects.

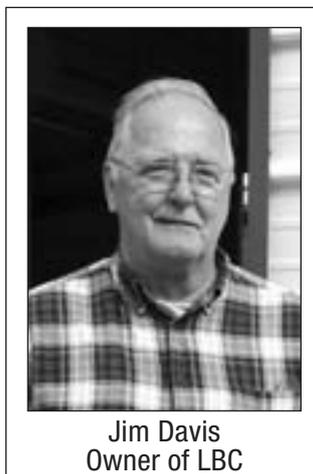
"It was cold and rainy last spring, and that suppressed the building season until mid-May," said Doug Arnold of Cowley Lumber Co.

"We never did get into the deck season last year. We sold maybe two or three decks all year. This year we've already ordered four decks for this season and have several inquiries. It looks like a good deck season.

"Our suppliers said sales were off \$1½ million to \$2 million last year, just in this region. This year we're seeing good numbers and suppliers are offering good prices. We'll be stocking deck material and running quality deals, as well."

Arnold said his company can work with homeowners to help design their deck using a computerized design program complete with a materials list and three-dimensional views.

"It makes it real easy," he said. "Customers can create their own login and ID and can even design it themselves. We'll put together a package. We have a range of materials from composite materials to pine



Jim Davis
Owner of LBC

and redwood decks. We can get PVC composite material that handles moisture and fits better, with less expansion and contraction."

As for home building and remodeling, Arnold said there is a lot of pent-up frustration after last year's cold spring and early summer.

"Homes are hot," he said. "People are wanting and waiting to do some things. It's look-

ing like a great homebuilding season."

Arnold said there are four new homes being added to the Stevens Subdivision, a new home elsewhere in Cowley, plus a duplex.

"Last year a lot of folks just remodeled their shops and garages," he said. "We haven't seen as much of that this year. It's moved to more new home building."

One thing Cowley Lumber offers is storage sheds from Cowboy Structures in Powell. The company buys materials from Cowley Lumber, and Arnold, in turn, displays the sheds on his lot.

"If people don't want to build one it's a great alternative," he said. "We have packages for do-it-yourselfers. We believe in working in partnership with our builders and suppliers."

Arnold said his greatest challenge is getting people to shop at home rather than automatically driving to

PHOTOS BY DAVID PECK

Doug Arnold, the owner/operator of Cowley Lumber, sits on some lumber at the yard in Cowley.

Billings.

"Our biggest frustration is the Montana border," he said. "We're trying to keep business here. We're doing our best to stay competitive so we can keep the money in our community."

Companies like Cowley Lumber, in turn, invest in the local community in many ways.

"We want to give back as well as reward people for buying locally," he said.

He said Cowley Lumber recently changed to offering Number One lumber, a higher quality lumber product.

Lovell Building Center

Lovell Building Center owner Jim Davis also said things are picking up this spring. He and wife Carol have been running the business with son Randy since September.

"We're starting to do a little concrete for building fences and stuff like that," he said. "We have Qui-krete.

"We also have a few customers coming in for paint. We have a new color match machine to help people. If they want a particular color, we can match it."

Some people are purchasing metal buildings, Davis said, noting that Lovell Building

Center offers Coast to Coast Carpents that can be ordered up to 100 feet wide, customized to meet a purchaser's needs.

"People can order what they want and they'll come in and put it up," he said, noting that the buildings can be used as a shop, garage of a variety or other configurations.

Lovell Building Center also builds wood sheds on site to a customer's specifications, or the Center can order in the lumber for a customer to build his own.

"We can order materials for decks and anything else," he said. "We have a lot of hardware and tools, and we're trying to get more product in. If people come in for it, we want to be able to supply it. We're still learning what people want. We can order just about anything."

But he also said he won't hesitate to send a customer "across the street" to CK Hardware if the Building Center doesn't have an item, noting, "If people want it, they want it (now)."



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The differences between roofing materials

Shingles are just one of many types to choose from these days

A roof is the primary defense a home has against the elements. It provides protection against wind, rain and snow, as well as shields the interior from the blazing heat. A compromised roof cannot do its job properly. There are many different roofing materials available these days -- each of which carries with it a certain length of usefulness.

Most roofs can last anywhere from 25 to 40 years, depending on the material composition. Homeowners may know it's time to replace a roof without even venturing out on the roof. Ceiling leaks or discoloration can indicate it's time to replace a roof. Check for sagging ceiling material on the top floors of the home if there is no attic. Wet or darkened wood or rusty nails in the attic could be signs. Rafters may channel leaks away from their original source, so it's best to do a thorough check anytime wetness or discoloration is evident anywhere in the home.

Once the decision to install a new roof is made, homeowners must decide between the different roofing materials. Research is necessary to find a roof that will be the right price and meet the homeowner's needs. Here are common roofing materials.



