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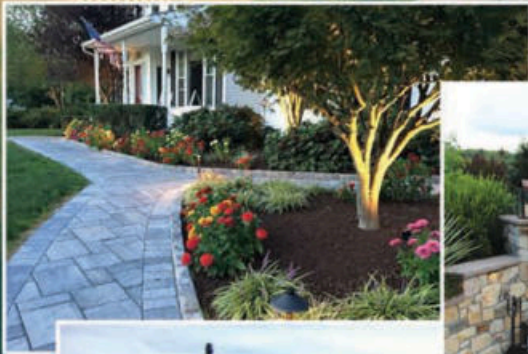
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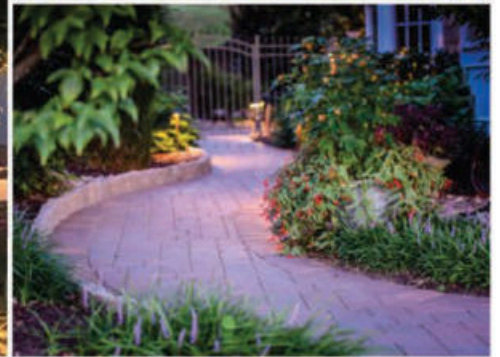
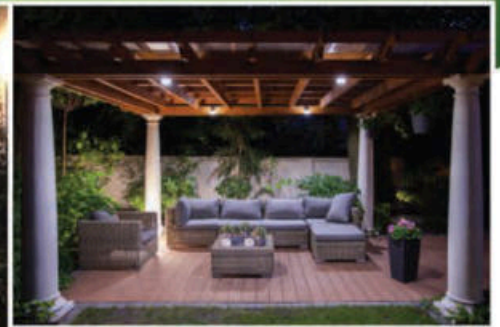
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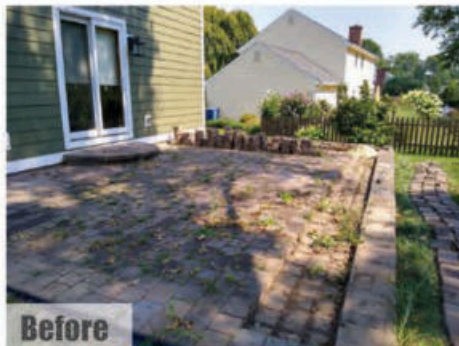
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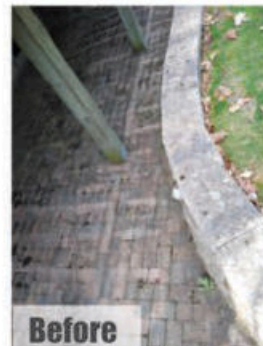
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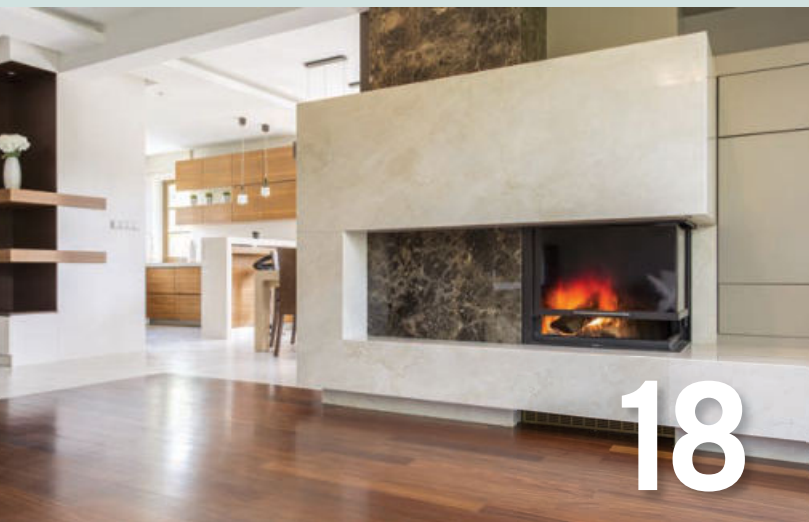


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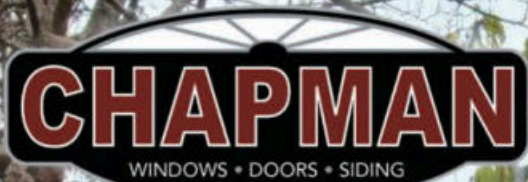
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#PA020224

# Chapman Windows Doors & Siding and Loewen Windows & Doors

by Liz Hunter

**C**hapman Windows Doors & Siding has built a reputation for friendly service and reliable installation over its 25-year-plus history. The family-owned and -operated company specializes in home exteriors and providing the best products for customers. Chapman has a unique partnership with Loewen Windows & Doors and *House & Home* spoke with Joanne Lyons, sales consultant at Chapman, and Larry Harkins, sales manager at Loewen Window Center, about this unique venture and how customers can benefit.

