

## Final thoughts....

As we get into the meat of Summer, here are a few random home improvements to consider if you are making some changes around your place.



If you are replacing your roof, especially if it has wood shingles or shakes, go to a 25, 30, or 40 year Architectural Shingle. They look good, you won't have all the spiders and wasps taking up residence, and you can usually get your home owners insurance lowered.



If siding replacement is on the list, consider switching to the Fiber Cement siding from James Hardie. It lays flatter, won't absorb water, holds paint like crazy, and provides a better flame spread rating.



Busting out a driveway or patio? For just a few extra bucks, your concrete person can tint the new concrete to your choice of colors. It takes very little to do, and can add some real punch to the appearance of your home.



Next time you have a plumber in your home, have them install a hose bib in your garage. This makes cleaning off the garage floor much easier and can come in real handy for filling buckets or giving the car a sponge bath. You could even hook one up to the hot water supply for winter use.



**"I don't know Bob, that just don't look right"**

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**The** **HOMEFIX** **Club!**

**Issue #3 July 2009**

**An Elite Club Open To Anyone Interested In Making Their Homes Better And Having More Fun Doing It**

# Eagle Independent Newspaper Column

Published 7-1-2009 by Joe Prin

There are a lot of things that should be done on a house as it is being built that when brought to your attention you wonder why it was never done in the first place. Make sense? I mean the things that you say, “Why did they not just do that in the first place”?

Two reasons. First, “They” don’t have to, and second, cost. Some things even though they make perfect sense to you the owner, and me the fix it guy, are not or were not required by the building codes so therefore if a home can get by inspections without it, it saves cost. You could add all the “Should haves” when your house is being built, if you know what to ask for, and all those little things will add up to big numbers at the end. The house will still look the same from the street, it will just cost more.

Builders try to provide the most house at the best price and still come out with a profit. Recently, with all the rain, I was faced with two similar situations that fell into the above prelude. These are a bit older homes, and today, with the codes the way they are, this probably won’t happen, but it is worth you checking out your house for this.

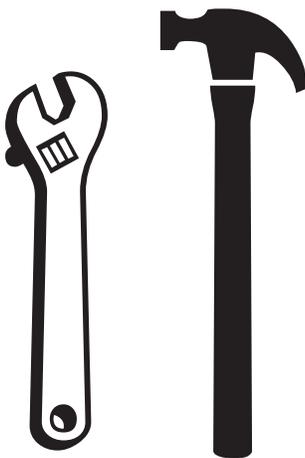
Water was getting in around some windows. Not all the time when it rains, just now and then when the amount and direction is just right. I looked at the windows from the outside and could see the problem. There was no flashing (drip cap) above the windows and they were not caulked in.

Here is how it should be: If you were starting over with a hole in the wall ready for a window, there would be a layer of house wrap, that white tear resistant moisture barrier stuff, over the sheathing that is “X” cut and pulled in and fastened to the wall framing inside the window opening. To this a properly placed, overlapping adhesive rubber water shield membrane is installed to the sill, sides, and top of the opening. Caulking is applied to the perimeter and the window installed into the caulking. The caulking is smeared to cover all holes and fasteners. Now more water shield is installed over the window flange.

The drip cap flashing is next at the top. Siding then goes on and I caulk the siding to the window frame. Then trim is installed top piece first full width overlapping the vertical drops and long enough to come out even with the bottom of the bottom piece. All of this is then caulked to the siding and to the window frame.

It seems like a lot of steps, but done this way, the window will not leak around the frame. Most window manufacturers require something like this for their warranty.

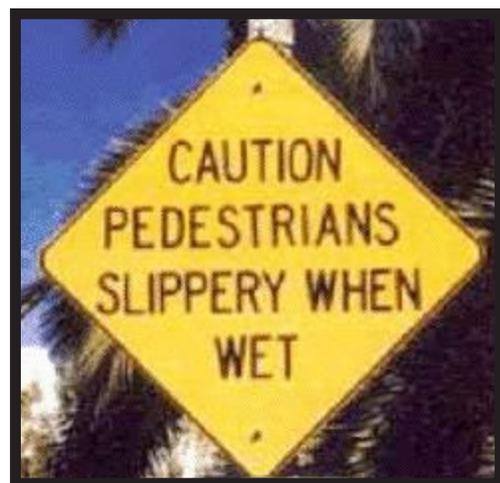
If you see that you do not have caulked in trim or flashing above your windows, you can pull the trim, possibly cut back the siding a bit at the top and slip in the flashing. Caulk like crazy and then do the trim like I outlined above.