- **Asphalt shingles:** This is the type of roof most homeowners first think of when envisioning a roofing project. The three-tab asphalt shingle is the most commonly used roofing material. The economic value it offers is why this roof is one of the most popular. However, even though shingles are available in many different colors, homeowners seeking something unique may want

to select a different roofing option.

- **Architectural shingle:** Similar to an asphalt shingle, the architectural shingle is made to be thicker and the layers are staggered to give the roof a more architectural look. These shingles are only slightly more expensive than asphalt shingles, which still makes them a good value.

- **Wood shakes and shingles:** Instead of asphalt, wood makes an ideal roofing material that's also pleasing to the eye. Over time wood will weather to different shades, which can help the home blend in with the environment. Wood shakes can be expensive to install, and will require periodic cleaning to remove mildew or moss, and may need re-oiling for preservation. There are also "fake" wood shingles that are made of composite materials that

may offer the look of wood without the maintenance.

- **Slate:** This hard, stone material is very strong and sheds snow and ice very well, which is why it was often used on homes in the Northeast. However, the weight of slate, which requires a more substantial roof structure, and the cost make it less popular among today's homeowners.

- **Metal:** This material is an ideal choice for industrial applications or on agricultural or country homes where snow is frequent. A metal roof can range from relatively inexpensive galvanized steel to lofty copper that is pricey. A properly installed metal roof could last 50 years, which makes it a good value.

- **Ceramic:** Ceramic tile roofs may be among the most expensive due to the craftsmanship and the instal-

lation required for these heavy tiles, but their life expectancy is 60 to 80 years. Chances are you'll only have to do this type of installation once in a lifetime. Many people are drawn to ceramic roofs because of their beauty. They are commonly found on Mediterranean-style homes in warm climates. Most tiles are waterproofed and hard-fired so they won't absorb moisture, also making them safe to use in northern climates.

In general, a roofing job is not a do-it-yourself undertaking. It will require an experienced and licensed contractor. A trusted roofing contractor can be found by exploring listings on the National Roofing Contractor Association Web site at www.nrca.net. Verify contractors prior to hire through organizations like the Better Business Bureau or on Angie's List.

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Easy tips on floodproofing your home

Cleaning gutters and downspouts is one way to prevent homes from flooding

Homeowners know no home is perfect. While the notion of a dream house is nice, every home eventually experiences a problem or two. Many problems are bound to occur sooner or later, but there are a few that diligent homeowners can prevent.

One of those preventable problems is flooding. Any home with floor drains or plumbing fixtures below street level can flood, and this can be due to inclement weather, such as heavy rainstorms, local sewer system backup, or groundwater

swelling. Flooding can even occur in the spring when melting occurs as the air temperature increases. While homeowners won't be able to control the weather, they can take steps to floodproof their home.

- Do some preventive landscaping. If the ground around the home's foundation slopes toward the house, make some grading changes so that the ground slopes away from the house.

- * Insulate the heating ducts. Some home heating ducts are under the basement floor. In such homes, homeowners should make sure these ducts are properly insulated and watertight.

- Make sure the vents all lead outside the home. The weather can cause moisture issues, but some moisture problems can come from inside the home as well. Clothes dryers and bathrooms are both internal moisture sources, and these sources should always be vented outside the home.

- Clean gutters and downspouts. Gutters and downspouts should be cleaned to ensure water is effectively being diverted away from the home. Clean gutters and downspouts in the spring after a long winter, and do so again in the fall to keep fallen leaves from blocking the flow of water. Downspouts should extend four feet from the outside wall of the



house.

- Inspect the home at least once a year. Before buying a home, buyers often hire a professional inspector to ensure the home is safe and sound. But the inspections should not stop once buyers sign on the dotted line. To prevent flooding, homeowners should inspect their home's foundation for cracks once a year. If the home has a chimney and fireplace, check for cracks there as well. If any cracks are discovered, consult a professional immediately.

- Clean out basement drains. Basement drains should be cleaned annually from the house to the

street. If the drains are still slow after cleaning, then clean them more than once a year.

- When leaving the home for an extended period of time, turn the water valve off. Homeowners worried about flooding can calm those fears when going on vacation or another long trip by turn the water valve off at the source. This ensures that, should a line break while no one is home, water will not pump into the house.

Floodproofing a home can save homeowners from potentially costly repairs and unsightly damage to a home's interior.



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Spring cleaning tips for the grill

It doesn't matter whether you barbecue year-round, or put the barbecue away for the winter, it's always a good idea to clean it thoroughly once or twice a year. Take a look these tips to make the job easier:

You will need: A steel putty knife; a heavy duty vacuum; a brass bristle barbecue brush; plus cleaning supplies including a degreaser for heavy grime, a glass cleaner with ammonia for exterior cleaning, and stainless steel cleaner/polish for finishing touches.