## Consumers may not be aware of Loewen Windows & Doors, what can you tell me about it and its history?

**Harkins:** Loewen Windows & Doors is a family-owned business located in Steinbach, Manitoba, Canada; which is about 30 miles outside of Winnipeg. Loewen is the oldest window manufacturer (founded 1905) in North America and only does business through Loewen Window Centers or with specialty window retailers. You will never find this high-end window line in any of the big box stores. Since Loewen is a Canadian company, it does have to meet Canadian air, water and structural standards, which are more stringent than the standards here in the U.S.

## What are the unique features and advantages of Loewen windows?

**Harkins:** One of the most important advantages of Loewen Windows & Doors is the wood construction as compared to most manufacturers. Loewen's standard wood construction is solid Douglas fir versus pine, which is the standard wood used by other win-



EXPERTISE: WINDOWS & DOORS

Joanne Lyons, sales consultant at Chapman  
Larry Harkins, sales manager at Loewen Window Center



dow manufacturers. Douglas fir is the hardest and slowest growing of the soft woods and when it grows it puts out a natural organic resin that makes the wood more resistant to moisture. Douglas fir is structurally better than pine and was used exclusively for framing before the engineered wood products arrived on the scene. Fir also has twice the fastener retention than pine, so nails and screws are less likely to pull away allowing for the construction of larger and heavier units. Loewen products carry a 20-year wood warranty on their clad products. Loewen offers an extruded aluminum exterior in two dozen colors or a custom color of your choice all having a Kynar finish with a 20-year warranty. Many glass package options are available and Loewen's glass carries a 20-year warranty.

## Tell us about the partnership between Loewen Windows & Doors and Chapman Windows Doors & Siding?

**Lyons:** Loewen only partners with specialty window dealers like Chapman Windows Doors & Siding. Chapman has an experienced and knowledgeable sales staff that will be able to assist you in the design and product selection to meet your project goals. We also offer installation and have our own in-house factory-trained service crew if any issues would arise. Chapman has a large showroom featuring Loewen Windows & Doors along with additional showroom space showing other manufacturers' products. Chapman's showroom is designed to showcase multiple product lines so customers can compare and make an educated choice concerning what would work best for their home and budget. Chap-

man and Loewen are both passionate about providing customers with innovative design, enduring quality and an extensive selection.

## How are Loewen Windows meeting the current design trends while still providing the long-term investment that consumers expect today?

**Harkins:** Loewen has always been an innovator in the window industry; it was the first manufacturer to reintroduce the push-out casement that has since taken off with other manufacturers. Today's big trend is the contemporary look, having very thin sight lines and large expanses of glass. With Loewen using Douglas fir we are able to build larger units with smaller sight lines than most other manufacturers in the market. With a large offering of different styles of hardware we are able to achieve the modern sleek look that complements this design aesthetic. Customers want to bring the outdoors in so it is only natural that the larger glass openings are becoming popular in both windows and doors. Loewen makes large lift-slide doors that can be configured several different ways, sliding left and right or all panels in one direction. Loewen also offers multi-slide doors and bifolds that can also give you that large clear opening.

**Lyons:** Another design trend we are seeing in windows and doors is a return to stained interior wood. Stained windows and doors soften and provide warmth to the contemporary window and door designs of today—a timeless combination—and Chapman has its own paint and stain department. The Loewen Douglas fir or mahogany wood interiors are perfect woods for achieving unparalleled natural beauty. Whether your home style is contemporary, traditional, Colonial, ranch or mid-century modern, Chapman provides the windows and doors that inspire your imagination and transform your home. **H&H**

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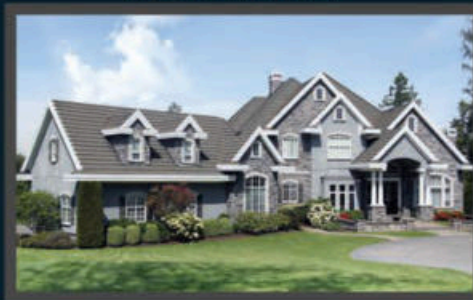
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# LanChester Grill & Hearth

by Julie Shannon

**N**ow that summer is over and fall-like temperatures are setting in, it's time to start thinking of getting your home prepared for winter. One project that should be on your list—a fireplace. It's the focal point of the room, creates more family time and overall gives the home a warm and cozy feel. Whether you are replacing an existing fireplace or installing one for the first time, LanChester Grill & Hearth is the company to trust for all your fireplace needs.

Founded in 1996, LanChester Grill & Hearth specializes in high-end projects and completes the job from start to finish. They are your one-stop shop for every part of the fireplace—from the stone work to the frame and fire—and are detail-oriented in every step of the installation.

