

Open House Directory | New Listing Directory

SIouxLAND HOMES MAGAZINE

 @SiouxlandHomesMag

Oct. 8, 2022

HOME OF THE WEEK

**4531 Whitetail
Elk Creek, SC, IA
\$449,750**

Enjoy this beautiful 1578 sq ft ranch with 2 bedrooms both with walk-in closets, 2 baths and 3 stall heated garage. LL has daylight windows for future finish. Enter this lovely ranch home to open floor plan with custom kitchen with island, quartz tops, walk-in pantry, \$4,500 appliance allowance, dining, and great room connectivity. Consistent LVT flooring

throughout the space for versatile and flexible living. Primary suite includes tray ceiling, plush carpets, custom walk-in closet, and 3/4 bath with walk-in tile shower and double vanity. Upgrades in this spec home: 74" fireplace, heated garage, quartz tops in kitchen and baths, 85 gallon water heater, rock landscape beds. You will love this floor plan. HOA \$250 per month.



OPEN SUNDAY 10/9 FROM 12:00-1:00

Come stroll through
The Residence at Elk Creek,
Multiple open houses and townhomes on tour



For more information about the Home of
the Week, contact:

Pam Kavanaugh Edwards
712-259-4074 • Licensed in IA & SD



Let your headboard SHINE

KARLYN KUBIN | Tribune News Service

Snuggle season is going to be here before we know it! When the cold rain and crisp wind of a fall morning start to join the morning rush, there is nothing more tempting than hitting the snooze button and curling back into your warm bedding cocoon of comfort. While I love looking at beautiful bedding during all times of the year, it is especially rewarding during these upcoming colder months!

Our second floor is such a delight to behold with all the textiles and colors that grace our beds. However, it is more than the duvets that catch my eye! I have also noticed a big trend towards wood bed frames and uniquely upholstered headboards. I have brought in some unique (and dare I say, bold) styles that are sure to steal the show from the pillows, duvets and coverlets we love so much!

Preppy Pink and Green. Now this is a wooden bed frame with some flair! I love a pop of color, especially in an unexpected place. Combining the classic shape of a wood frame with a bright hue brings maximum interest to your space with minimal details. Keeping the bedding simple with soft whites allows for the frame to shine and be the true star of this bedding display. While bright colors such as lime green can sometimes be considered juvenile, the elegance of the simple bamboo-inspired headboard allows it to transition into a beautiful bed for all ages.

A Touch of Wild. Another one of my favorite frames is this sophisticated and dramatic dark stained spindle bedframe. The intricate details of the spindles and the towering height of the headboard makes it just as much of a statement as the bright bamboo piece above. For this moody, almost black, wood frame we have kept the bedding light and full of texture. This creates a nice balance for the bed and keeps it from getting too dark and heavy. This is also a great frame to pop with pillows! The drama of the frame can stand up to busy patterns and textiles without being overpowered.



Combining the classic shape of a wood frame with a bright hue brings maximum interest to your space with minimal details.

HANDOUT PHOTOS/TNS



The intricate details of the spindles and the towering height of the headboard make a statement.

Elegant Leather. If wood frames aren't your dream, upholstered frames come in all shapes, sizes and patterns! While we offer frames in many of our fan favorite fabrics, I can't get over the simple beauty of this rich tufted leather look. Leather adds a warmth to furniture that is hard to otherwise find, which is especially perfect for a cozy bed! Not only is it elegant and beautiful, but it elevates whatever bedding you add to it as well! The earthy tones in the leather pull out the crimson hues in the plaid pillows and duvet making for a bed perfect for a lodge- or cabin-inspired space.

There are so many ways to customize furniture—the imagination can truly run wild! Until next time – happy decorating!

This column was adapted from www.nellhills.com.

DEAR MONTY

Should I have my brand-new home inspected?

RICHARD MONTGOMERY
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Even the very best contractors, or their subcontractors, can make mistakes.

Dear Monty: Should I have my brand-new home inspected? I am in the process of building a new house. My agent told me that, on completion, I should have an inspection. My builder informs me that it is inspected three times during the process and once after completion. They use an independent inspector to check the house. In your opinion, is it necessary for me to hire someone to inspect the house after it is completed?