First step: Attach your barbecue to the propane tank. Use a mixture of dish soap and warm water to coat all connections to test for leaks — any bubbling at connections means there is a leak. Remove the grids and heat. **Clean:** Heat and cooking grids. Light your barbecue and let it heat up to 200 F.

Turn everything off and let it cool until it is just warm to the touch. Brush the grids thoroughly on both

top and bottom. Remove the grids and set aside. Use your grill brush to remove any debris on the heat media, remove them to expose the burners and cook box. Using your putty knife, scrape the sides of the cook box to remove any caked-on debris.

If your barbecue has a removable grease tray, take it out with the debris. If you have a closed-bottom cook box, use your heavy-duty vacuum to clean up all the loose ash and debris in the cook box.

Quick Tip: Re-install the grease tray, heat medium, and cooking grids. Heat your barbecue to at least 400 degrees F and season your cooking grids with olive or grape-seed oil. This will protect your cooking grids and can prevent food from sticking.

Whether your barbecue is brand new or older than your children and pets, a semi-annual cleaning is highly recommended to ensure years of trouble free use.



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Lots of options around Big Horn

By **NATHAN OSTER**
Greybull Standard

As landfill costs continue to escalate, the communities of Big Horn County are investing considerably more time and resources promoting the benefits of recycling.

According to the website, Facts About Recycling, more than half of the municipal solid waste that ends up in landfills across the country is highly recyclable material — things such as papers, plastics and metals, to name just a few.

In fact, yard trimmings make up 20 percent of the solid waste in the United States, and only one quarter of that amount is recovered for composting purposes.

Given that, it should come as no surprise that recycling — the making of new products from used materials — and compost programs are gaining in popularity.

The three largest communities in the county, Lovell, Greybull and Basin, as well as Deaver all have recycling trailers that get transported to Powell Valley Recycling.

"We do an average of close to 70 ton a month — and a lot of that comes from Big Horn County," said Mary Jo Decker, the operations manager at Powell Valley Recycling, which is a nonprofit organization.

In addition to the municipalities, many residents take their recyclable products directly to Powell. Decker said in addition to papers, cardboard, magazine and telephone books, Powell Valley Recycling will soon start accepting the type of cardboard used to make cereal boxes and shoe boxes. The business will also start taking the type of propane tanks that go in cook stoves as well as grocery bags — preferably, she said, they should come stuffed inside actual grocery bags, she said.

For residents in Greybull, Basin and Lovell, it's easy to recycle because each of those communities has trailers set up in highly visible locations.

In Lovell, there are two trailers in the Red Apple parking lot.



PHOTO BY KARLA POMEROY

Glass recycled in Basin is taken to the landfill where it is used as cover material.

In Basin, a single trailer is parked on the county fairgrounds.

And in Greybull, there are two — one next to the Herb Asp Community Center, the other in a lot adjacent to Ron's Food Farm.

Valerie Schneider is a Youth Conservation Corps supervisor for the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, which sponsors the recycling program in Lovell.

One of the bins in Lovell is for cardboard products, while the other is a multi-bin trailer that takes the typical recyclable products such as papers, some plastics and cans.

"We've had it for three years now and I think it's going over very well," Schneider said. "We take both of them over about once a week."

"The community has been very supportive — not just in terms of people volunteering to take it over but also in spreading the word. Everybody's talking about recycling — and having those two trailers in such an up-front location, that's made it really convenient."

As one might expect, she's a big proponent of recycling. "Oh yes, it's a great thing," she said. "Every bit we can do reduces our carbon footprint ... it cuts down on the amount that we have to mine for heavy metals ... and it reduces the amount we have to log for new paper because we're able to re-use old paper products."

Lovell also has a place north of town, near the sewer lagoon and animal control building, where residents can take their vegetative waste.

In Greybull, the town made a commitment to recycling when it purchased the two trailers — and it reaffirmed that stance recently when it agreed to go in with Basin on a cardboard baling program, which is expected to roll out later this year. At the present time, none of the trailers in Basin and Greybull accept cardboard products.

Greybull has had a brush pile for yard waste, but is currently in a transition period due to an issue with a private landowner over access to that pile, which is located on the north end of town.

Dalen Davis, the interim town foreman in Greybull, said residents can box or bag their lawn clippings and leaves and place them beside Dumpsters until the town is either able to re-open the former compost site or announce the opening of a new location.

Greybull Town Clerk Kathy Smith said that

that

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County for recycling, composting

when the cost of transporting the trailers is factored in, it's probably "a wash" in terms of cost savings to the town.

But for Aaron Kania, co-founder of Basin Citizens for Recycling, there's no doubt that Basin comes out ahead on recycling. He is in an interesting position. While an outspoken advocate for recycling, he is also on the board of directors of the South Big Horn County Landfill. Landfill profits go down when citizens recycle, but Kania said in the grand scheme, that's OK because it extends the life of the landfill.

