

Homes & Design

■ HOME SERVICES ■ HOME FURNISHINGS ■ HOME IMPROVEMENTS ■ HOME DECOR ■ REAL ESTATE & RENTALS



~ Published by Southern Lakes Newspapers LLC

JAN. 2025

Sugar Creek Mutual Insurance Company
Elkhorn 262-723-3244

Banco Insurance Agency
Palmyra 262-495-2118
Whitewater 262-473-7334

Breck Ward
Elkhorn 262-215-5633

Patricia Lauderdale
Elkhorn 262-742-3818

Daniels Insurance Agency
Burlington 262-537-2677

Grams Insurance Agency
Edgerton 608-884-3304
Evansville 608-882-6515

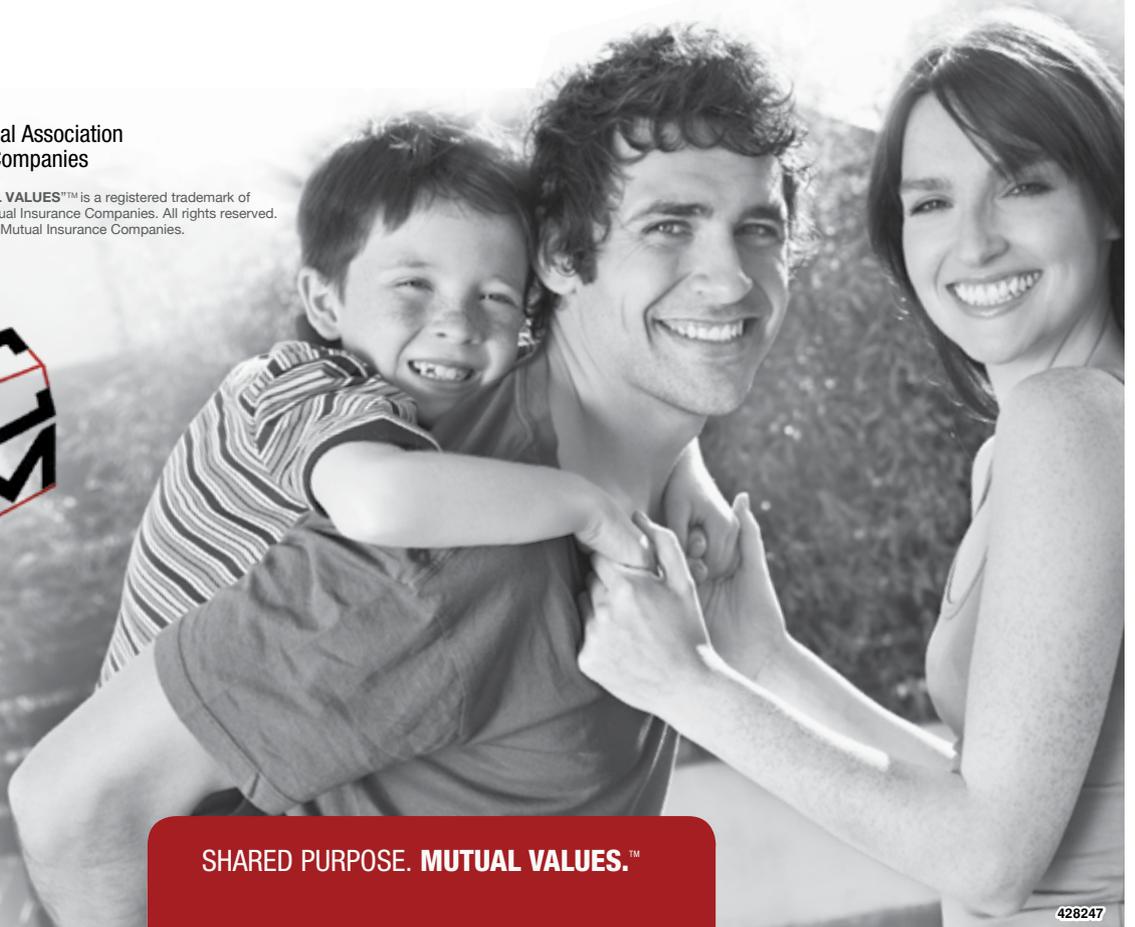
Schaal Agency LLC
Waterford 262-534-7801

**“I CHOOSE MUTUAL INSURANCE
BECAUSE I KNOW WE’RE
IN THIS TOGETHER.”**

Policyholders who work with a mutual insurance company have a shared purpose: getting the best coverage and protection available. And mutual insurance delivers because mutuals serve policyholders, not shareholders. Our decisions are always based on what’s best for you. Plus local agents offer customized solutions for all your insurance needs. Find out how mutual insurance can work for you.

Member of the National Association
of Mutual Insurance Companies

*“SHARED PURPOSE. MUTUAL VALUES™” is a registered trademark of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies. All rights reserved. © 2012 National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies.



SHARED PURPOSE. MUTUAL VALUES.™

428247

How combination appliances can transform a kitchen

Combination appliances are revolutionizing modern kitchens, offering a blend of functionality, efficiency and convenience that is transforming cooking and meal preparation.

“The appeal of combination appliances lies in their ability to streamline kitchen operations, save valuable space, and provide a diverse range of cooking options without the need for separate appliances,” says Peter Weedfald, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Sharp Home Electronics Company of America.

Whether you’re a seasoned chef or a busy parent looking to simplify meal preparation, combination appliances can offer a compelling solution that merges convenience with culinary excellence.

SPACE-SAVING EFFICIENCY

One of the primary advantages of combination appliances is their ability to save valuable kitchen space.

In an era where kitchen real estate is often at a premium, especially in urban environments, these multi-functional units can create a more organized kitchen layout, while still delivering quality cooking.

STREAMLINED SELECTION PROCESS

One challenge in kitchen shopping is navigating the number of choices.

Combination kitchen appliances can streamline this process by reducing the need to research and compare multiple individual products, simplifying decision-making, and allowing you to focus on what truly matters – designing a functional and stylish kitchen.

