

10 Things

I've Learned That Make My Job Easier

1. Nix the Graffiti. “If you find graffiti in your community, remove it quickly—fresh paint is easier to remove than dry paint. Paint over ruined painted siding. Scrub or pressure-wash brick or stucco walls.”

2. Oil Up the Garage Door. “After hundreds of trips up and down, roller shafts become bent, hinge bolts loosen and rubber seals rip. Oil new shafts every six months; drill completely through the door to install bolts; and replace seals with the long flange facing into the garage in cold regions, to keep it from freezing.”

3. Identify Snow Blower Snags. “If your snow blower doesn't seem to be operating as efficiently as it should, check the common culprits: the engine, the drive belt and the clearance between the auger and the top of the scraper blade.”

4. Save Yourself from Snow Pain. “Use a rubber tip floor squeegee to remove snow from porches and stairs. Coat both sides of your shovels with salad oil or cooking spray to keep snow from sticking. Move heavy, wet snow with a steel garden rake to save yourself from an aching back later.”

5. Extend Your Caulking Reach. “If you have to get caulk into a tight spot, tape a flexible drinking straw to the tip of your caulk gun. This will help you get to those hard-to-reach nooks.”

6. Props for Under the Sink. “Before you go to work on a plumbing job under the sink, prop a small scrap piece of plywood on empty paint cans in front of the cabinet. You'll be much more comfortable lying under the sink without the edge of the cabinet digging into your back.”

7. Save Energy Costs. “Although using allergen filters may seem to help stop allergies, they may lead to higher heating bills from decreased air flow. Use regular filters sprayed with dusting aids to maximize heat efficiency and to trap more allergens.”

8. Maintain the Fridge. “When turning an apartment, clean the refrigerator condenser for one to five minutes; wipe the door gasket for two minutes; clean the freezer vents for five minutes; and set the temperature controls to the lowest setting until move-in.”

9. Eliminate Odors. “Bacteria build-up, not a plumbing problem, is often the cause of garbage disposal odors. Simply run some ice cubes and baking soda through the disposals every two weeks to remove offensive smells.”

10. Paint Tile Imperfections. “If you have small chips in colored bathroom tile, you may be able to use nail polish to fix imperfections. It comes in a variety of glossy colors and is easy to apply with the built-in applicator.” ■

If you would like to be considered for a future *End Points* column, please contact Kate Pierce at 703/797-0619 or kate@naahq.org.

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Tony O'Dell (left) with J.C. Hart Company President John C. Hart Jr.