*House & Home* spoke with owner Sam Stoltzfus about replacing existing fireplaces, the different fireplace options and why every home should have a fireplace.

## What are some of the reasons why homeowners should replace an existing fireplace?

One of the main reasons is a lot of the houses built 20-30 years ago have a builder grade fireplace, which means there's not a very big flame and not a lot of heat. It was not properly insulated and a lot of cold air is coming in. Most of the builders put in the cheapest fireplaces they can get. The quality is not there.



EXPERTISE: FIREPLACE DESIGN & INSTALLATION



Sam Stoltzfus, owner/president

## A homeowner wants to add a fireplace to their house. What's the first step?

The first step homeowners should do is come into our showroom and see all the options we have. Once they choose if they want ledger stone, tile or granite to name a few, we build the frame for the fireplace and then put the fireplace right in. Most times we recommend Mendota fireplaces. We do the entire process from start to finish.

## What options does a homeowner have at LanChester Grill & Hearth?

We offer many options with over 70 units on display such as:

- Mendota—the industry leader in both flame, appearance and warranty
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We have the largest Mendota display in the world—we have every fireplace on display that Mendota sells. We also have the largest Dimplex display in Pennsylvania, maybe even the Northeast. My top recommendation is to come in and see our showroom. Each unit isn't just on display—we showcase each unit. Each one of our showcases has a different surrounding, not a wall with the same thing on it so you'll see exactly how it would look in your home.

## Can homeowners update their fireplace without going through the installation process?

Yes, it's called retrofit fireplace installation, a system that can remove old fireplaces and put one in without disturbing an existing façade or fireplace mantel usually in just one day. We have a great system in place and have been doing this for 12 years now.

## What are the benefits of having a fireplace? What value does it add to a home?

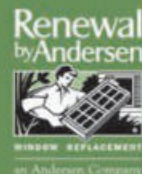
There are several things—more family time gathering around the fireplace for sure. Another thing is you save money. Most homes have fireplaces that aren't really comfortable because they aren't putting out much heat. So then they are cranking up the thermostat to be warm in that particular room. With our fireplaces, they have the ability to push out a lot of heat and turn the thermostat down, say five degrees. You'll save money and be cozy in the family room.

A fireplace usually adds about double to what the fireplace costs. There were six homes for sale in the same neighborhood and one of the houses had a fireplace installed by us. The realtor said it sold within three months and the others were on the market for a year. The fireplace is the reason it sold so quickly. **H&H**

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# Fall in Love with your New Kitchen

The fall means more time in the kitchen—update it with the pros’ choice for the best in design and products, Elevations by Shelly’s. *by Lauren Kubiak*

**As summer drifts into fall**, and you find yourself spending more time indoors, it’s the perfect time to consider updating the inside of your home. Entertaining during Thanksgiving or over the holiday season? Then now is the time to stop dreaming and start renovating.

Picturing the finished result of your home renovation can be difficult and it might be a troublesome aspect of redesigning a new room. You want to make sure your dream kitchen, for example, looks and plays the part with a sleek design and functional cabinetry and storage space. What you’ve envisioned and what can fit in the allotted space you have in your home can sometimes be on opposite ends of the spectrum.

When you go to a professional for your home renovation, from the kitchen and bathroom to windows and doors, you trust the experts to bring your ideas to life. They ultimately take a trip to companies such as Elevations by Shelly’s to find the best and most updated products for your home. And while Shelly’s does still work closely with professionals, the one-stop shop now has a direct relationship with homeowners who want to take design into their own hands.

So if you are having trouble picturing the final product, taking the time to plan with Elevations can help your visions become real, especially through use of their state-of-the-art design technology. 3D technology separates Shelly’s and lets homeowners experience the space before any permanent changes are made.

“One of the key benefits we offer in the area is that we’re able to use 2020 design technology to render a 3D version of a design,” says Tim Krall, president of Shelly’s.



“We can take a homeowner’s kitchen and then take our design proposal and transform it into a 3D rendering so a customer can put goggles on and experience the design in virtual reality before the actual design is built. They can interact with that space and make sure it captures their vision perfectly.”

Shelly’s planted its roots in Pennsylvania over 90 years ago, making it one of the oldest and largest suppliers of lumber, hardware, building materials and manufactured components on the eastern side of the state. In 2013, Shelly’s joined U.S. LBM, a leading distributor of specialty building products, that combines the scale and operational advantages of a national platform with the best local companies in building products distribution.

Shelly’s has always been the reliable source that large professional builders, design firms and private designers can count on when needing top-quality products, and Shelly’s is now bringing its expertise and leading brands and products to homeowners, letting them shop at the same place as the area’s top professionals.

“On staff we have teams of designers that can work directly with homeowners to design their space, and we can help you find a contractor or construction professional to do the installation and renovation work, if you’re looking for that,” Krall says.