Kania said he supports incorporating more recycling, as well as composting, into the landfill's business model. In fact, during the landfill's upcoming permit renewal process with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), he said there would be an attempt to get compost included in the things the landfill can do. The landfill board would ultimately have to decide how to market it.

Basin does not have a curbside recycling program, but instead relies on residents to take items to the 10-bin recycling trailer at the fairgrounds.

Basin has had good success this year with its compost program. There are at least 26 of the green "compost" Dumpsters spread out around town. They get collected and taken to a compost pile.

"To date this year, we have collected twice the material we collected all of last year. Residents are filling (the Dumpsters) up and doing a really good job sorting things," Kania said.

Basin has also worked out an agreement with the Big Horn Basin Group Home kids, who keep an eye on the compost pile, sorting out what isn't either weeds or grasses, in exchange for free passes to the swimming pool.

One caution, however: Kania asks residents to simply put grass and clippings in the green Dumpsters. There is no need to put it in garbage bags, which degrade the product. He also asks that Basin residents not put branches in the green Dumpsters.

Basin's compost pile is located near the town's sewer lagoons.

Burlington also has a recycling trailer that is located at the school.



Dumpsters around Basin for compost material are painted green and marked for leaves and grass only.



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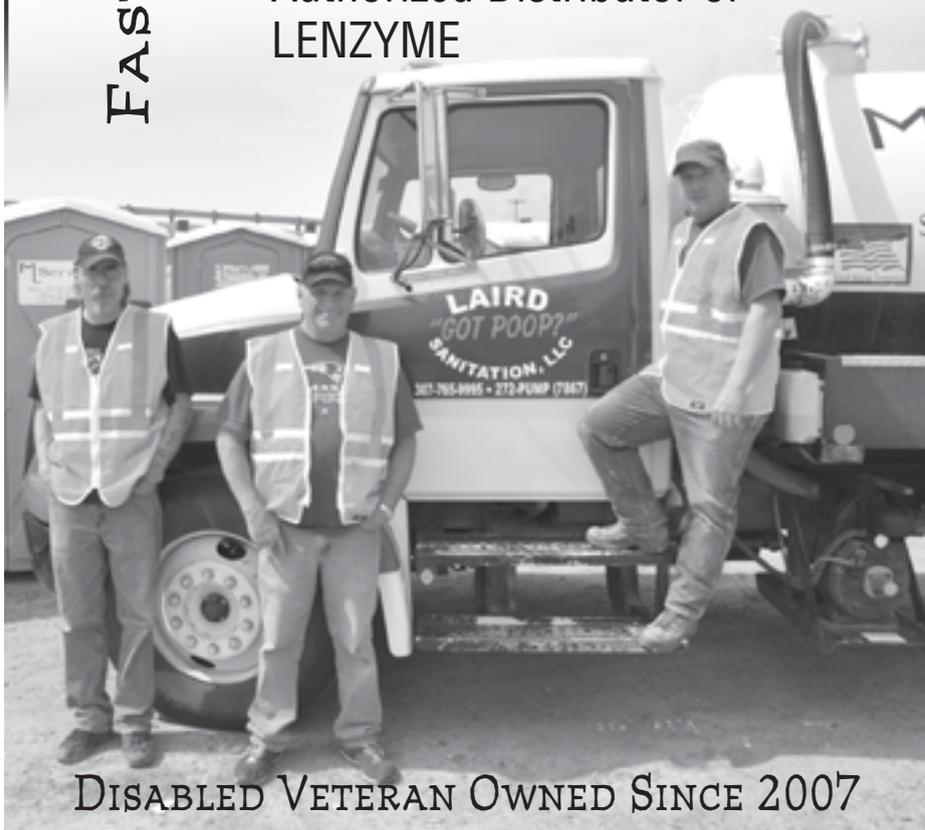
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DISABLED VETERAN OWNED SINCE 2007

Top 10 April gardening tips

By GARY EMMETT
Lovell Chronicle

Average last frost date for the Big Horn Basin: May 17. This will vary year to year and depend on your location. If you plant tender plants prior to this date, be prepared to offer protection.

Plant part of your vegetable garden: Potatoes, peas, onions, beets, radishes, carrots, and onions are a few of the vegetables that can be planted out in your garden. You can also plant broccoli and cabbage plants. If temperatures drift to the low 20's be prepared to cover the new starts with a cloth.

Finish pruning and shaping your fruit trees. Though they can be pruned at anytime, it is easier to see the shape of the tree prior to full leaf set. Most other trees can also be pruned at this time. DO NOT prune maple or birch trees in the spring. They will "bleed" or drip sap for several weeks. Prune those trees in the late fall. Don't prune your lilac and forsythia bushes until after they bloom.