This can save you a lot of water damage to insulation, sheathing, drywall, floors, carpet and pads. If you are replacing your windows, make sure the installer does everything possible to eliminate water intrusion from the outside in.

**Read Past columns from Joe as well as  
get past issues of the HomeFix Club  
Newsletter at [www.JoePrin.com](http://www.JoePrin.com) !**

# A Sign of the times...





# Joe Goes Digital!

I am flattered and pleased to announce that I have become a cartoon! Jeff Myers, a very talented local artist and illustrator for the "King Of The Hill" TV show and I crossed paths, got talking, and ta da!

Look for more of Jeff's great work soon to appear on the joeprin.com website, this newsletter, and perhaps even some other spots.

Jeff will be putting me in various poses and in color! The above is the draft of one such illustration.

I want to thank Jeff for his work and I am giddy with anticipation of how I turn out.

Hey Jeff, can you trim a few pounds off the beltline for me.... and a little bigger biceps?

# FREE!

Now that I have your attention....

Sponsors, Advertisers, Friends of the HomeFix Show.... **START WRITING ARTICLES** for this newsletter! It is **FREE!**

You just have to do it.

Email your info to me and I'll take it from there. Not a sales pitch, good information and I'll make it fit into the next issue.

Coupon offers too!  
Photos, stories, jokes.

Not that I am running out of things to say, but we want to hear from you too.

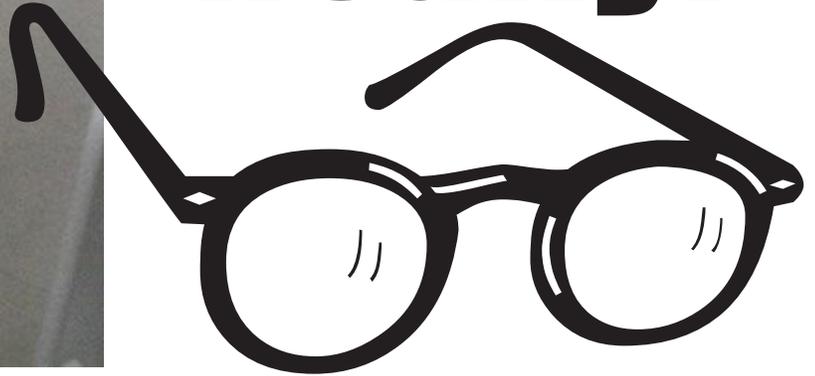
Thanks, Joe.

# Do you see an issue with this?





# Really?



## Star Independent Newspaper Column

Publishing 7-12-2009 by Joe Prin

I have always, well OK, not always, but recently, wondered why we expect so much out of some home products and so little from others. I understand the disposable mentality that we have and how it is related to economics and availability.

There are some times when all of us purchase a product or tool and do not have long term expectations as to the durability or the lasting value of the item. Other times, we expect a lot out of a product and are let down years later when it quits performing for us.

So, as a little mental exercise for you to run through the gray matter between your ears, think about this: The next time you go to buy an item for you house. Any item, I would like you to ask yourself the following; do I really need it? If so, what other options in this type of product do I have? Also, is there the chance that this will be the last one of these that I will ever need to buy? And, am I buying the best quality that I can afford.

Without going to the extremes and great overkill, this could get interesting. We all know about the things that we have that are very old and still working just fine. We might even take pride in the fact that they do still work. We also wonder why other things seem to

have built in obsolescence in them. Care and proper usage are critical to long-term performance. Manufacturers cannot make things “idiot proof”, although they do try to take into account customer abuse.

I am going through my house right now replacing and adding a few doors. Door hardware is something I have come to appreciate and I want to install something that won't cause problems later. I feel that I interact with it every day, and I don't want to be reminded of a poor choice. In fact a good choice is one that I actually forget about because there are no reminders.

