

Snow Throwers Can Be Hazardous

Once something of a status symbol, the power-driven snow thrower is becoming almost as popular as the summer cousin—the power lawn mower.

And, like the power lawn mower, the snow thrower also can be mis-used with unfortunate results.

"The snow thrower is a valuable time-, labor-, and heart-saver for the middle-aged homeowner," Gerald E. Montgomery, executive director of the Greater Detroit Safety, says. "Unfortunately, the snow thrower can present hazards for the untrained and careless user."

Most injuries occur when the operator attempts to clear a clogged chute without first turning off the motor.

Because stones or other objects hidden by the snow can be picked up and thrown by the whirling blades, the council advises operators of snow throwers to make sure no one is in line with the discharge chute and to pay particular attention when clearing driveways and walks covered with crushed stones.

Montgomery urges snow thrower operators to observe the following safety rules:

- Read all operating instructions carefully;
- Know how to stop the engine or how to throw the unit out of gear quickly;
- Keep children and pets away while operating the machine;
- Never leave running equipment unattended;
- Never refill the fuel tank while the engine is running and avoid fuel spills;
- Never remove foreign objects or snow from the equipment while the engine is running;
- Never put a hand or foot near any moving part, and never place your hand inside the discharge chute or even near its outside edge with the engine running;
- Never make any mechanical adjustment, or do any other kind of work, on the equipment while it is running;
- Never run the engine indoors;
- Don't operate the machine on sloping ground where you risk a slip or fall.



ONE WAY TO ADD a touch of individuality to your home is through the selection of doors that set a tasteful tone. Shown above are popular French doors of ponderosa pine, available in stock sizes at local lumber dealers.

Walls Play Important Role In Redecorating

When you redo a room, don't overlook the wall decor.

Sometimes, homeowners who spend a great deal of time selecting furniture and accessories for a particular decorative period give only a passing thought to the walls.

Whether you're "going" French provincial, Early American, Scandinavian or Mediterranean — the look won't be complete without the "right" wall decor.

Walls play an important role in any room remodeling. They serve as a backdrop for furniture, accent drapery and paintings, and can even visually modify the size of a room by making it appear larger or smaller. Because of their importance, they merit better treatment than an occasional repainting or repapering.

Hardboard panels come in a wide range of woodgrain designs, such as walnut, teak and cherry, that can lend a rustic — or an elegantly formal — look.

There are handsome "antique" finishes to set off Colonial and Early American furnishings.

FOR MORE contemporary decor, there are tapestry and travertine marble effects, murals, prints, solid colors and patterns that have unusual textured looks:

corrugated, basketweave, wicker, and leather.

Because hardboard takes hard use without denting, marring or scuffing, the walls stay new — looking for a long time. An occasional damp-wiping will keep them clean and fresh looking.

PANELING with hardboard offers an additional benefit. It's economical and easily installed by a do-it-yourselfer.


The panels go up over studs, furring strips or right on the existing wall.

For a professionally finished look, there are special adhesives for nailless application, color-matched nails, and matching moldings and baseboards.

Money saved by doing the job yourself can be put toward that "perfect" wing chair or lamp you thought would have to wait 'til next year.



MASONRY PANELS, designed for both indoor and outdoor use have the natural appearance of weathered brick. Introduced by Masonite's Roxite Division, the panels come in four colors. Easily installed by the do-it-yourselfer, they are practical in use in kitchens, dens, rec rooms, living rooms, and on planters, fireplaces, bar fronts and room dividers.



The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

So your cats are nibbling on your favorite house plants? During the winter months cats like to chew the leaves of plants, usually when they aren't feeling up to snuff.

You can protect your favorite plants by growing a few toughies for the felines to chew on. One such plant is the florists' "spike," a dracaena. This is the one used in cemetery urns, porch pots and window boxes. Many gardeners save their spike year after year, just for this purpose.

Also, you can try growing some herbs for your cats. Dry some catnip and hang it in a nylon stocking. A catnip mouse drives our cats crazy. Another trick to keep cats off is to plant grass, oats, or rye grass in aluminum foil pans. They'll eat this tender growth and leave your house plants alone.