Uncover your roses: Depending on how cold or mild this past winter was, start to uncover your roses and prune out any dead canes. You will notice the greening up of the canes, prune just into the green wood for healthier canes.

Plant your summer flowering bulbs such as Canna's and Glandulous. No need to wait until May or June.

Start watering your landscape plants: Lawns, trees, and shrubs. This year we didn't have a lot of

winter moisture. We also have had a warm spring: trees, especially the evergreens need moisture before they become too stressed and then become more susceptible to insect and disease attack.

Don't be afraid of planting some spring color. Pansies and viola's can offer some much needed color to a drab spring. You can also start planting perennials. Be careful of any early planting. Even though these hardy plants can tolerate the colder temperatures of early spring, they are coming from a growing greenhouse. Allow them to sit on your porch for a day or two to get acclimated to the Wyoming air before planting outside.

Take a moment to sharpen your tools before using them. A sharpened shovel or hoe blade will make gardening much easier. Have your lawnmower tuned up and blade sharpened too: A sharpened lawnmower blade will make for a healthy lawn.

Aerate and apply humic acid to your lawns rather than de-thatching them. Aeration will allow for a healthier root system and also helps in lessening soil compaction. You can also top seed with new grass seed to fill in thinning areas. Apply a nitrogen based fertilizer to your lawn around May 1.

Take time to smell the roses. You should be able to enjoy what you have done and what you are doing in your garden. Make what you plant worth your time.

If you have a gardening question please send them to me at getgrowingwithgary@gmail.com.



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Protect your garden from hungry animals

Deer and rabbits can eat many garden plants down to the ground

Homes full of garden beds with blooming flowers and foliage can seem warm and inviting. Planting flowers is one of the easiest ways to transform the appearance of a home with minimal effort and expense. Too often homeowners plant annuals and perennials only to find their hard work has been damaged by hungry animals, like deer, rabbits and underground pests. There are ways to keep animals away from plants -- many of which are humane and environmentally safe.

Keeping furry marauders away from the garden is something individuals who live in rural or suburban areas have to consider when planting. Many communities are growing and encroaching on the natural habitats of wild animals. With some of their natural food sources diminishing, animals may decide to partake of the easy pickings that come from residential home gardens.

If you understand how these animals feed, you can take precautions to restrict access to planting beds. Rabbits tend to munch on vegetables and ornamental plants. Small in stature and not able to scale fences very easily, rabbits might be deterred by a low fence surrounding plants. Consider digging some chicken wire below the fence a few inches to discourage digging under the fence. The fence should be 18

inches high, and you should keep the openings no more than one inch because rabbits can squeeze through small openings.

In terms of gophers, moles, voles, and other burrowing animals, the key is preventing underground access. Chicken wire or another abrasive material put under the garden soil can help keep underground animals from burrowing under and then up into the heart of the garden.

Deer are another story altogether. They are tall animals capable of rising up on hind legs to stretch out and reach branches of trees and bushes. Therefore, taller fences may be needed to protect the garden. But these can sometimes be unsightly, especially in a front yard. Therefore, look for natural barriers that can keep them out. They may be deterred by thorny bushes or plants. Daisies, papaver (poppies), narcissus, rudbeckia, achillea, agastache, aster, lupine, coreopsis, verbascum, centaurea, and echinacea are available in many varieties and are not attractive to deer or rabbits.

Here are some additional strategies that you can try.

- Create narrow pathways between raised beds. Rabbits will feel like they are in prime locations for predators to get at them in this type of situation and may be less likely to venture in. Deer may not be able to



navigate narrow paths.

- Use mulch. In addition to benefiting the plants, keeping soil moist and fertilizing the areas, mulch also deters many animals.

- Interplant different species of plants. Some animals don't want to bother picking tasty plants out among other varieties they don't like. So mix plants with ones that animals find unpleasant.

- Use other natural deterrents. Animals may be kept away by scents

of their predators. Urine from coyote, foxes, dogs, and cats may help. You can also try human hair, cat litter and soap flakes.

- Create an animal-friendly area elsewhere. Feed the deer and rabbits the foods they love somewhere away from your garden. They may fill up with favorites and stay away from your flowers and vegetables.

- Traps may work. As a last resort, use humane traps to collect animals and release them elsewhere.

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Easy ways to clean

It's the season for spring cleaning, and homeowners no doubt have a slew of projects on tap in the weeks to come. Clothes will be sorted and donated and unnecessary items thrown in the trash.

Sometimes, however, there's little time for a thorough cleaning, so a quick tidying up is done when guests are coming to visit. There are many ways to tackle the clutter and get a home presentable in no time at all. When you're short on time, consider these ways to give living spaces the appearance of cleanliness.



Kitchen

- Assess the kitchen sink and move all the dishes awaiting washing into the dishwasher. Wipe down the inside of the sink with a disinfecting wipe or a clean sponge.