Monty's Answer: It is unclear in your message where you are in the home building process. Allow me to start at the beginning. Some components will be too costly to change or investigate if you are too far along in the process. Many municipal inspections purposefully occur before encasing the work inside a wall, under concrete or the lawn.

Even the very best contractors, or their subcontractors, can make mistakes. Based on my experience, here is a link to the level of investigation a careful

consumer may consider when choosing a builder. With the current overheated market, some builders may be reluctant to take the time to respond. Still, you can shorten the list of questions.

The roadmap

Your contract with the builder is the roadmap to completion with no detours. For example, a reader recently asked a question in a dispute over the location of a window. In the process of answering their question, it became clear that the buyer signed a contract without a house plan. Most builders want floor plans, elevation drawings and specifications in the contract to avoid such a situation. Change orders made during construction typically add additional costs. If you have a building plan, a change in correcting a construction error is on the contractor.

Buyers treat the process differently

Some eager customers show up almost daily toward the end of the workday to watch their new home come to life. Others may rarely visit the construction site. Some time ago, a client building a home in a cross-country move signed a contract and never set foot in their new home until they took occupancy. While multiple inspectors visit periodically to ensure code compliance, their inspections are specifically for a particular component, as in electrical wiring or plumbing. Municipal inspectors are not inspecting the entire house. The code and inspector experience and diligence vary by state and municipality.

A suggestion

Ask the builder to see a copy of the

inspection before signing off on the construction. The term "independent" implies impartiality. Suppose the inspector has a relationship with the builder: a relative, a golf buddy or a neighbor. In that case, human nature suggests impartiality is at risk of being compromised.

Turning a blind eye to an inspection issue is more likely as the volume of inspections increase.

Here is a link to an article written for an insurance company that insures home inspectors you may find to be helpful. Depending on what you observe as you consider the value of a second inspection, consider ordering one of your own if any red flags appear. It seems a bit unusual your agent suggested it. Is it possible your agent knows something?

Richard Montgomery is the author of "House Money—An Insider's Secrets to Saving Thousands When You Buy or Sell a Home." He advocates industry reform and offers readers unbiased real estate advice. Follow him on Twitter at @dearmonty, or DearMonty.com.

ASK A PLUMBER

Bathroom budget can choose faucet style

ED DEL GRANDE
Tribune News Service

Question: Dear Ed, I'm running the numbers for my new bathroom and noticed I can choose between a two-handle "widespread" faucet or a "center-set" faucet. Are there big differences between these types of faucets to help me with my choice?

Ted, New York state

Answer: Centerset faucets are deck mounted with 4 inches between handles. Widespread faucets are made up with separate components and space between handles can be about 8 to 16 inches apart. But, the big difference can be the extra costs between installing a widespread bathroom faucet over a centerset faucet. These costs may determine what style you choose. Some extra costs to be aware of are: Widespread faucets can be more expensive just to purchase the faucet itself. Also, because widespread faucets are sold in separate pieces, labor costs may be higher to install. Finally, special order bathroom sinks or counter tops may be



KOHLER

A widespread faucet may be more expensive than a centerset.

needed. Bottom line: A widespread bathroom faucet can give you design impact, while a centerset faucet can give you savings!

Master Contractor/Plumber Ed Del Grande is known internationally as the author of the book "Ed Del Grande's House Call," the host of TV and Internet shows, and a LEED green associate. Visit eddelgrande.com or write eadeld@cs.com. Always consult local contractors and codes.



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LISTINGS NEEDED!

I have buyers in various price points for South Dakota & Iowa

PLEASE GIVE ME A CALL OR TEXT FOR A FREE MARKET ANALYSIS!

MORNINGSIDE, SC



NEW LISTING

1021 So Alice, SC, IA 51106 • \$125,000

Welcome Home to this sweet and amazing updated 2 bedroom 1 bath bungalow with character and charm as you step onto the covered front porch and through the new front door. Convenient location to schools and shopping. Move in Ready with NEW H/PAC, 2022 exterior/interior paint, shingles (2019), New(2020) all plumbing/sewer lines, main electrical panel and wiring, tile bath, LVP flooring all doors, some windows, new blinds, kitchen cabinetry & appliances, plumbing and light fixtures. Beautiful backyard w/ alley access.