A scratching post, covered with an old piece of rug and made from scrap lumber, will save furniture and upholstery cat scratches. We put a sign on ours: "For Cats Only" because one visitor thought we were trying to patch up some run-down furniture. Any other ideas for keeping cats happy during winter months?

By the way, don't forget to put kitty litter on your compost and garden. Some cats do not use the alfalfa based litter, preferring the granular clay litter either type can be used to improve your soil.

EVERY YEAR we attempt to explain why glads change colors. We say that disease wipes out the weaker varieties, leaving the stronger ones to reproduce.

Not so, says a reader who writes: "The answer to changing colors is so simple I can't understand why you haven't gotten wise to it. The bees cross pollinate the flowers. So, to prevent this simply cut off the flower stalk as soon as the first flower begins to open, and bring it indoors. Try it."

Sorry, but bees wouldn't affect the bulbs. True, they would affect the seed but we don't ever use the seed. Gardeners save bulbs each year, not seed.

GREEN THUMB CLINIC: A reader writes: "Are those little crystals of ice on the leaves of impatiens plants harmful?"

No. They are salts or sugar crystals exuded by the plants.



Handy Jim's

FIX-UP TIPS

To 'Un-Blank' a Wall

THERE'S no fun looking at a blank wall. It can be "un-blanked" by installing decorative furniture-crafted pilasters and wood shelves.

A system of shelving created by Masonite Corporation and available from lumber and building materials dealers helps the decorator-minded homeowner create settings that are "people pleasers."

The shelves may be used with or without pilasters to develop interesting, attractive and functional wall displays. Brackets and a choice of shelves complete the ensemble.

The illustration shows how one decorator-minded homeowner dressed up a blank dining room wall for two reasons: To add life to a lack-luster area and to create a place for showing art objects and fancy dinnerware.

For folder on shelving, send postcard to Masonite, Box B, Chicago, Ill. 60690.



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Christmas Care For Poinsettias

Whether you are buying a poinsettia as a gift or to brighten your own home this holiday season, you will have a healthier, prettier plant if you follow these tips from Michigan State University horticulturists:

Choose a poinsettia with dark green foliage. Fallen or yellow leaves indicate poor fertilization or a root disease.

The bracts — the red, pink or white parts usually thought of as the poinsettia flower — should be of good size and color. The red or green button-like parts at the center of the bracts are the actual flowers.

Before taking a poinsettia outside, be sure it is wrapped well. Exposing it to low temperatures for even a short period of time can cause leaves and bracts to turn brown and fall off.

At home, place your poinsettia near a sunny window or in some other well lighted place. Do not let any part of the plant touch the cold window panes, and keep the plant out of drafts from radiators, air registers, or open doors and windows.

Poinsettias prefer a temperature range of 60 to 70 degrees. Higher temperatures will shorten the life of the bracts. Cooler temperatures at night (55 to 60 degrees) will help keep the plant in bloom the maximum length of time.

The soil should be checked daily and the plant watered only when the soil is dry to the touch. Water until the soil is soaked to the bottom of the pot, but do not water more than necessary. Overwatering will cause the lower leaves to yellow and drop. Underwatering will cause the plant to wilt and the lower leaves to drop off.

Christmas Cyclamen Blooms On

EAST LANSING To keep your Christmas cyclamen blooming through January, here are some tips suggests, is an east window, from Michigan State near but not touching the cold University horticulturist glass.

William Carlson: The cyclamen prefers cool temperatures (60-65 degrees)

Check soil moisture regularly, he advises. The plant requires thorough watering and good drainage. It should not be allowed to remain in water, however. The crown and foliage should also be kept free of water, because diseases occur if they are allowed to remain wet for long periods of time.

When the leaves start to turn brown and no new flowers appear, the plant may be discarded or kept for reblooming.

50 Years

The Faculty Women's Club at The University of Michigan marked its 50th year of service to the University community.

HERE'S A GOOD tip for next spring: "I took a slip from our favorite rose bush, four inches long, split the end of the cutting, and then placed an oat seed in the split end. I put the cutting with oat in it in water for two days for the oat to sprout, then I set the slip in the ground and it rooted nicely. Must be sure to keep the cutting damp at all times.

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