- Wipe down the countertops quickly with a wipe or sponge. Wet a paper towel or rag and attack any errant spots on the stove and floor, which will become sticky and attract more dirt.

- Fold or hang dish towels in a way that camouflages any stains.

- Place a small pan of water on the stove with some nutmeg and cinnamon and bring to a simmer. This will disguise any smells lingering from last night's dinner.

- Take down magnets and notes stuck to the refrigerator and temporarily place them in a zipper-seal bag.

- Use a static-charged sweeper sheet to grab any hairs, dust or pet fur from the floor.

Living Room

- Go to the sofa and turn the pillows to the side that is not often facing outward. Consider this the "company side" that may not have any stains or mars in the fabric. Fluff the pillows to clear out dust.

- Use a handheld vacuum to clean up any crumbs or dirt on tables or in the sofa cushions.

- Wipe down coffee tables with a damp cloth to clear away dust and fingerprints.

- Wet the fingertips of rubber gloves and glide your hand over upholstery to rid furniture of pet hair.

- Keep a basket handy to neatly store newspaper, magazines or books.

- Gather and remove the most obvious clutter and relocate it elsewhere less noticeable.

- Dim the lights and light candles. It's harder to spot dirt in a dim room.

Bathroom

- A premoistened wipe can quickly clean the sink and counters from dried-on contact solution or toothpaste.

- The same wipe can be used to rid the mirror of errant spots of splatter.

- Use the same cloth to wipe down the toilet seat and the rim underneath. Use the toilet brush to scrub inside the bowl to remove any rings.

- Put new hand towels on racks or on the counter.

- Glide a lint roller over the bath mat to remove hair and fuzz.

Bedroom

- If the children's rooms are messy, close the doors and make those rooms off-limits.

- Make your bed and fluff the pillows.

- Take dirty clothes to the hamper and put away anything left out. If desperate, pile it into the closet to attend to later.

- Neaten the night stands next to the bed, removing personal effects or storing it in the drawers.



Homeowners embracing eco-scaping guidelines

Proper watering guidelines is one way homeowners can adopt more eco-friendly landscaping practices

Eco-friendly or conservative landscaping is growing increasingly popular among homeowners. Often referred to as eco-scaping, conservative landscaping includes removing invasive plants, conserving water and reducing reliance on chemical pesticides. Homeowners looking to landscape in a more eco-friendly way this gardening season can employ the following techniques.

- Remove invasive plants. Exotic plants are often invasive, as they have been brought here from different ecosystems and therefore have no natural enemies to keep them under control. Though exotic plants might add significant aesthetic appeal, this may come at the expense of local wildlife and existing plants. Many mistakenly assume all non-native plants are invasive, but that's not always true. Consult a local nursery before removing a foreign plant to determine if it's invasive or non-invasive. If it's non-invasive, it does not need to be removed.

- Choose native plants whenever possible. Native plants have adapted to the local climate and soil, which can offer numerous eco-friendly benefits. Because they're accustomed to native conditions, native plants do not need chemical fertilizers and require less water to thrive than their non-native counterparts, which have not adapted to the climate and soil and, as a result, need help to grow and survive. In addition, native plants won't harm surrounding wildlife or plants.

- Plant strategically. Plants can be very picky when it comes to growing

conditions. If placed in poor growing conditions, plants will require chemical supplements to thrive and more water to survive. When planting, do so strategically. Find the appropriate light, moisture and soil conditions for any new plants, and then plant accordingly. Doing so requires less maintenance, saving you money while adding aesthetic appeal to your property. A local nursery can help find the right growing conditions for your plants.

- Water properly. Far too often homeowners waste water, particularly when the mercury rises. Overwatering plants leads to excess runoff, which can result in pesticides and fertilizers being carried to local streams and rivers. Excessive watering can also filter nutrients from the soil. When watering, water early in the morning, which allows plants to conserve water throughout the day. Native plants that have established themselves should not need supplemental watering.

- Reduce reliance on chemical pesticides. Pesticides should be a last resort. In addition to their potentially harmful effects on the local ecosystem, pesticides can be harmful to human health as well. Oftentimes, pesticides exacerbate pest problems, killing the beneficial species like earthworms that don't recover as quickly as their more harmful pest counterparts. Only use pesticides if absolutely necessary. Consult a landscaping or gardening professional and ask about potential alternatives to pesticides.

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Garden Trivia:

Daisy and sweet peas are the birth flowers for the month of April.