SMART FEATURES

Many combination appliances come equipped with smart features that enhance the cooking experience.

The Sharp Smart Convection Wall Oven with Microwave Drawer Oven, for example, combines two appliances into one beautiful and convenient cooking center.

The simple-to-use, full-color touchscreen



Regardless of the reasons you may be looking for ways to simplify meal prep, combination appliances are worth consideration, especially given all of the choices available now.

STATEPOINT PHOTO Homes & Design

control panel seamlessly manages both ovens. It Works with Alexa for hands-free cooking and features over 150 Alexa Voice Commands that provide intuitive operation and access to various cooking modes for both the oven and microwave drawer (Amazon Echo device not included).

These smart features can make cooking more accessible and enjoyable for users of all skill levels. Got your hands full in the kitchen? Just say, “Alexa, open the microwave,” and watch the magic happen!

MODERN DESIGN

Combination appliances often feature sleek, modern designs that elevate the aesthetic of any kitchen.

The integrated look of appliances like the Smart Radiant Rangetop with Microwave Drawer Oven contributes to a cohesive and sophisticated kitchen environment,

appealing to both homeowners and interior design enthusiasts.

When planning your kitchen, these combination appliances seamlessly fit into a single cutout. Appliances like the Sharp SWB3085HS and STR3065HS offer several benefits, from space-saving efficiency to simple selection and smart features.

As kitchens continue to evolve, these multi-functional appliances are becoming increasingly popular with homeowners looking to maximize functionality without sacrificing style or space.

With their innovative features and sleek designs, combination appliances can help make your life simply better while elevating your cooking experience.

To learn more about how combination appliances can transform your kitchen, visit <https://shop.sharpsusa.com/products/combi/>.

(STATEPOINT)

HOMES & DESIGN

Jan. 2025

Published by Southern
Lakes Newspapers LLC
1102 Ann St., Delavan, WI 53115
(262) 728-3411

Homes
& Design

For advertising opportunities, call (262) 728-3411
or email vicki@southernlakesnewspapers.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF: **Heather Ruenz**

PAGE DESIGN: **Jen DeGroot**

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: **Heidi Schulz**

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR: **Vicki Vanderwerff**

Design features to watch for in 2025 custom homes

Looking toward 2025, luxury custom homes are pushing the boundaries of design, offering innovative elements that blend functionality with high-end aesthetics.

From cutting-edge technology to timeless materials, these features are setting the standard for what's next in luxury living.

Here's what to expect as you explore the homes of tomorrow.

1. SMART GLASS: THE FUTURE OF PRIVACY AND ELEGANCE

Imagine having complete control over your privacy with just the touch of a button. Smart glass, also known as switchable or privacy glass, transitions from clear to opaque instantly, eliminating the need for traditional window treatments.

Benefits you'll love:

- Instant privacy control via smartphone integration that's ideal for bathrooms, room dividers and other areas
- Flexibility between views and privacy in areas such as the primary suite
- UV protection while allowing in natural light
- Solar heat control for energy efficiency
- A sleek, minimalist aesthetic with no curtains or blinds

2. REVOLUTIONARY VIRTUAL LINEAR FIREPLACES: WHERE ART MEETS WARMTH

The fireplace is no longer just for warmth – it's a centerpiece. Virtual built-in linear electric fireplaces with LED technology are redefining how these features function.

They combine custom design with energy efficiency, creating stunning focal points such as:

- Customizable flame colors and patterns
- No maintenance or ventilation needed
- Energy-efficient heating when desired



STOCK PHOTO Homes & Design

- Safe-to-touch technology
- Practicability for all climates, with a no-heat option

3. ARCHITECTURAL WATER FEATURES: A BOLD FOCAL POINT FOR YOUR HOME'S ENTRANCE

Water features are a striking hallmark of luxury design, transforming an entrance into a sensory experience.

Imagine a dramatic two- or three-story water wall, where the soothing sound of cascading water sets the tone for the entire home and:

- Creates a stunning first impression
- Adds tranquility and elegance with flowing water
- Enhances beauty with LED lighting
- Functions as a living work of art
- Increases home value with a sense of exclusivity

4. HURRICANE-RATED POCKET DOORS: SEAMLESS INDOOR-OUTDOOR LIVING

For truly seamless living, hurricane-rated sliding pocket doors are a must.

These engineering marvels connect your indoor and outdoor spaces, offering:

- Expansive openings for entertaining
- Storm protection without compromising design
- Smooth, quiet operation
- Added real estate value
- Energy efficiency

These doors transform how you experience indoor-outdoor living and are a must-have in areas prone to wicked weather.

5. STATEMENT SKYLIGHTS: BRINGING THE SKY INDOORS

Natural light and large statement skylights are the perfect way to bring the sky inside, providing:

- Energy-saving natural light
- Unique architectural interest
- Opportunities for star-gazing
- Increased perceived space

6. GILDED PERFECTION: GOLD AND BRASS ACCENTS

The kitchen is often considered the heart of the home, and adding gold and brass accents can add:

- Timeless elegance
- Warm metallic reflections
- Custom personality

"While touring luxury custom home projects of our partners set for completion in 2025, I had the opportunity to meet with industry leaders redefining the standard of living – like HLevel Architecture, Wright Jenkins Home Design, and interior design firms such as Design and Company and Leili Design Studio," says Jennifer Kis, regional and brand marketing manager at Alair Homes.

"Working alongside them, we've seen firsthand how their innovative designs are pushing the boundaries of what's possible," Kis added.

From smart glass to interior waterfalls, these features are leading the way in luxury custom homes and setting the stage for the next era of sophisticated living.

For more information, visit www.alairhomes.com.

(STATEPOINT)

Things to know about digital mortgage tools



Get answers to questions about how information is being used

With the increased use of digital tools, the mortgage process looks quite different today than it did for previous generations.

These new technologies can make the home loan process more efficient for both those buying a home and those refinancing their mortgage. However, it's important to understand how your information is being used.

To help ensure you're a savvy loan applicant, Freddie Mac is providing answers to some commonly asked questions about digital mortgage tools:

WHY DO LENDERS USE DIGITAL MORTGAGE TOOLS?