Customers can actually experience the virtual products they’ve experienced in reality by way of the showroom. “Our showroom



space lets you actually touch, feel and engage with some of the add-on lifestyle features,” he says. “If you want underside lighting or a USB outlet or concealed outlet or you want outlets inside the cabinets, you can see all of that, learn how it all functions and if it’s right for your space.”

The showroom is just a preview of Elevations by Shelly’s quality products—Artistokraft cabinets, granite countertops, Jeffrey Alexander hardware and Empire millwork are among the forefront. Elevations by Shelly’s is functional and gives homeowners and professionals the inspiration needed for any project. Located in the historic barn at Main Street on Exton, Elevations showcases modern design while incorporating elements of the historic space, demonstrating how you can modernize an old, existing space.

“We’ve been the trusted partner for building professionals in the area for decades and now we’re excited to bring the products, technology, service and expertise we’ve offered to those professionals to homeowners and customers who are looking to improve their home and make their design dreams a reality.” **H&H**

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# BURNING

## QUESTIONS

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE  
APPROACHING A FIREPLACE PROJECT.

**By Liz Hunter**

**T**his month, many homeowners will be turning their attention to indoor projects to set the space up for the months when we tend to go into hibernation mode. With more time spent indoors, we want everything to be functioning properly and looking its best, and that may even mean a bit of remodeling. One area often considered at this time of year is the hearth. Whether yours needs some routine maintenance, a facelift or even if you want to install one completely new—there are plenty of questions to ask before beginning a fireplace project. *House & Home* spoke with some of the area's leading fireplace companies to pick their brains about some of the most frequently asked questions.

***Does a fireplace add value to a home?***

A fireplace will always add value to a home as most new homeowners regard that as a must-have on their wish list when looking. The design options available now allow numerous choices in the chosen decor of any home. The most important plus is that 95 percent of the fireplaces sold today offer a heat source for the homeowner.

**Jody Miller, manager, Alber's Fireplaces**





**“A fireplace will always add value to a home as most new homeowners regard that as a must-have on their wish list when looking.”**

— JODY MILLER, MANAGER, ALBER'S FIREPLACES

# BURNING QUESTIONS

## What maintenance is required on an existing fireplace and why are inspections beneficial?

When it comes to wood-burning fireplaces, the National Fire Protection Association recommends having it cleaned and inspected every year. Most manufacturers of gas fireplaces recommend annual maintenance and inspections. People are more likely to neglect gas fireplace inspections, but we tell people, just like your furnace or AC system, this needs routine maintenance too.

Inspections tell you a lot about what's going on and homeowners don't realize it takes a trained eye to spot corrosion. We might spot a bit of white corrosion built up by the pilot which could be a

bigger problem, or if we notice water leaking, we need to figure out where it's coming from. Everything is interconnected.

**Ed Gaynor, owner,  
Newtown Fireplace Shop**

## Why is chimney repair an important component of maintenance?

Chimneys should be swept yearly. Creosote can cause a chimney fire. Chimneys are also impacted by the freeze and thaw of winters, and may require brick pointing or crown repair, which if ignored could lead to costly damage and a potential rebuild.

**Chris Tor, owner, 3C Home & Hearth**

## For homes with wood-burning fireplaces, do you see the homeowners opting to transition that to gas or a gas insert?

We absolutely see people wanting to convert from inefficient wood-burning to gas—it's a majority of what we do. There are some misconceptions about the terminology within the industry and it can sometimes be confusing to understand all of the options out there, so we recommend a trip to a showroom to discuss and make recommendations.

**Ed Gaynor**

## What are the advantages to fireplace inserts and do they make switching easier?

Direct vent inserts provide high ef-



Image courtesy of Alber's Fireplaces

iciency along with thermostatic temperature control and ease of use with most being remote controlled. A gas or wood insert takes the old, brick, very inefficient fireplace and turns it into a sealed combustion, high-efficiency fireplace.

When converting from wood to gas it is recommended that a Class II inspection be performed to check the integrity of the chimney and to see which type of appliance is appropriate. Once you've completed the Class II you should then contact a licensed plumber to see how difficult the gas run will be to get gas into the fireplace. Once those two things are complete it's pretty simple to select what's right for your home, be it a simple, vented gas log or a high-efficiency unit that will adequately heat the room.

**Dave Rettinger Sr., co-owner,  
Rettinger Fireplace Systems**

## What are the differences in vent styles?

A direct vent fireplace is an enclosed chamber that pulls the cold air in from the outside and expels all of the combustion gas back outside, without the need for a chimney. For vented gas units, the home must have a traditional chimney fireplace to expel the exhaust. If someone in the home has asthma, I would not recommend going this route.