ELK CREEK, SC



OPEN SUNDAY Oct. 9 from 12:00-1:00

4531 Whitetail Court • \$449,750

Enjoy the beautiful 1576 sq ft ranch with 2 bedrooms both with walk-in closets, 2 baths and 3 stall heated garage. LL has daylight windows for future finish. Enter the lovely ranch home to open floor plan with custom hickory island, quartz tops, walk-in pantry, \$4,500 appliance allowance, dining and great room, consistent LVP flooring throughout the space for resale and flexible living. Primary suite includes tray ceiling, dual closets, custom walk-in closet, and 3/4 bath with walk-in tile shower and double vanity. Upgrades in this spec home: 14" fireplace, heated garage, quartz tops in kitchen and bath, 65 gallon water heater, rock landscape leads. You will love the floor plan. H/A \$250 per month.

ELK CREEK, SC



OPEN SUNDAY Oct. 9 from 12:00-1:00

5224 Lynx Court • \$475,000

Story & 1/2, 1655 sq ft, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bath, oversized 2 stall heated garage. Main floor primary suite with walk-in tile shower, double vanity & walk-in closet, open kitchen with island, and LR with fireplace, main floor laundry and guest 1/2 bath. Upper level has 2 large bedrooms with walk-in closets and full bath with double vanity and storage areas. Full basement with approximately 917 sq ft of future finish ready for your ideas with rough ins for wet bar and another bath. Convenient Sioux City neighborhood and Spil Bluff Schools. H/A \$250 per month includes Club House, fitness center & pool, snow removal, landscape mowing/trimming, irrigation.

ELK CREEK, SC



OPEN SUNDAY Oct. 9 from 12:00-1:00

5219 Lynx Court • \$329,750

New Construction - estimated completion Nov. 2022. Take advantage of the 10 year tax abatement. Gorgeous Elk Creek Community w/ pond and Club House, pool, fitness center and H/A also handles lawn care, irrigation & snow removal, \$250/mo. Come and see this 1398 sq ft townhome w/ 2 bdrm/2 bath, 2 stall heated garage and tons of additional custom amenities and upgrades included at a spec home price: LVT, 60" electric fireplace, quartz tops, walk-in pantry, & heated garage.

New "build-to-suit" lot listings:

2644 Albatross/Lot 25 Claret View - \$142,900
2682 Albatross/Lot 27 Claret View - \$162,900
17 Spanish Bay - Dakota Dunes - New Price - \$250,000

If you aren't working with an agent, you are missing out.

Pamela J. Kavanaugh Edwards
 Broker Associate • Licensed in IA & SD • Call: 712-259-4074
 335 Sioux Point Road Dakota Dunes, SD 57049
 www.dunesrealtysouthdakota.com



ASK ANGI

How should I clean for houseguests?

PAUL F. P. POGUE
Ask Angi

Sometimes you have fair warning when guests are coming over, such as for major holiday events. Other times people drop in with little or no warning. Whatever the case, you want your home to make the best impression. If you're short on time, here are some tips on how to quickly prep your home for maximum comfort and give your guests a great experience. Fear not — you can accomplish quite a bit of cleaning in a short amount of time if need be!

■ Walk through your house and think like a visitor. What are the things you notice first that might not look so great? Pay special attention to common areas, guest bedrooms and bathrooms.



■ Prioritize what needs to be cleaned first. You can always close the door to your home office, your own bedroom and

other areas guests aren't likely to wander.

■ Be aware of your guest's needs. For instance, if they have allergies to particular scents, avoid cleaning materials that use them.

■ Wash all the bedding and other linens in the guest rooms.

■ Wipe down commonly touched surfaces such as countertops, doorknobs and light switches. For the best results to get rid of germs and viruses, use a two-step process. Clean with soap and water first, then disinfect using a bleach or alcohol solution. Store-bought alcohol wipes are good for the second step.

■ Give your oven and refrigerator a good cleaning. The oven will probably get a lot of use, so you want to make sure it's in the best order. Remove all outdated food from your fridge to make room for leftovers.

■ Check all your bulbs, indoors and out. Sometimes it's easy not to notice a burned-out bulb in an area you can walk through with your eyes closed, but your guests won't have that familiarity.

Prep the bathroom

You want your bathroom(s) in particular to give your guests a good impression. Give each bathroom they might use a good wipe-down, particularly the toilet, shower basin, sink, floor and fixtures.

DREAMSTIME/TNS

When cleaning for surprise guests, prioritize the most important tasks and areas first.