Lenders have traditionally relied on printed documentation that requires them to manually review your application before deciding if you qualify for a loan, including for how much and on what terms. This can be a time-consuming process for both the homebuyer and the lender.

Digital mortgage underwriting tools allow lenders to expedite the process by using electronic documents and automation to more efficiently evaluate your loan application.

Freddie Mac research has found that these tools can decrease the loan origination timeline and may also save you money in closing costs.

In addition, the digital tools mortgage

lenders use may help you qualify for a loan if you have a limited credit profile by looking at factors such as your history of on-time rent payments or the amount of money coming into and out of your bank account each month.

This helps demonstrate your ability to pay your mortgage each month.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL MY LENDER ASK FOR?

Not only will the way you provide documentation change, but in some instances the information your lender evaluates will change as well. For instance, you may be asked to provide access to digital accounts, such as your bank account, instead of providing printed bank statements.

By using digital tools, lenders can get a more detailed view of your finances, which helps them lend to you if you are a harder-to-underwrite buyer. Specific requirements may vary by lender – some may prefer a fully-digital process while others may use a combination of printed and electronic documents.

Talk to your lender to get a better understanding of their loan application process.

WHAT IF I'M NOT COMFORTABLE PROVIDING MY INFORMATION?

Though your lender will have a more

detailed look at your finances through a fully-digital process, keep in mind that digital documents often provide a higher level of security than printed documents.

If you still prefer not to share digital access to your personal information, your lender should understand your concerns and be willing to work with you on an alternative solution.

If not, you can find a different lender who is willing to accommodate a loan application process that is not digital. In either scenario, you should always take steps to ensure your personal information is protected and remain vigilant against potential fraud.

You can help mitigate your risk of fraud and identity theft by researching lenders and working only with reputable companies that take steps to protect their customers' information.

As the housing finance industry continues to modernize, you can expect a faster, easier home loan process. Staying knowledgeable about these new tools can ensure there are no surprises when it comes time to secure a loan.

Learn more about the mortgage application process with Freddie Mac's step-by-step guides to homebuying and refinancing, which are available at myhome.freddie.com.

(STATEPOINT)

The use of digital tools during the mortgage process has increased, which can make it more efficient for homebuyers and those looking to refinance. Because of its importance, Freddie Mac offers a closer look at how the information is being used.

JACOB WACKERHAUSEN/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES Homes & Design

Dos & don'ts of do-it-yourself

It's best to rely on the experts for duct cleaning

Homeowners often turn to online do-it-yourself tips to help them maintain their house, but some advice can do more harm than good.

For example, DIY duct cleaning can lead to serious damage to your HVAC system. Inadequate tools and techniques can cause blockages, reduce system efficiency, and result in costly repairs.

More importantly, DIY methods can release harmful particles into your home's air. Dust, allergens, and mold spores can escape, posing health risks to you and your loved ones.

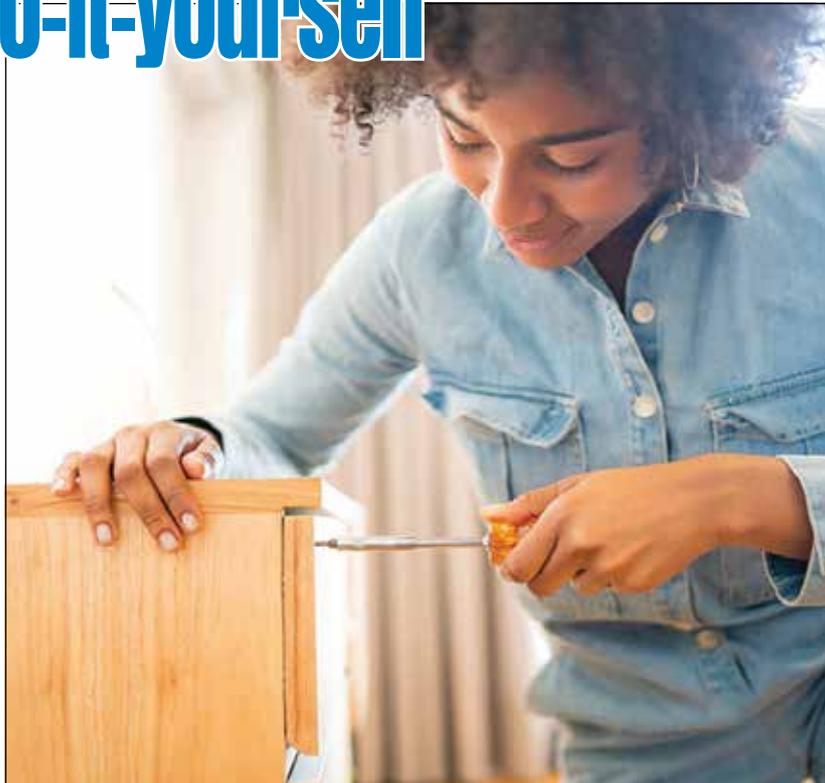
DIY duct cleaning can be time-consuming and frustrating, often resulting in incomplete or ineffective cleaning. Any initial cost savings can quickly vanish with potential system damage and increased energy bills.

Fortunately, there can be a solution. NADCA member companies use specialized equipment to thoroughly and safely clean your ducts, ensuring contaminants are properly contained and removed.

You can trust NADCA professionals to maintain your HVAC system and ensure you and your family breathe clean indoor air.

Visit NADCA.com to learn more and find qualified professionals nearby.

(NAPS)



While there are many projects and things requiring maintenance that the average homeowner can handle, duct cleaning is better left to HVAC specialists.

NAPS PHOTO Homes & Design

Professional Remodelers since 1972



**STEBNITZ
BUILDERS** INC.



WE'RE HERE, READY TO LISTEN

Want to add a screen room? Need more space to fit your lifestyle? Or just updating the look of your home?
It's your home and your dreams.

StebnitzBuilders.com • 262.723.7232

425179

m martens

PLUMBING & HEATING INC

65+ years in your neighborhood!

**PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING
WATER SYSTEMS • WATER HEATERS
WATER SOFTENERS
• COMPLETE BATHROOM REMODELING •**

Visit Our Newly Remodeled Showroom

117 MacArthur Drive, Mukwonago, WI

262-363-7146

www.martensplumbing.com

MP # 134384

434734

A home renovation project with huge potential returns



An additional unit can boost a home's value by as much as 35%

Adding an accessory dwelling unit to your property can increase the value of your home, become a source of rental income, or help you expand your living space for your adult children or parents. They are often known as in-law apartments, granny flats, carriage houses or secondary suites.

According to Freddie Mac, there are several reasons why investing in adding one may be worth it.

THE BASICS

An accessory dwelling unit is a smaller, independent residential structure built on the same lot as a single-family home.

To qualify as such, the additional living area needs to include a kitchen, bathroom and separate entrance.

Common examples include a dwelling over a detached or attached garage, a suite above the main floor of the home, a basement apartment, or a detached structure such as a guesthouse or backyard cottage.

THE BENEFITS

Building an accessory dwelling unit on your property may contribute to the supply of affordable housing in your area, but it also has a wealth of benefits for you, the homeowner.

It can boost the value of your home by as much as 35% and become a potential source of extra income if you rent your accessory dwelling unit to a tenant.

Such a unit can also make for a great home office, guest house or workshop, or be a good solution if your adult children are returning to live with you, or you are the caretaker to aging or disabled relatives.

ELIGIBILITY

Before adding an accessory dwelling unit to your home, you will need to learn about the zoning codes that apply to your property. Ordinances and policies vary by location and change frequently.

Make sure you understand any federal, state or local laws involved with renting your accessory dwelling unit. Discussing this with an attorney is one option.

To find your zoning code, check your local government's website or reach out to your local zoning or building code office.

FINANCING

You should create a construction budget and consider how you will pay for a new accessory dwelling unit or renovations to an existing one.

The good news is that you don't necessarily need to pay the expenses upfront. There are loans designed to help you pay for improvements to your home.

For example, Freddie Mac CHOICERenovation is a financing solution that can provide you with funding to add an accessory dwelling unit on your property.

Speak with your lender about the financing options available to you and which may best suit your needs.

Whether you're looking for a way to increase your property value or create a living space for a loved one, adding an ADU can be a rewarding investment.

While navigating zoning laws, renovation budgets and landlord responsibilities may seem daunting, there are many resources available to guide you through the process.

To learn more about home equity and renovating your home, visit My Home by Freddie Mac.

(STATEPOINT)

There can be many positives to adding an accessory dwelling unit, often known as in-law apartments, granny flats, carriage houses or secondary suites. And there are loans designed to help homeowners pay for such improvements.

MONKEYBUSINESSIMAGES/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES Homes & Design

Home sales, median prices both rise

State Realtors Association weighs-in on recent data

The Wisconsin REALTORS Association, in releasing its October 2024 Wisconsin Real Estate Report, noted a rebound in sales following a fall in September.

While the state remains a seller's market, mortgage rates are still more than a percent lower than October 2023. Inventories remain tightest in Wisconsin's metropolitan counties, but improved overall across all urban-rural classifications, despite being 12,720 listings away from a balanced market.

Mary Jo Bowe, 2024 Chair of the Board of Directors, Wisconsin REALTORS Association, commented on the mortgage rate concerns:

"It's good to see mortgage rates below the peak from a year ago, but it was disappointing to see them rise a quarter point in October. Unfortunately, spikes in mortgage rates keep both buyers and sellers of existing homes sidelined," Bowe said.

Tom Larson, President & CEO of the Association, noted an increase in new listings.

"We've had consistent improvement in our listings beginning in November of last year, and the uptick in both new listings and total listings in October was a good sign,"

Larson said.

"Although months of inventory are tightest in our large cities, they are getting closer to being balanced in Wisconsin's smaller urban areas and rural communities," he added.

David Clark, Professor Emeritus of Economics and WRA Consultant, explained recent mortgage rate increases.

"Although the Fed has now lowered the short-term Federal Funds rate by 75 basis points, the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage moved in the opposite direction in October. Mortgages tend to track the 10-year Treasury yield more closely than short-term interest rates, and those Treasury yields have been increasing since mid-September," Clark said.

"Uncertainty about future economic growth can contribute to changes in the Treasury yield. Now that the national elections have been settled, hopefully this leads to less uncertainty, lower Treasury yields and lower mortgage rates," he added.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- October home sales rebounded after falling in September. Compared to October 2023, existing home sales rose 3.5%. Strong

demand and tight supply continue to put upward pressure on the median price, which rose 10.7% to \$310,000 over the past 12 months. On a year-to-date basis, closed sales rose 4.1% relative to the first 10 months of 2023, and the median price rose 8% to \$310,000.

- Inventories have improved due in part to the spike in listing recorded in October. New listings rose 8.6% compared to a year earlier, which pushed total listings up 8% over October 2023.

- Inventories improved across all urban-rural classifications, but they remain tightest in the state's metropolitan counties, which had just 3.4 months of supply in October. In contrast, micropolitan counties, which include smaller cities and towns, had 4.2 months of supply, and counties classified as rural had 4.9 months of supply.

- The state remains a seller's market and would have needed 12,720 additional listings in October to reach a balanced market characterized by six months of supply.

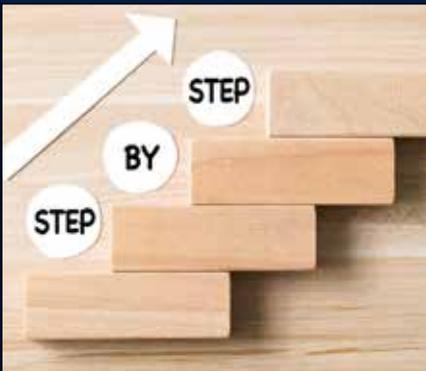
- After falling 88 basis points between May and September, the average 30-year

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

FIRST CITIZENS STATE BANK



SINCE 1863



Specializing in Home Mortgages and helping you through every step of the process.