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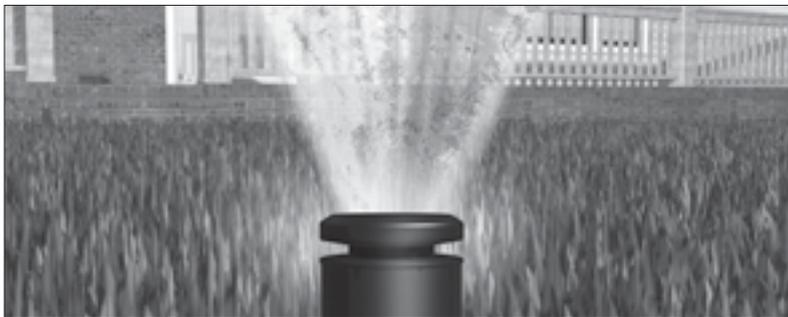
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AH-CHOO:

Spring, summer brings allergies

By **KARLA POMEROY**
Basin Republican Rustler

The trees are blooming, grass is growing, flowers are budding and allergies are in full swing for those who suffer from flowing pollen, dust mites and more.

Big Horn Clinic's Nick Rasmussen said there are number of things people can do to try and help alleviate symptoms. He said some symptoms of allergies can sometimes mirror a common cold. Allergy symptoms include stuffy nose, runny notes, itchy nose, eyes and throat, fatigue, watery eyes, headache and sneezing. He said sneezing, the itchiness and watery eyes are usually tell-tale signs of allergies, not colds.

The biggest thing allergy sufferers can do is to avoid contact with allergens. "That's hard to do," Rasmussen said. You can use hypoallergenic pillowcases and sheets, wash bedding frequently in hot water and dry on a hot setting. He said the hot water and heat in the dryer will kill any dust mites.

Avoiding allergens outside is harder, unless a person stays inside with the windows closed. He said when driving, don't open the car windows.

People working in the yard and garden should change clothes and take a shower when coming in to re-

move any allergens.

"The first line of treatment is to avoid the allergens but there are other therapies," Rasmussen said, adding that there are numerous over-the-counter allergy medications. Claritin, Zyrtec and Allegra don't have the sedation effect that other medications do and are good for itchy eyes. For those with stuffy or runny nose, allergy nasal sprays work the best.

There are also prescription medications and long-term injections, Rasmussen said. He noted that the clinic has numerous patients that come in for the long-term allergy injections, but a patient must first see an immunologist to determine what the allergies are and determine dosage.

"One thing I do myself and strongly recommend is nasal irrigation or sinus rinse," Rasmussen said. He said the sinus rinse is an over-the-counter saline solution that will clean both nostrils from any allergens. "It's safe, effect and the side effect is minimal." He said you spray in one nostril and it is "rinsed" out the other and then you repeat.

The good news is there area lot of over-the-counter medications to help people manage their allergies. If they don't work go see someone (health provider). You don't have to suffer."

Watch for signs of rodents to help prevent hantavirus infection

Considering the potential presence of rodent droppings while cleaning garages, campers, cabins, hay stacks and barns can help prevent hantavirus infection, according to the Wyoming Department of Health.

According to the DOH, infected rodents shed the virus through urine, droppings and saliva. Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) is transmitted to humans through aerosolization, which happens when dried materials contaminated by rodent urine and feces or saliva are disturbed. Humans can become infected by breathing in these infectious aerosols. Infection is also possible when the virus is directly introduced into broken skin or mucous membranes, if it is ingested or after rodent bites.

According to the DOH, rodent infestation in and around the home and in outbuildings such as barns remains the primary risk for hantavirus exposure.

In Wyoming, the deer mouse is the primary carrier of hantavirus.

Recommended guidelines for safe and proper cleanup of rodent-infested areas include:

- During cleaning, wear rubber, latex, vinyl, or nitrile gloves.

- Spray rodent urine and droppings with a disinfectant or bleach solution until thoroughly soaked. The bleach solution can be made by combining 1 ½ cups of household bleach with 1 gallon of water.



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Deer mouse

- To avoid generating potentially infectious aerosols, do not vacuum or sweep rodent urine, droppings, nesting materials or contaminated surfaces until they have been disinfected.

- Use a paper towel (while wearing gloves) to pick up the urine and droppings. Place the paper towel in the garbage.

After the rodent droppings and urine have been removed, disinfect items that might have been contaminated by rodents or their urine and droppings. In especially dirty or dusty environments, extra protective clothing or equipment should be worn such as coveralls (disposable if possible), rubber boots or disposable shoe covers, protective goggles, and masks that cover the mouth and nose. If the building has been closed and unoccupied for a long time, open doors and windows for ventilation at least 30 minutes before beginning work.

Watch out for poisonous spiders when doing yard work

Venomous spiders found in the United States include the black widow, brown recluse, and hobo spiders.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, they can be dangerous to outdoor workers including farmers, foresters, landscapers, groundskeepers, gardeners, painters, roofers, pavers, construction workers, laborers, mechanics, and any other worker who spends time outside.