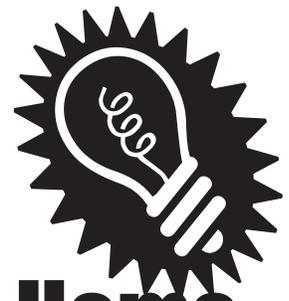
I chose to use a good grade of ball bearing hinges on all the new doors. I won't have squeaks, sags, or the poofs of black grindings on the trim and carpets. Install them right the first time and there should be no problems as long as I am around. The hinges cost \$7 each instead of \$2 but to me it is well worth it.

I also need to practice what I preach in a future purchase of some lighting fixtures for my workshop / barn / man cave. I could go the cheap shop light route, have them up in a couple of hours, and fight the temperature and flicker problems for the next 20 years or until they fry themselves or I could select a commercial grade, exterior fixture that will avoid all this yet will be more difficult to install and will cost more out of the chute. I hope to have a clear head and make the choice of quality and durability.

So what are you going to bring into your home this week? Is there a better choice that can be made?



**Month**



# Keeping the Heat out of Your Home

The Heat is here!

What are you going to do about it?

One of the basic principles of thermodynamics is that “heat goes to cold”. In other words, warm air is always seeking cooler air. In the summer, this means that when the temperature is hotter outside, it’s trying to get into your house, (assuming it’s cooler inside). Heat can be transferred through conduction, convection, or radiation.

An example of radiant heat is the solar gain that comes through your windows. To reduce solar gain, concentrate your efforts on east- and west-facing windows.

- \* When replacing these windows, look for units with a solar heat gain coefficient less than .40.

- \* Less costly options are solar shades, which are custom fitted and removable casings that allow you to see through the window.

- \* Window film is another option that provides visibility to the outdoors.

- \* At the very least, close the curtains

- \* Cheapest option: aluminum foil, which blocks radiant heat very effectively.

An example of conduction is the heat transferred from your hot car into your garage when you get home. Avoid putting hot objects in your home until they’ve cooled off, including autos, garbage cans, and indoor/outdoor furniture.

An example of convection is warm air coming into your home via open windows, poor weather-stripping and frequent opening and closing of doors. Convection is also the phenomenon that occurs when the upper floors get warmer than the lower floors.

- \* You can use convection to cool your home in the evening by opening windows on opposite sides of and on different levels in your home.

- \* Set up a strong fan to blow air out an open window on the upper floor. This will draw in cooler air below, which will force the warm air in the home to rise and exit upstairs via the open window.

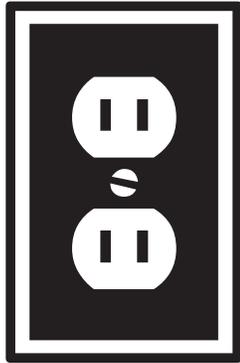
The main idea is to keep your home as cool as possible in the first place, to reduce the need for mechanical cooling and increase overall comfort. Once interior walls and furnishings have heated up, they will take a long time to cool back down. This brings us to the final tip:

- \* Flush the home’s air in the morning before 8 AM. Open all the doors and windows and run fans for a half hour, then seal everything up tight.

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**For More Energy Saving Tips from Idaho Power, go to [joeprin.com](http://joeprin.com) and click on "Articles" for many other money and energy saving suggestions from Idaho Power. My thanks to those who provide these tips for the HomeFix Radio Show each and every week!**

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## Not the Same Old Outlets You Used Last time

If you go to replace an outlet in your home now, and you go to the store looking for the good old' fifty nine centers, you may not find any. Outlets as you know them have changed.

The new electrical codes are requiring "Tamper Proof" outlets now as standard practice.

Although they look almost the same as any other outlet, a close inspection will reveal little trap doors over the slots in the receptacle. If you try to put a screwdriver, knife, paper clip or whatever in one of the slots, the door will not open. However, if you push in a male plug end, Simultaneous pressure will release the doors and the plug goes in.

These plugs are supposed to save hundreds of lives every year. I just want to know which inventor hired the right lobbyist to get this written into the code. I am sure he is getting a nice royalty check every month.

## Who Should Be In The HomeFix Club?

Do you know someone that should be in the HomeFix Club? If so, you, being one of the Charter Members, have earned the right to submit up to 5 names and email addresses. Pick good people and let them know that you are signing them up. It's no fun on my end to get back "*Get me off your list! I don't know you or want to know you!*"

And, I am giving you permission to forward this newsletter on to anybody you know that may enjoy it. Send your nominations to [joe@joeprin.com](mailto:joe@joeprin.com) and put HomeFix Club in the subject line. Thanks!



