



# LET'S TIE UP LOOSE ENDS

FossilMeyer Real Estate Newsletter

June 2015, Issue 8, Volume 6

Backyard barbecuing is a familiar American tradition. But before you fire up the grill, you will need a full tank of propane. If you purchased your propane tank more than two years ago, you may find that you have a hard time filling it in most states. New regulations state that propane tanks unequipped with overfill-protection devices (OPDs) cannot be filled by anyone. OPDs are placed on propane tanks to ensure that the tank is not filled to more than 80 percent capacity. The use of this safety device is designed to prevent accidents relating to overfilling a tank.

There are between 40 and 55 million 20-pound propane grill tanks in the United States, so chances are you might have an unequipped tank. In most cases, consumers can tell if a propane tank has an OPD valve by looking at the handle. If the handle is round or star-shaped, your cylinder may be outdated. Cylinders equipped with OPD have a triangular handle. You also will see the letters "OPD" on the valve handle.

What do you do if your tank is unequipped with the new valve? Most propane dealerships will outfit your tank with the valve for around \$25. You may also consider purchasing a new tank. In both of these cases, you will still need to pay the cost of filling your tank.

If you are looking for an even simpler solution, you can use a propane cylinder exchange service, such as Blue Rhino or Amerigas. Often located outside of home improvement centers, grocery stores, or convenience stores, these kiosks allow you to bring in your old tank for a new, filled cylinder. All of the tanks available through these services offer the new up-to-date valves. Generally the cost for these tanks is around \$20.

## App of the Month: Yummly

There are lots of ways to find new recipes. Yummly makes it easy to find them on your smartphone. This free app searches the most popular recipe sharing sites like Allrecipes and Epicurious. It then displays the link along with a large image of the dish, giving you a visual way to scan through recipes. Each recipe offers a list of ingredients, a nutritional breakdown of each recipe, and instructions for the dish. Best of all, the recipe recommendations are customized to your tastes, making it useful and personal. You can save your favorite recipes to your own recipe box too.

To dream anything that you want to dream. That's the beauty of the human mind.

To do anything that you want to do. That is the strength of the human will. To trust yourself to test your limits. That is the courage to succeed. --

Bernard Edmonds

Although mushrooms often are packaged in plastic wrap in grocery stores, this is not the best way to store them. Mushrooms need some ventilation to keep from decaying. Do not wash them before storing. Place them in a paper bag and keep in the refrigerator.



## Home Improvement Strategies Every Homeowner Should Know

It doesn't matter if you live in a large suburban home or a cozy city condo, owning your own home means that you will encounter some situations that need some special skills. These strategies can help you make your house into a better home.

### - Don't neglect the little things.

The best strategy of all is to not ignore little repairs. That leaky faucet or running toilet may seem like no big deal, but leaks can add up to lots of damage if not addressed quickly. Cleaning out gutters, repairing broken floor tiles, and replacing damaged light fixtures can make your home safer and will save you from dealing with a bigger repair job later.

### - Look for inspiration all around you.

There is no lack of sources for DIY inspiration. Home improvement shows, Pinterest, magazines, and even your friends can guide you to what you like and what projects you'd like to do in your own home.

### - Get the right tools.

All the inspiration in the world can't help you if you can't actually do the job. Having the proper tools will let you accomplish your home improvement goals in a safe and efficient manner. If you don't have the tools you need, consider renting the equipment you need.

### - Know when to get help.

Every weekend warrior hopes he or she can tackle that home improvement job, but sometimes it is best to call in a professional. To save money, do as much of the job as you feel comfortable with, and call in help for those tasks that are outside your scope of expertise.

During storms, it can be tempting to use a candle for lighting if your power goes out. But experts say this should be avoided. Candles can be forgotten or knocked over, especially if a window or door were to break open due to strong winds. In the middle of a storm situation, a fire could be impossible to put out. Instead, put battery-powered lanterns and flashlights in your home emergency kit. Swap out the batteries on an annual basis to make sure you will always have light in an emergency.

## Boosting Your Brain Function with Exercise

Brain function can diminish as we age. A report released by the Institute of Medicine suggests that maintaining physical activity can help preserve memory and attention as we get older. Studies show that people who are physically active are less likely to experience a decline in their mental abilities. They also show a lowered risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

Researchers believe that the benefits come from increased blood flow and an increase in brain-protecting chemicals. Exercise also seems to counter some of the reduction in brain connections that occur as we age. Doctors are not sure how these processes work or how effective exercise is in preventing mental decline, but they agree that exercise has many positive benefits for seniors and are hopeful that more research will lead to a better understanding of the mind-body connection.

## Taking Great Vacation Pics

There is no better way to remember your vacation than by looking through your snapshots. To increase your chances of coming home with lots of fantastic pictures, keep these vacation photo tips in mind.

Keep your camera handy. It is frustrating to find yourself in a picture-perfect spot, only to realize that your camera is back in the hotel room. Find a camera bag that is comfortable and easy to carry and remember to bring it with you each time you go sightseeing. Also, check to make sure that your camera has fresh batteries. Consider getting a second battery to make sure that you always are charged up and ready to go. If you are traveling outside of the country, be sure that you have the proper adapters needed to recharge your battery. To be sure you won't miss a shot, consider investing in a larger memory card.