**Chris Tor**

## How has electric fireplace technology evolved?

The changes in electric fireplaces have been a game-changer—opening up the option for a fireplace where people can't put a chimney or vent, such as basements and bathrooms. Electric is not going to be a large source of heat, maxing out at 10,000 BTU, but they are a nice option for areas of a home you wouldn't have thought to have a fireplace.

**Jay Stong, owner, Salter's Fireplace  
Patio Grill**

## What are some new or trending styles of fireplaces you would recommend?

The linear gas fireplace has become very popular as many homeowners look to install a television above their fireplace. The manufacturers have made advances in the options which can be added to ensure the safety of heat damage to TVs. Another very popular product that is available to install into existing fireplaces are direct vent gas inserts. These are heat sources that can provide 900-1,200 square feet of additional heat to the home.

**Jody Miller**

## What remodeling options are there to update the look of an existing fireplace?

Fireplace remodeling has become our niche. Many people have builders-grade fireplaces and man-



Before



After

Images at left: courtesy of 3C Home & Hearth



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**Chris Tor**

### **How are mantel designs changing?**

Shiplap is very popular right now and we're actually seeing not just your traditional white shiplap look, but painted different colors like gray and even navy blue at the beach. Another popular trend popping up is metal walls and mantels which lend themselves to the industrial or farmhouse look.

**Alexis Rettinger, co-owner, Rettinger Fireplace Systems**

### **What are some safety considerations for mantels?**

It's very important to find a contractor who knows what they are doing and knows what is allowable for every fireplace and the mantel. I'm a firefighter, so we don't mess around. Some mantels pose a problem, like shiplap you sometimes can't have it for safety reasons. Manufacturers are getting sharp to the fact that homeowners want to place their TV over the fireplace, so they are making products that redirect the heat. We try to discuss what's allowable with every client because it's all specific to that fireplace.

**Ed Gaynor**

### **What other features are worth noting about modern fireplaces?**

In the last few years, gas fireplace manufacturers have added accent lights to bring attention to the fireplace even if it's not on. The lights make it look like something is going on and it's

entertaining, making it a focal point any time of the year.

**Jay Stong**

### **What else should homeowners know before beginning a fireplace project?**

This industry is largely unregulated, but it's increasing in education requirements. I strongly suggest readers do their homework, reading online reviews, checking someone's certifications and accreditations to make sure they are following the best practices of the industry. Hire someone who is licensed, insured, qualified and screened—this is not a project for an amateur.

**Ed Gaynor H&H**



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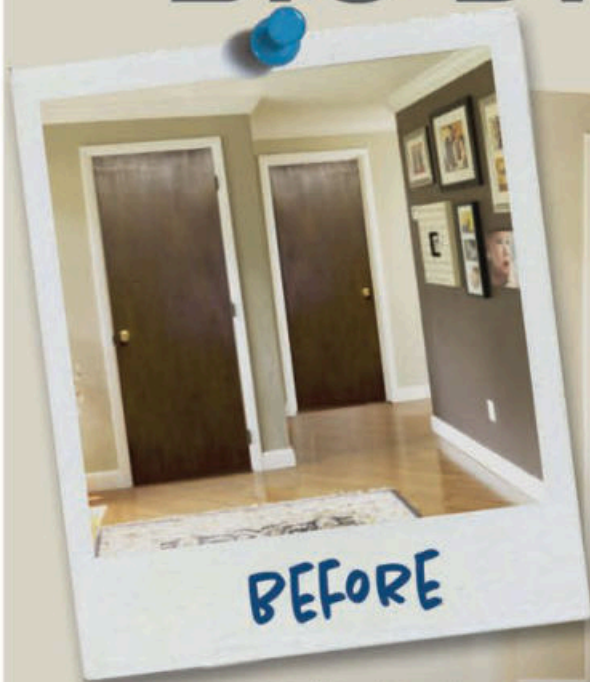
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H&H profile

# Take Your Entertaining Inside

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# This season is an ideal time for a number of landscaping tasks and tips.

BY LINDSEY GETZ

**T**he air is getting crisper and the leaves are starting to change—and it's a beautiful time to be outdoors. It's also a great time to think about ways in which you can enhance your landscape. Although spring is traditionally thought of in terms of landscaping, the fall is actually an ideal time to perform a number of important tasks.

## Plants and Flowers

One of those tasks is planting. The fall can be a wonderful time to install new flowers and plant material around your property.

“Studies have shown that fall is actually the best time for planting—better than the spring,” says Richard Cording Sr., president and licensed landscape architect with CLC Landscape Design. “That’s because the weather conditions are ideal. It’s still sunny but the air is cooler. Roots grow deeper and stronger. Plus, with plants going into dormancy, they have a better chance of survival during the cold winter months than newly installed plants needing to survive the stress of summer heat.” ➔



# Fit for Fall

Image courtesy of CLC Landscape Design



The fall is also the time to plant spring flowering bulbs such as tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, says Sam Waddell, president of SLS Landscaping. To ensure you have beautiful early spring color, you don't want to miss that window.