## The Somewhat Famous HomeFix Bucket Of Stuff!

**Assemble This List and you will have the essentials!**

- 5 gallon plastic bucket
- 1 roll Gorilla Tape
- 1 small spray can WD-40
- 1 small Gorilla Glue
- White Polyseamseal squeeze tube
- Small bottle of Contact Cement
- 1 roll Blue masking tape
- 1 ½ sash brush
- 3" brush
- Toothpicks & popcycle sticks
- Exterior wood glue (or Titebond)
- Quick Dry Epoxy
- Anchoring Hardware assortment box
- Lightweight Spackle
- Assorted zip ties
- Spray White Lithium Grease
- Goof Off
- Super Glue
- Liquid Lava Hand Cleaner
- 1 roll blue Shop towels
- 1 assorted small Sandpaper
- Foam sanding block
- Nail and Screw assortment box
- 1 roll Electrical tape
- 1 small bundle Wood Shims
- 2 Carpenter pencils
- Disposable drop cloth
- 1 pair Rubber Gloves

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# The **HOMEFIX** Club!

Issue #3 July 2009

An Elite Club Open To Anyone Interested In Making Their Homes Better And Having More Fun Doing It

## From Joe...



Vacation time! Somewhere around now many of you will be taking out of town trips and multiple day vacations.

As you do so, remember to take into account your home security.

You can get a lot of good info from the Police Department, Crime Stoppers, and even your Home Owners Insurance Company on what you can do to better protect your home while you are away. However, I believe that the best thing is to hire a trusted neighborhood kid to baby-sit your house.

Have this person live in it while you are gone. Let them stay up late and watch TV, have a couple of friends over, water your plants, pick up the mail, park cars in the drive. All this will give the lived in look that thieves hate.

Lay down the law and the house rules you want them to respect and have this meeting with their Parents present.

\$20 per day seems to be the going rate for this "service" for a youngster. Make it worth their while, but don't over do it.

Stock the house with munchies, snacks and appropriate treats. Let them know what areas are off limits and what is not to be touched. Show them where all the cleaning supplies are because, well... Stuff Happens.

Communicate with your house sitter every day. Have them either call you with a quick update or at least send you a text or an e-mail.

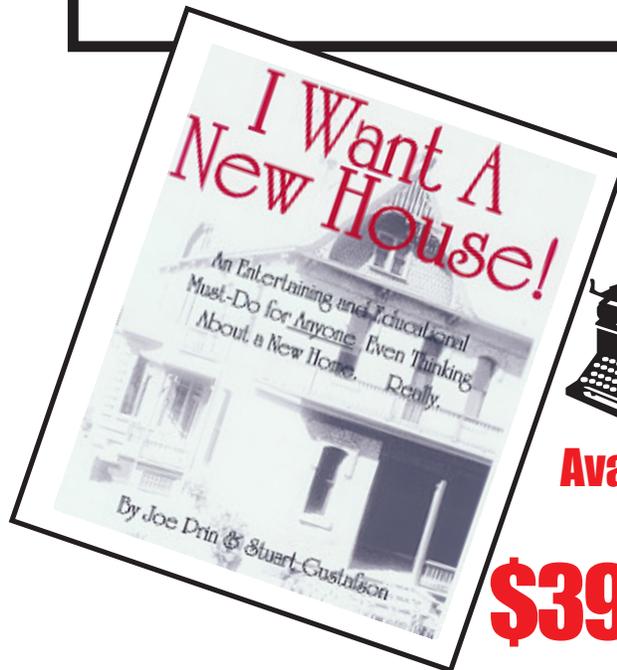
If pets are involved, be sure to let the sitter know who your Vet is, where they are, and that they should not hesitate to take "Fluffy" in if needed.

**Free Stuff!** From The **HOMEFIX** Club!

Last Months Winners include:

- Bob Harris
- Dennis Wagner
- David Gjesdal

Congradulations!



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**"Makes a great gift!"** I am hearing stories of how this book is helping sons and daughters of some of the HomeFix listeners. Books have been given as gifts to help future home owners make the right choices. If you know of someone who could benefit from the information in "I Want A New House", place your orders now! Personal inscriptions available on request.

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