LIFE IS  
BETTER  
WHEN  
YOU'RE  
LAUGHING.

Making a batch of hard boiled eggs seems easy, but what if you need to make a bunch all at once? Just master this technique, and for your next party you can serve plates of deviled eggs or egg salad sandwiches with less effort.

First preheat your oven to 325 degrees. Place eggs in several muffin tins, with one egg per opening. Place in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the tins and using tongs, drop each egg carefully into a bowl of ice water. When completely cool, crack the shell of each egg all around and remove the shell. The eggs will then be ready for any recipe or just to enjoy as they are.

### Mango Strawberry Salsa

1 cup strawberries, diced  
1 cup mango, diced  
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced  
Juice of 1 lime  
2 tablespoons chopped red onion  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
1 teaspoon honey  
1/2 teaspoon salt

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Serve immediately with tortilla chips, crostini, or crackers.

## Public Transportation Personal Safety Tips

Using public transportation can save you money and get you to your destination efficiently. To make your ride as safe as possible, keep these personal safety tips in mind.

Plan out your route ahead of time. Consult online schedules to map out the best path to your destination and to find out how much money you'll need. This will keep you from becoming disoriented or distracted while traveling.

Wait in a lighted or busy area. Try to avoid dark or unoccupied waiting spaces. Stay close to other riders as you wait, and board the bus or train as soon as it arrives.

Be aware of your surroundings. Traveling on public transportation is not a good time to take a nap or to tune out your environment. Watch for altercations or disturbances that could put you at risk. Refrain from wearing headphones—they could distract you and make you a potential target.

Do not have your wallet or money in sight. Keep your personal belongings neatly inside your bag, briefcase, backpack, or purse. Hook your arm through your bag to keep it snugly against your body. But if someone does try to rip your bag out of your hands, don't put up a fight. Remember that your safety is more important than your property.

On a train or bus, ride as close as possible to the operator or driver. If someone bothers you, notify the operator immediately.

Want to make your clothing choices more environmentally friendly? First consider the material. Clothing that is dry clean only is not a smart choice. Look for natural fibers that can be washed in cool water. Next think about where you get your clothing. Shop first at a consignment or thrift store. You will be picking up clothing that still has a lot of life left for a cheaper price than new togs. Finally, don't wash your clothing too often. If you've only worn your outfit for a couple of hours, hang it to air out and wear it again before washing. Your clothing will last longer and you will use less detergent and water.

When remodeling, it is tempting to pick out the latest styles, but consider that many of these types of materials need to be special ordered. This can take extra time and sometimes special order fees. Take a look at all the available in-stock materials before jumping straight to the special order section.

## Five Summer Lightning Myths

During the summer, thunderstorms can not only bring rain, but thunder and lightning. To protect yourself from dangerous lightning, keep these common myths in mind next time you see a storm brewing.

### **Lightning never strikes twice.**

Many locations and objects get hit by lightning several times every year. These include tall buildings like Chicago's Sears Tower and the Empire State Building in New York. There are also locations, such as mountain peaks, that will receive many lightning strikes each season. Other large structures, such as radio-television antennas, also can receive repeated strikes.

### **Lightning only occurs with thunderstorms.**

While lightning does require moisture in the air to form, it doesn't have to be raining to create lightning. In fact, one of the most dangerous times for a fatal strike is just before a storm. Lightning can also travel horizontally, striking in areas that are still sunny. It is even possible for lightning to form during snow showers.

### **Lightning is only a danger outdoors.**

Shocks from lightning strikes can travel into structures, usually through metal pipes, bathtubs, and electronic devices. If there is lightning in your area, stay off of your telephone, do not take a shower or bath, and limit your computer use. It is also possible for lightning to strike through a window, so if there is lightning in your area, take precautions to avoid this danger by closing any open windows and doors.

### **A person who has been struck by lightning shouldn't be touched.**

Lightning strike victims are not electrified by the jolt. In fact, they carry no electrical charge and most likely need assistance from those nearby. Rescue personnel should be immediately called, and the victim should be evaluated by bystanders immediately, as they often need CPR to survive.

### **Lightning will not strike bodies of water.**

Lightning can in fact strike anywhere, including on water. Being on a boat or swimming will not protect you from a lightning strike. Lightning strikes to water have been known to kill fish in the immediate vicinity. To protect yourself, anytime there is the danger of lightning, even if none has been seen yet, you should remain indoors until the threat has passed.

### **By the Numbers: Father's Day**

- There are an estimated 64.3 million fathers in the United States.
- There are over 14,000 hardware stores in the U.S.
- The estimated number of stay-at-home dads is 140,000.
- Nearly 95 million Father's Day cards are given each year.
- Fifty-three percent of children younger than 6 eat breakfast with their father every day.

Source: Census Bureau



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Adapt yourself to the life you have been given; and truly love the people with whom destiny has surrounded you. – Marcus Aurelius

When parking in a long-term parking lot at the airport, back your car into the space. If there are any issues when you return, like engine trouble or a dead battery, you will have easy access to the engine compartment or have an easier hook-up to a tow truck.