"The avid gardener will also start planting chrysanthemum and aster that will offer that splash of color for the fall," adds Waddell. "A little bit later into the fall, winter pansies will make an appearance and provide color late in the season and another big push in the early spring."

Chris DeMato, owner of Rock Bottom Landscaping & Fencing, says watering needs are also less intense in the fall (as opposed to spring and summer), so that's appealing to busy homeowners. He notes that there are a number of tasks that are best-performed at this time of year—including seasonal color.

"Removal of any annual flowers can also be done in the fall and then replaced with fall blooms like mums, pansies or kale, to name a few," DeMato says.

"Fall is most known for mums, but it doesn't have to stop there," agrees Michael Pasquarello, landscape architect with Elite Landscaping. "Many varieties of fall annuals are available such as celosia, aster, kale/cabbage and purple fountain grass. Even ornamental peppers offer an array of autumn hues to add a splash



*Your lawn is also a vital aspect of your overall landscape and the autumn months are the ideal time to pay attention to your lawn's overall health.*

of color to container gardens."

Selective pruning can also be completed in the fall, adds Pasquarello.

"Once certain varieties of shrubs and trees have lost their leaves it makes an easier determination of what should be pruned and shaped," he explains. "It is very important not to prune any set buds on flowering plants for the upcoming spring."

Michael Carmack, owner of A & M Landscape Management, agrees that fall can be a great time to shape and prepare many varieties of trees and shrubs for the winter and the next growing season, but adds that pruning can definitely be more complex than a lot of homeowners realize.

"Many common varieties of

deciduous shrubs such as spirea, burning bush and barberry can be cut back hard in the early winter for the reduction of the plant size and shape," he says. "But early blooming varieties of shrubs such as rhododendrons, lilac and forsythia have already started producing buds for the spring and should not be pruned in the fall. Pruning these varieties in the fall and or winter will remove flower buds and reduce the number of flowers the plant produces for the spring. Late-blooming flowering shrubs such as crape myrtle and butterfly bushes can be pruned in the late fall or early spring as they produce flowers on new growth."

When in doubt, leave the pruning to the pros who will know exactly what needs to be pruned and when. This will help ensure that you achieve optimal results and don't negatively impact bloom time.

### A Beautiful Lawn, Too

Your lawn is also a vital aspect of your overall landscape and the autumn months are the ideal time to pay attention to your lawn's overall health. The weather conditions make it the perfect time for services such as aeration and over-seeding.

"Fall is a great time to address any lawn issues you may have with weeds or other problems," says DeMato. "The cooler mornings really help to speed up seed germination."

"Lawns can be much better established in the fall for a couple of key reasons," adds Cording. "For one, they don't have to compete with crabgrass and other spring weeds. But also, the cooler temperatures help stimulate root growth and prevent heat stress. Fall is the perfect time for aeration, seeding, lawn fertilization and even sodding."

Fall is definitely the time to strengthen turf roots to help the root system survive the winter, agrees Carmack. "This will help set the turfgrass up for success," he says. "Getting weed problems under control now [and eliminating growth] will help reduce the amount of weed germination in the early spring ... and allow room for top dressing and over-seeding to fill in voids created in the lawn as the fall provides the best opportunity for new turf seed growth."

### A Focus on Maintenance

There are a number of important property maintenance tasks that can also be taken care of in the fall. Many professional landscape companies offer "fall cleanup," which usually includes services such as leaf and debris pickup and removal. Allowing leaves to sit on your property for too long can actually kill your grass.

"Be sure to not allow fallen leaves to sit on lawns for an extended amount of time," warns Pasquarello. "It is best, at minimal, to do two leaf cleanups in the fall."

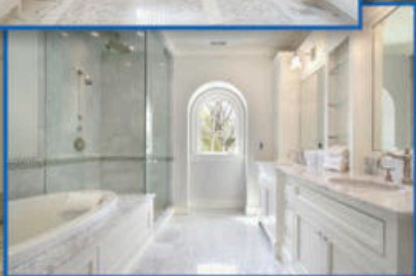
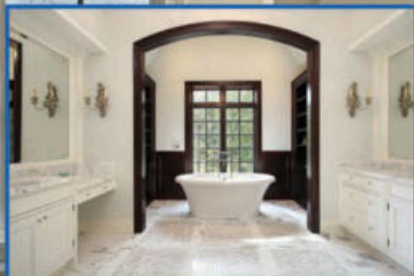




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## Fit for Fall

The first when about 50 percent of the leaves have fallen and a final when they are all down.”

Don't forget to also pay attention to cleaning and maintaining your hardscaped surfaces, as well.