- ONLINE APPLICATION
- PRE-QUALIFICATION
- ON-SITE CLOSING
- IN-HOUSE SERVICING

Local people, Local decisions

The products & services you need



firstcitizensww.com

Whether its upsizing, downsizing, or stepping into your first home, we are here to help you with the next step!



Main Office
207 West Main Street
Whitewater
(262) 473-2112

West Side Office
1058 West Main Street
Whitewater
(262) 473-3666

Palmyra Office
111 East Main Street
Palmyra
(262) 495-2101

East Troy Office
2546 East Main Street
East Troy
(262) 642-2530

451265



Keep your home safe from fires and other emergencies

While the winter season brings many joyful indoor moments, it can also bring increased safety risks – but you can protect yourself, your home and your family.

Volunteer fire departments across the country are raising awareness of seasonal hazards to protect residents and keep families safe.

“Firefighters are there to protect their neighbors when emergencies arise, but they also work hard to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place,” said Steve Hirsh, Chair of the National Volunteer Fire Council, the national association for the volunteer fire service.

Holidays, cold weather, and winter storms all bring their own fire hazards. In fact, the National Fire Protection Association reports more home fires occur in winter than any other season.

Fortunately, there are simple steps everyone can take to reduce the risks and keep their homes safe.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Council recommends the following tips to minimize home fire and safety risks this winter.

- Stay alert when cooking. Do not leave the kitchen when frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food, and keep kids at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles. If using real candles, do not leave them unattended, and keep them out of reach of children and pets.

- Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen, garage, and living room, and make sure all household members know how to use them.

- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home. Test them monthly to ensure they work.

- Install carbon monoxide alarms and test them at least once a month.

- Develop a home fire escape plan and practice it with the entire family.

- Keep portable generators outside and away from the home.

- Practice fireplace safety. Have chimneys professionally inspected and cleaned every year, install a screen in front of each fireplace or wood stove, and store cooled ashes in a metal container outside the home.

- Do not leave space heaters on unattended and keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from it.

HOW TO HELP OTHERS

In addition to keeping their own homes safe, residents can take an active role in protecting their neighbors from fires, medical emergencies, natural disasters, and more. Many fire departments are looking for volunteers to step up and serve their communities.

“About two-thirds of our nations’ firefighters are volunteers, neighbors helping neighbors in their hour of need,” said Hirsh. “There are few volunteer opportunities that are as rewarding as

the fire service. I encourage all those who want to make a true impact in their communities, learn life-saving skills, and join an incredible network of people to consider volunteering with their local fire department.”

The volunteer fire service offers roles for all ages, backgrounds, and interests, and training is provided by the department. Firefighters and emergency medical personnel provide life-saving services. Auxiliary or support members assist with the non-operational needs of the department, such as fire prevention and life safety education, disaster preparedness planning, fundraising, administration, and much more. Young people can participate as junior firefighters, learning about the fire service while gaining important life skills such as teamwork, responsibility, and leadership.

“Whether you are interested in becoming an emergency responder, support member, or junior firefighter, there is a place for you in the volunteer fire service,” Hirsch said.

For more about the volunteer fire service and to find an opportunity visit [www. MakeMeAFirefighter.com](http://www.MakeMeAFirefighter.com).

(NAPS)

There are simple steps that can be taken to reduce the increase of fire hazard risks in cold weather and winter storms. According to the National Fire Protection Association, more home fires occur in winter than any other season.

STOCK PHOTO Homes & Design



snow thrower safety tips

Keep best practices in mind this winter

Whether it's your own home, another property you own or you're helping out a neighbor, clearing snow and ice from driveways and sidewalks is no small job.

You rely on your outdoor power equipment to do the heavy lifting, and it's important to keep safety in mind. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) reminds home and business owners to use snow throwers, often referred to as snow blowers, safely and offers tips to help.

"Weather today is unpredictable. You need to have your snow thrower serviced and ready to power up," says OPEI President and CEO Kris Kiser.

"Review your owner's manual so you can use your equipment safely," Kiser added.

According to Kiser, preparation is key, and homeowners and property owners should consider the following:

REVIEW THE MANUAL

Check the owner's manual for safe handling procedures. If the manual cannot

be found, look it up online, and store a copy on your computer so it's available to reference in the future. Review how to operate controls. Be able to shut off equipment quickly.

CHECK EQUIPMENT

The snow thrower should be powered off when being checked over. Adjust any cables and check the auger.

CHARGE BATTERIES

Locate the batteries for your snow thrower and charge them fully before it snows.

PURCHASE FUEL

Be sure to use the correct fuel recommended by the equipment's manufacturer. For most gasoline-powered snow throwers, that is E10 or less. Often fuel stations are closed after a storm so buy gasoline in advance of storms. Fuel that is more than 30 days old can phase separate and cause operating problems.

STORE/USE FUEL PROPERLY

Place gasoline in a proper fuel container and label it with the date purchased and

the ethanol content. Store fuel safely and out of the reach of children. Fill the fuel tank outside before starting the engine and while the engine is cold. Never add fuel to a running or hot engine.

CLEAR THE AREA

Snow can sometimes hide objects. Doormats, hoses, balls, toys, boards, wires, and other debris should be removed from areas you intend to clear. When run over by a snow thrower, these objects may harm the machine or people.

DRESS FOR THE WEATHER

Locate safety gear now and place it in an accessible closet or location. Wear safety glasses, gloves and footwear that can handle cold and slippery surfaces when operating the snow thrower.

KEY SAFETY TIP

Never put your hands inside the auger or chute. Use a clean out tool to unclog snow or debris from the snow thrower. Your hands should never go inside the auger or chute.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Homeowners are reminded to be prepared to use snow throwers (often referred to as snowblowers) this winter by reviewing a list of basic safety tips.

OPEI PHOTO Homes & Design

On the garden path

Growing moth orchids for months of beauty

Add exotic long-lasting orchid blossoms to your indoor garden. These living bouquets provide months of beauty with minimal care. Just provide the proper growing conditions and success is sure to follow.