These spiders occasionally find their way inside structures or buildings and can also present a risk to indoor workers including machine operators, janitors, and cashiers (Bureau of Labor Statistics Monthly Review - Insects bites, stings cause thousands of workplace injuries).

Spiders are usually not aggressive and most bites occur because a spider is trapped or unintentionally contacted.

It is important for employers to educate their workers about their risk of exposure to venomous spiders, how they can prevent and protect themselves from spider bites, and what they should do if they are bitten.

For more information see the CDC website at <<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spiders/>>.



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Brown recluse



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Weed and Pest offers aid in grasshopper battle

By JENNIFER BUTLER
Basin Republican Rustler

Since 2008, Big Horn County Weed and Pest Supervisor Ruth Zeller said grasshoppers have been economically detrimental to crops and gardens and causing a loss of forage. She added because of the dry and warm spring the county may see an increase or same level of grasshoppers this year.

According to Zeller, there are steps the residents of Big Horn County can take to help prevent and decrease the amount of damage caused by grasshoppers. She said the use of Integrated Pest Management can help reduce the grasshopper population. Some techniques, she added, is to cultivate the ground to disturb and destroy the grasshopper eggs before they hatch. She said the cultivation does not need to be deep, only about one inch.

Flood irrigation can also be used. Zeller said flood irrigation forces grasshoppers into one area making it easier to use the pesticides and would help reduce the amount of pesticides used.

According to Zeller, when spraying fields, the grasshoppers rarely originate in the center of the field but are more likely to originate from

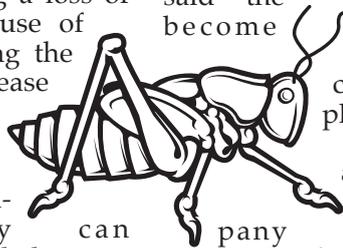
the sides. She said "border control" is usually very successful.

Zeller added it is also beneficial for grasshoppers to be exterminated when still small, about the size of a grain of rice or a pinto bean. She said the more mature they become the harder they are to kill and thus they can damage more plants.

Zeller said the Weed and Pest will be contracting with a company to spray the county road right-of-ways.

Zeller said the Weed and Pest is providing a cost-share program. They will be selling pesticides at 50 percent of the full price. These pesticides can be used in pastures, field borders and yards. Zeller said, Dimilin 2L will be the main chemical for pastures. They will also be offering befenthrin, tempo, carbaryl, and econbran flakes for both yards and pastures. According to Zeller, the entomologists from the University of Wyoming advised that natural or organic grasshopper spray is ineffective and thus not recommended.

For more information about grasshoppers and details about the products being sold contact the Big Horn County Weed and Pest office at 307-765-2855.



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How to prevent lawn damage

Preventing lawn damage includes cleaning up after pets, whose urine can cause discoloration in the yard

Many homeowners aspire toward a pristine and lush lawn. For some a nice lawn gives them feelings of pride. Others believe a perfect lawn enables them to have the best-looking house in the neighborhood. Many homeowners spend hours outdoors perfecting their lawns or spend a good deal of money hiring professionals to make their lawn more appealing. But just because a lawn looks good now doesn't mean it will look good later. That's because delicate grass can be damaged by a number of different factors.

Grubs

Grubs are not very lawn-friendly. Grubs are actually the larval stage of different types of large beetles. These worm-like creatures feed on the roots of grass and are able to kill large sections of the lawn in a relatively short amount of time. It can sometimes be difficult to discern whether grubs, drought or another other pest has damaged a lawn. One way to check is to grab a portion of the damaged

lawn and attempt to peel it back. If it comes back easily like a piece of carpet, it's likely grubs. Spotting grubs underneath is a sure sign these larvae are killing the lawn.

Using an insecticide for grub control in July can help kill off grubs that start hatching in August through September. Grub eggs do well in sunny patches of lawn that are well watered. More shade may deter them. There's also the option of letting the lawn go dormant and not watering it, but you will be left with a brown, unappealing lawn.

Pet Urine

Pets can also damage a lawn. Pet urine can create burnt patches and significant discoloration on the lawn, particularly if the dog or cat uses one area consistently as their potty zone.

The best way to prevent urine damage is to walk your dog so that he or she will not have free reign of the yard. However, sometimes dogs get out or stray cats and dogs visit your yard and relieve themselves without



your knowledge. So this method is not foolproof. Therefore, you should take added action to maintain a lush lawn.

First, make sure that soil and lawn is in good health by fertilizing and taking care of it properly. Second, water can dilute urine and neutralize its corrosive properties. Some have found that diluted urine can often

act as a fertilizer to grass. You may have noticed that the outside ring of a urine-burned spot is often greener than the healthy lawn. Try to dilute the urine prior to eight hours having elapsed for the best effect.

Lawn damage can occur through a number of different factors. Finding out the cause can help you find an effective treatment.

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