“Fall is also a great time for cleaning up and taking care of your patio surface,” adds Jarrod Nyce, vice president of Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete. “Cleaners and sealers can be applied this time of year because of good temperatures and low humidity. Many people cover up furniture or clean up ponds and water features. Winter preparations are needed for any water features because of freezing.”

### Fall Hardscaping

Of course, if you want to get started with a hardscaping project in the fall, there's really no reason not to pursue it, adds Nyce. Most landscape companies work until the ground freezes so it's quite possible you could have a hardscaping project—such as adding a fire pit or a patio—completed at this time.

“A lot of homeowners think they have to wait until the spring but that's not the case at all,” says Cording. “Fall is a great time to have work completed on your property and most landscape contractors don't begin their off-season until December.”

It's also a great time to start planning ahead for large projects, such as a pool, that you may want completed in the spring, adds Cording.

“Many large-scale projects, like pools, require three to six months of planning prior to be shovel-ready and we have a lot of homeowners who start those projects in the fall and winter,” he says.

With the cooler weather and beautiful days, now's the time to get outside and enjoy it while you can.

As Nyce sums it up: “Winter is just around the corner, so take advantage of the fact that fall is a great time to get outside and enjoy your landscape.”

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# Annual Checkup

With cold weather approaching, now is the time to assess the key parts of your home and make sure they are ready for winter.

**Labor Day weekend has come and gone**, the kids are back to school and soon the cool weather will be rolling in. There is no mistaking that fall is here and winter will soon follow, and now is the time for homeowners to make sure their houses are prepared for the harsh conditions.

Just like annual visits to the family doctor can help people stay on top of their health, a routine checkup on the home can ensure that it is in tip-top shape and functioning properly.

"It's important to winterize and secure your home for the colder months because energy efficiency becomes more vulnerable and taking steps to ensure the efficiency of the home will save money, will help the environment and will also provide a more comfortable living space," says James Russo, co-owner of Lawrenceville Home Improvement Center.

*House & Home* spoke with several area professionals for tips

on which areas of the house must be addressed to prevent failure in the winter and avoid potential financial disaster.

## STARTING THE PROCESS

One of the first steps homeowners can take is a simple walk around their property to look for issues that need attention.

"Make sure all of your outside hose bibs are shut off and opened up, so you don't have any cracked pipes or anything," says Pete Afflerbach of Amiano & Son Design-Build. "Check the windows because the seal can go bad in the summertime, leading to condensation in the window. If you see condensation, most likely you have a bad seal."

With caulk being affected by the extreme heat of the summer, it may be wise to reapply it, particularly around windows.

"Caulking is just a good practice to have so you don't have snow or rain blowing in behind the window and deteriorating the wall," says Jamie Fiel of Renewal by Andersen of Philadelphia and South Jersey. "It's good protection for the home all the way around, because you could get mold behind your siding or something like that. The hot summer months take a toll on the caulk, so that's why I like to double check and make sure it's not cracked anywhere."

Russo suggests waiting for a windy day in the fall to check for a draft around the windows. Adam Parnes of Global Home





Improvement agrees and says fall is a good time to replace older or failing windows.

"We always have people who keep waiting to do their windows, but new windows are not just something where you see a difference in your energy bill; you also see it in the rooms you spend time in," he says. "Don't you want the rooms you spend the most time to be the most comfortable? Waiting an extra year, you might save money but your house is not going to be comfortable."

Both Parnes and Russo recommend fiberglass windows to avoid marked expansion and contraction of the window, which results in a poor fit. Fiel believes the Fibrex material patented by Andersen takes that idea a step further by not moving at all and not being susceptible to changes in climate.

On top of the right material is having an experienced professional overseeing the project. "At the end of the day, the best solution for a draft problem is a well-installed product," Russo says.

As with windows, doors should be checked for any air getting through. A poor fit might be able to be adjusted and weatherstripping can also help.

"If you're not replacing your doors, check your weatherstripping and make sure it's in good shape," Fiel says. "On most doors the weatherstripping is replaceable, especially entry doors. You can go to Home Depot, get a new weatherstrip

and pop it in there. That's always something I take a look at in my home."

### CRUCIAL WINTERIZING STEPS

While a failing roof is certainly an issue any time of year, that is especially true during the winter. Homeowners should take stock before it's too late.

"You can inspect your roof, but if you don't want to get up there you can look at the downspouts and see if you have a lot of shingle granules," says Dave Lyons of DNA Roofing & Siding. "If that's the case, then your roof is getting near end of life."

"Obviously, the worst thing that can happen is you get a bad storm and you get shingles blown off, and then you get a leak. You want to be preemptive and do something before that happens. September, October and November are probably the best times to install a new roof. It's the best time for the crew, the best time for the materials and the temperature is perfect."

Several of the experts we spoke with warned of the dangers of ice damming on the roof.