By **MELINDA MYERS**
Contributor

The moth – or phalaenopsis – orchid is the one best adapted to your home environment, making it the easiest to grow. It thrives in the same temperatures as people with night temperatures in the 60s and 70 to 80 degrees during the day. However, avoid hot and cold air drafts that can stress the plants and cause bud and flower drop.

Moth orchids are epiphytes, growing on but not parasitizing trees and other plants. They obtain water and nutrients from the air, rainwater, and plant debris that accumulate in their environment.

They can be mounted on a board but usually are grown in an orchid mix made of peat, fir bark, and perlite. This or a similar combination retains water while providing needed drainage.

Place your plant in a bright location near an east-, west- or slightly shaded south-facing window. Your orchid will do best when it receives 12 to 14 hours of sunlight daily.

Enlist the help of artificial lights if your orchids are struggling when natural light, especially during winter, is insufficient. Newer full-spectrum LED lights are more affordable, require less energy, and are longer lasting than the grow lights of the past.

Give your orchid a good watering about once a week with room temperature water just as the planting mix starts to dry. Pour off any excess water that collects in the saucer.

Don't allow orchids to sit in water and don't water too often as this can lead to root rot and death of your plant.

Fertilize actively growing and flowering plants every third or fourth watering. Use an orchid plant fertilizer according to label directions. Skip winter

fertilization if temperatures are cooler, sunlight is limited, and the plants are not putting on new growth.

Improve the environment even more by increasing the humidity around the plant. Group them with other orchids and indoor plants. As one plant loses moisture, or "transpires," the others will benefit from the increase in humidity. Plus, you'll create a beautiful display while improving the growing conditions.

Or increase the humidity around your plants with humidity or gravel trays. Place pebbles in the saucer and set the pot on top of the pebbles. Allow excess water to collect in the pebbles below the pot. As the water evaporates it increases the humidity around your plant. It also eliminates the need to pour off the excess water that collects in the saucer.

You won't need to repot your orchid for quite a while. Wait to repot it until it is done blooming, the potting mix has broken down or the plant becomes pot bound. This is usually about every 18 to 24 months.

Enjoy a second flush of flowers with cool nights and proper post-flowering care. Leave the flower stem intact and the plant may produce a second flush of

smaller blooms at the tip of the stem. Or you can cut the flower stem back between the second and third node from the bottom.

For the best rebloom and to allow the plant to replenish energy spent on flowering, prune the flower stem back to about one-half inch above the leaves and enjoy a second flush of flowers in about a year.

And if reblooming your orchid is too much work, treat it like a long-lasting bouquet. And if you can't stand to toss or compost it, give it to an avid gardener. There's always someone willing to adopt and try to rebloom your plant.

*Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*.*

*She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program.*

*Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' website is www.MelindaMyers.com.*



The moth orchid – also known as phalaenopsis orchid – provides months of exotic blossoms with minimal care. They can be a great addition to an indoor garden.

MELINDA MYERS PHOTO *Homes & Design*

HOME SALES • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

fixed-rate mortgage reversed course and increased a quarter percent in October to 6.43%. Still, mortgage rates are more than a percent lower than October 2023 when the average rate was 7.62%.

• Although mortgage rates did improve over the last 12 months, the spike in media prices

and the tepid growth in median family income over the last year led to very little improvement in affordability. The Wisconsin Housing Affordability Index rose just 1.6% since October 2023.

To read the complete report including various breakdowns from areas throughout the state, visit wra.org.

SNOW THROWER SAFETY

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

TURN IT OFF TO CLEAR A CLOG

If you need to remove debris or unclog snow, always turn off the snow thrower. Wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before clearing any clogs or debris.

VISIBLE CONDITIONS

Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light.

AIM WITH CARE

Never throw snow toward people or cars. Keep children

or pets inside and away from your snow thrower when it is operating.

CAUTION ON SLOPES, HILLS

Use caution when changing directions on slopes. Do not attempt to clear steep slopes.

KNOW WHERE THE CORD IS

If using an electric powered snow thrower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times. Avoid tripping.

For more information, visit www.opei.org.



Ways to add a touch of luxury to your home

There are many simple, inexpensive ideas that can step up the look

Home sweet home. It's called that for a reason: Home is where you can go to relax, refresh, and reset.

No matter where or how you live, adding a touch of luxury to your living space is a great way to help you look forward to relaxing after a long day.

Contrary to what many people might think, however, giving your home that "high-end" feeling doesn't mean you have to shell out on incredibly expensive, designer home decor.

There are a few simple ways to add a little luxury to your everyday life.

A bright idea: For example, lighting can play a crucial role in setting the mood.

Swapping out your standard light bulbs for soft, warm-toned LEDs or string lights can create a cozy, inviting atmosphere that helps you unwind, while also making your home feel more elegant and inviting.

Clean and classy: Studies show that certain scents can have a calming effect on your

whole body – so consider making high-end aromas a part of your everyday routine.

For example, there's Pinalen's new Luxury Scents line of multipurpose cleaners, which offer premium scents that can elevate your home's energy and signal to your body that it's "time to relax", while also providing a deep clean.

Modeled after popular luxury perfumes, these multipurpose cleaners are crafted by master perfumers in a high-end fragrance house.

The two new scents in the line – Sunrise Memories and Opulence Bloom – sound as luxurious as they smell, and they're both versatile enough to be used in every room of the house.

Little things can mean a lot: Finally, don't forget to invest in the little luxuries.

Whether that's an automatic can opener or a coffee maker you can put on a timer, the little things in life often make the greatest impact when it comes to making your life easier and imbuing your environment with a sense of opulence.

For more tips and tricks, visit www.alenusa.com/en/.

(NAPS)

SERVICE CORNER



Complete Tree & Shrub Care

262-763-4645

- Tree & Shrub Trimming & Removal
- Custom Lumber Sales
- Deep Root Fertilization
- Insect & Disease Control

www.arborimages.com
W573 COUNTY TRUNK
JS(State Road 11)
Burlington, Wis.

Winter Showroom Hours:

MONDAY - FRIDAY
7:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

SATURDAY
7:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

- Colorized Mulches & Wood Chips
- Development/Lot Clearing
- Tracked Aerial Lift 453113

Lakes Area

GARAGE DOOR, LLC

Elkhorn, WI.

WAYNE DuPONT
P.O. Box 406
Elkhorn, WI 53121

ELKHORN: (262) 742-3159
WHITWATER: (262) 473-3400
FAX: (866) 804-1463

lakesareagaragedoorllc@charter.net

311264

TO PLACE YOUR AD, CALL (262) 763-2575

You don't have to break the bank to feel a little fancy and up your home's "relaxation quotient" – and there are numerous tips to prove it.



home and property sales

Here is a listing of recent single-family home, condominium and vacant land sales in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties. The information is provided through the Multiple Listing Service.

RACINE COUNTY

SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

Burlington

- 30002 Beach Dr..... \$250,000
- 31213 Bushnell Rd..... \$260,000
- 33609 Contour Dr..... \$500,000
- 33625 Contour Dr..... \$439,000
- 409 Edwards St..... \$280,000
- 8835 Fishman Rd..... \$450,000
- 432 Herman St..... \$315,000
- 101 Hillcrest Dr..... \$377,500

Dover

- 1705 Chippewa Dr..... \$269,900
- 23621 Dover Line Rd..... \$500,000
- 24701 La Follette St..... \$172,000
- 2141 Lakeshore Dr..... \$1,042,343
- 2800 Lakeshore Dr..... \$168,000

Norway

- 27131 Long Lake Rd..... \$440,000
- 23200 W Overson Rd..... \$575,000
- 8307 Stonegate Rd..... \$425,000
- 8362 Stonegate Rd..... \$450,000

Raymond

- 4471 96th St..... \$240,000

Rochester

- 30927 Royal Hill Rd..... \$532,500
- 24 N Westwood Ave..... \$605,000

Sturtevant

- 8512 Queensbury Ln..... \$345,000

Union Grove

- 709 15th Ave..... \$127,777
- 741 16th Ave..... \$270,000
- 1036 Cardinal Ln..... \$340,000
- 150 Chelsea LN..... \$525,500
- 486 Kiddle Ln..... \$556,900
- 1755 New St..... \$281,000
- 1875 Nottingham Dr..... \$498,400

Waterford

- 665 Cherrywood Dr..... \$448,000
- 4416 Field Ln..... \$399,900
- 7021 Idlewood Ct..... \$347,500
- 31024 Lake Pointe Ct..... \$342,000
- 20506 Mountain Ln..... \$599,900

Wind Point

- 12 Raven Turn..... \$629,000

CONDOS

Burlington

- 3405 S Browns Lake Dr 3 .. \$380,000
- 3405 S Browns Lake Dr 41 \$365,000

Sturtevant

- 9700 Rayne Rd 5 \$205,000

Union Grove

- 1130 58th Rd..... \$309,990
- 1132 58th Rd..... \$299,990
- 1140 58th Rd..... \$324,990

Waterford

- 314 S Jefferson St C \$256,000
- 640 Trailview Xing 1 \$340,000

VACANT LAND

Burlington

- 1325 Serena Ln 1333..... \$164,800
- Lt1 Summit Pl..... \$150,000

Rochester

- Lt1 Academy Rd..... \$150,000
- Lt1 N River Rd..... \$1,010,000

Yorkville

- Lt11 Highland Way \$176,900
- Lt12 Highland Way \$189,900

KENOSHA COUNTY

SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

Brighton

- 4701 308th Ave \$740,000

Bristol

- 20400 107th St..... \$415,000
- 8733 160th Ave..... \$470,000
- 8211 214th Ave \$435,000

Paddock Lake

- 6916 236th Ave \$249,900
- 6514 238th Ave \$700,000
- 23434 62nd St..... \$138,000

Paris

- 4606 200th Ave \$675,000
- 17111 38th St..... \$942,500

Randall

- 40001 85th St..... \$1,850,000
- 39810 Lake Park Ct..... \$1,550,000

Salem Lakes

- 23305 111th St..... \$453,900
- 27527 122nd St..... \$1,100,000
- 23752 126th Pl..... \$349,900
- 9903 271st Ct..... \$349,900

Twin Lakes

- 10625 395th Ave \$595,000
- 319 Basset St..... \$200,000
- 325 Mueller Ave..... \$365,000

Wheatland

- 5615 366th Ave \$810,000

VACANT LAND

Brighton

- Lt4 31st St..... \$125,000

Paddock Lake

- 25717 78th Pl Lt37 \$97,900

Randall

- 34000 Bassett Rd..... \$170,000

Salem Lakes

- Lt0 84th St..... \$145,000

Twin Lakes

- Lt3 93rd St..... \$37,000
- 3024 Richmond Park Dr..... \$40,000

WALWORTH COUNTY

SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

Bloomfield

- N2439 Dumas Dr \$170,000
- W822 Eau Clair Rd..... \$232,000
- W1341 Fairfield Rd..... \$255,000
- N2456 Giles Dr..... \$369,900
- N1442 Jasmine Dr..... \$291,489
- W1039 Juneau Rd..... \$314,000

Delavan

- W5689 Amos Rd \$760,000
- 725 Burr Oak Ct \$292,500
- 114 Cedar Ave..... \$365,000
- 419 Coburn Street..... \$329,000
- 111 N Harrison St..... \$300,000
- 413 Phoenix St..... \$256,400
- 1811 South Shore Dr \$3,050,000

East Troy

- N9521 Beulah Meadows Rd \$665,000
- 2062 Church St \$125,000
- 2686 Red Oak Ln \$566,900

Elkhorn

- 219 N Broad St..... \$360,000
- 202 N Church St..... \$305,000
- 400 E Grant St..... \$417,500
- 409 N Lincoln St..... \$235,000

Fontana

- 334 Bay View Ave..... \$1,100,000
- 1106 Jenkins Dr \$510,000
- 330 Kinzie Ave..... \$920,000
- 564 Sauk Trl \$4,750,000
- 850 Tarrant Dr..... \$1,000,000

Geneva

- N3220 Beach Rd..... \$250,000
- N3440 Como Rd \$479,000
- W4068 Lake Shore Dr..... \$524,245

home and property sales

Here is a listing of recent single-family home, condominium and vacant land sales in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties. The information is provided through the Multiple Listing Service.