"If you start having more significant leaks in the middle of the roof or ice damming where the roof meets the gutter, then you should really consider a replacement," Parnes says. "We've seen serious damage from ice damming where the ice builds up along the gutter, and when it melts it's almost like a flood inside your house."



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**"It's important to winterize and secure your home for the colder months because energy efficiency becomes more vulnerable and taking steps to ensure the efficiency of the home will save money, will help the environment and will also provide a more comfortable living space."**

James Russo, co-owner of Lawrenceville Home Improvement Center

All of your walls are wet, all of your insulation is wet, and it's just a nightmare to go through insurance, replace all of that stuff and deal with mold and mildew."

Gutters often get overlooked in the winterizing process, but it is important to keep them cleaned.

"You should really go up in the late fall and make sure the leaves are out of there because the gutters will fill up with water, and the next thing you know you have water freezing under your shingles and you have an ice dam, creating a leak inside your home," Fiel says. "I can't tell you how many times I've seen homeowners have water pouring in their house and it's not even raining, and it's all because of clogged gutters. So that's one of the main things I believe you should do."

Lyons has seen many homeowners dealing with water in their basements this year and recommends painting the basement walls with Drylok and putting a foundation coat on the outside.

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comes from Afflerbach, who warns homeowners to make sure their chimney caps are closed and to check soffit so that animals can't get inside and cause damage.

## BRINGING THE HEAT

The last major piece of winterizing centers on the home's heating system, which will obviously be counted on throughout the season. Chris Cavanaugh of R&D Heating and Cooling recommends having an inspection completed to make sure everything is working mechanically, especially if it's an older system that might need to be replaced before the cold temperatures arrive.

There are also important steps homeowners can take on their own.

"The big thing is using the change of seasons to remind yourself to change your air filter," Cavanaugh says. "Especially as we start entering flu season, you want to make sure that thing is clean. As it gets colder and you shut the

windows, you're trapping air inside the house and it's just recirculating, so you want to make sure it's filtered as much as possible."

Cavanaugh also suggests getting the humidifier ready to run by changing the pad, hosing off the outdoor air condenser and looking into a condenser cover, particularly in a wooded area.

"[In addition], if your [HVAC] system has a UV light it's a good time to make sure the bulb is still working," he says. "Typically the UV bulbs are good for roughly two years. As we move into the flu season, it's best to make sure your system is doing everything it can to help fight the germs."

With more and more homeowners opting for generators, Cavanaugh also stresses that yearly maintenance and weekly testing are critical to ensure it will operate when called upon.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Some of the measures for winterization can be knocked out in a weekend, while others will be more

expensive and require a professional. Either way, it is important to remember that a home needs to be prepared for the rough season ahead.

"All homeowners should definitely do checks around the house," Afflerbach says. "Anytime we're

going to have bad weather, you want to prepare so that way it doesn't cost you more in the long run. Your home is your largest investment in your life, so you want to take the steps to make sure everything is doing what it should be." **H&H**



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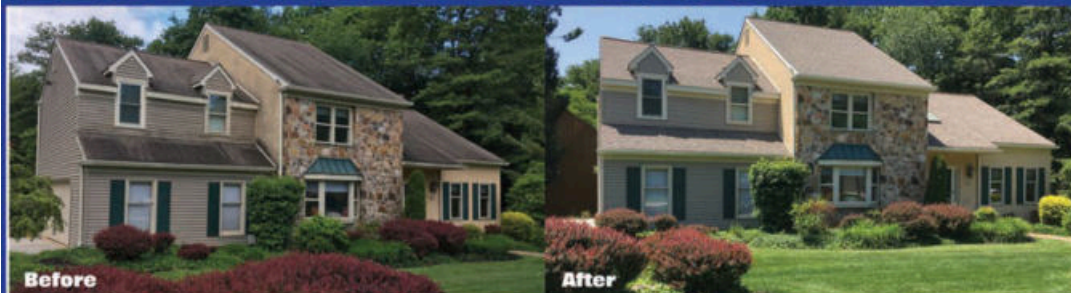
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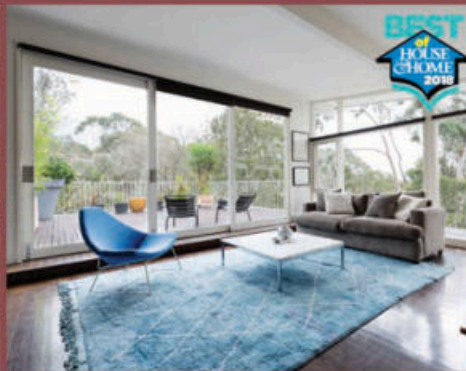


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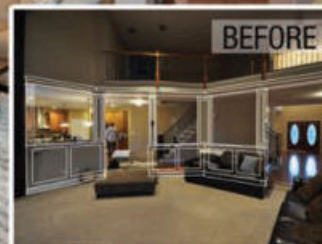
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