- N3238 Ridge Rd..... \$262,000
- 3075 Satinwood Rd..... \$350,000
- W4891 White Oak Rd..... \$455,000

Genoa City

- 769 Oak Ridge Ln \$410,000
- 700 Pintail Pl \$332,000

La Grange

- W5855 Mariner Hills Ct \$150,000
- W6022 Mariner Hills Trl \$363,000

Lafayette

- N6749 Peck Station Rd ... \$1,200,000

Lake Geneva

- 222 East St..... \$299,000
- 1074 Mobile St \$410,000
- 297 Pearson Dr \$535,000
- 209 E South St \$379,000
- 1555 N Stone Ridge Dr \$570,098

Linn

- N2466 Elgin Club Rd..... \$450,000
- W3833 Lakeview Park Dr ... \$475,000
- W4357 Laurel St..... \$490,000
- W3240 Park Dr..... \$5,250,000

Lyons

- 1668 Church St \$425,000
- 1709 Mill St \$270,000
- W1365 Highway 11 \$380,000
- W2004 Highway 11 \$300,000
- N6107 Lyons Rd..... \$385,000

Richmond

- N6417 Delaney Rd..... \$865,000
- N6774 Lake Dr \$299,900
- N7044 Oakwood Dr..... \$273,900

Sharon

- 103 Martin St..... \$198,000
- 144 Seymour St..... \$95,000

Sugar Creek

- W5128 Chanteny Ter \$650,000
- W6582 Hazel Ridge Rd..... \$425,000
- W5408 Lake View Dr..... \$180,000

Troy

- N9604 Highway 67 \$486,000
- N9531 Sunset Dr..... \$412,000

Walworth

- 505 Fairfield Dr..... \$398,281
- 158 Weber St..... \$272,400
- 256 Wood St..... \$204,900

Whitewater

- 411 N Jefferson St..... \$212,000
- 972 Peck St \$300,000
- N7652 Pine Knoll Dr..... \$700,000
- N7694 Woodchuck Alley . \$1,217,000

Williams Bay

- 532 Highland Rd \$1,210,000

- 38 Hill St..... \$490,000
- 56 Hill St..... \$205,000

CONDOS

Delavan

- 206 N Autumn Dr..... \$387,854
- 1512 N Delavan Club Dr \$319,000
- 1473 S. Delavan Club Dr \$265,000
- 311 Linden Ln \$340,000
- 1505 S Shore Dr \$140,500

East Troy

- 2817 Edwards St A..... \$298,000

Fontana

- 20 Abbey Springs Dr \$1,050,000
- 706 Counrty Club Dr D..... \$825,000
- 305 Deerparth EA \$680,000

Geneva

- 891 Eagelton Dr 46-15 \$320,000
- 161 Palmer Pl 52-23..... \$654,000
- 83 Red Chimney Rd 07 \$285,000

Genoa City

- 1400 Hunters Ridge Dr 129 \$200,850
- 1400 Hunters Ridge Dr 64 . \$261,000

Lake Geneva

- 215 Country Club Dr 2A \$165,000
- 1270 Wisconsin St 209..... \$164,000

Lyons

- 7020 G. Geneva Way 162 .. \$112,000
- 7020 G. Geneva Way 324 .. \$111,500

Williams Bay

- 218 Elmhurst Ct D-4..... \$272,000
- 91 N Potawatomi Rd J3..... \$392,000

VACANT LAND

Bloomfield

- Lt21 Charles Young Dr Lt27 . \$22,000

Delavan

- Lt18 Cochrane St Blk 10 \$47,500

East Troy

- Lt12 Troy Hill Ct \$76,000

Geneva

- 1565 Geneva Nat'l Ave
N 16-05..... \$97,500

Lake Geneva

- Lt0 State Highway 20 \$440,000
- 699 South Stone Ridge Dr . \$145,000

Sugar Creek

- Lt40 Lakeshore Ave..... \$85,000

Walworth

- Lt2 Wisconsin St..... \$225,000

Whitewater

- Lt9 Blue Heron Dr \$69,000
- Lt1 Cedar Ct..... \$60,000



CLASSIFIEDS

CALL 262.728.3411
TO PLACE YOUR AD

REAL ESTATE

For Sale by Owner

HOMES FOR \$54K! Two great starter homes, vacation spots or investment properties, \$54K each. You choose or bundle both per \$90K. (1 in Lk. Geneva & 1 in the U.P.) I am a motivated seller of an inheritance, they won't last for Long! Garry 262-581-3415.

INHERITANCE FOR SALE! Two homes at \$45K each or both for \$75K! Garry 262-581-3415.

Other Real Estate

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familiar/ status or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-900-669-9777. The toll-free tele phone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY



James R. Taylor and Sons INC.

Family Owned & Operated For 3 Generations

Remodeling, Siding, Windows, Roofing, Kitchens, Baths



Nominate a Veteran/Active Duty Service member for a FREE Roof!



**FREE Estimates
Fully Insured**

"The bitterness of poor quality lingers long after the sweetness of a cheap price is gone."



262-642-7970

www.jrtaylorandsons.com

STOP IN AND SEE OUR *Smart Home* Showroom

Since
1956



VOTED 2024

**BRAND
SOURCE**®

DEALER OF THE YEAR
GREATER
MIDWEST REGION

NOW CARRYING  COUNTERTOP APPLIANCES



YOUR FULL SERVICE
Grilling
Headquarters

Lyle's TV 
& Appliance
ELKHORN, WI

17 S. Washington, Elkhorn
(262) 723-3477

www.lylestv.com • Online Parts & Service

The Appliance Store with So Much More

Stop in &
Shop Our
Fully Stocked!
Beautyrest
SHOWROOM