Make sure the supplies are up to date. Clean expired medicine from the cabinet. Make sure soap, towels, shampoo, conditioner and a hair dryer are available. Stock the cabinet and sink with commonly used items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, disposable razors, feminine products, allergy medication, over-the-counter painkillers or cotton swabs.

Leave room for your guest's stuff. An empty, flat surface will be perfect for their own toiletries.

If you lack the time yourself, you can always hire a professional housecleaner for the job. Housecleaning services cost between \$40 and \$80 per hour, per cleaner, and the average one-time job runs between \$150 and \$200. Keep in mind you might have a hard time getting a housecleaner on short notice if you don't have an existing

relationship with one, and could pay a premium for same-day scheduling.

Tweet your home care questions with #AskAngi and we'll try to answer them in a future column.

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Leave room for your guest's stuff. An empty, flat surface will be perfect for their own toiletries.

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Make old tiles look new by regrouting

JAMES DULLEY
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear James:
The grout on the bathroom tiles is crumbling and looks dark even after using bleach. I don't want to remove the tile and redo it. Can I just replace the grout myself? — Damon W.

Dear Damon:
You probably won't have to remove any tiles in the discolored grout areas. Where the grout is crumbling, water may have gotten behind the tiles and loosened them and damaged the wallboard. Carefully pry on those tiles and remove any that are loose. Examine the wallboard for deterioration.

When there are just a few loose tiles and the wallboard is good, you can stick them to the wall again. Don't just regROUT them and think this will keep them in place. After you have taken care of any unruly tiles, you must remove all of the old grout. This is the most difficult job in the whole project. Unfortunately, you cannot just add more new grout over the old bad spots.

Today there are many tools available at home center stores to help make this part a little easier. There are even electric tools that can speed the process along, but if you use them, be careful. These can sometime be difficult to hold on to and can cause damage to your tiles.

If you are nervous about handling a power tool, you can also just use a utility knife, chisel and hammer, or an awl for narrow areas. Make sure you also remove all of the caulk out of the tub's corners.

Some people's skin can become irritated from the grout and often pieces will fly once you have loosened them. To protect yourself, wear rubber gloves and safety goggles. To protect your bathtub, lay down a drop cloth to keep it from getting scratches.

Start removing the grout at the most unattractive point. The section that is

HOME Do-it-Yourself

Tile Regrouting

Instead of wasting time and money trying to re-tile the entire surface, regrouting tile can dramatically improve the appearance.

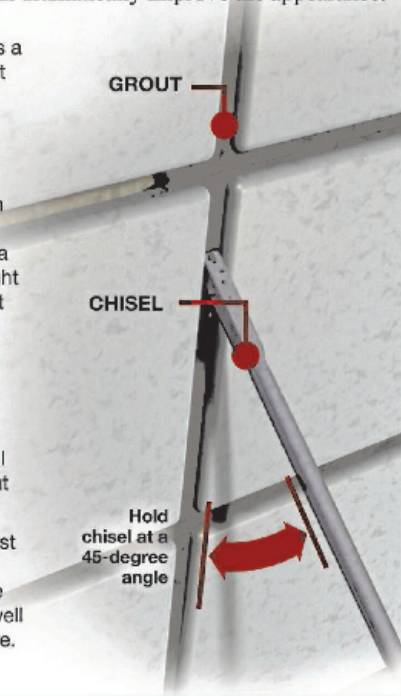
STEP 1 Hand tools such as a chisel, carbide-tipped grout saw and a carbide-tipped grout scraper make grout removal easier.

STEP 2 Start by cutting a groove in the old grout with the grout saw. Next, chip away any loose grout with a hammer and chisel. Use light hammer taps and clean out joints of any chips or dust. Tap the chisel toward the center of the grout line to prevent chipping of the ceramic tile.

STEP 3 A grout scraper will help pull the loose grout out of the joint.

STEP 4 Vacuum up any dust or debris left after the removal process. Clean the newly opened grout lines well so the new grout will adhere.

Creators.com Bob Kast



already falling apart will be your best option. Try to be very careful until about a one-inch section has been removed.

Once this spot is open, you can be a little more aggressive when removing the grout. To remove the next spot, chisel in the direction of the last removed area. Continue to work away from the cleared area so the old grout will crumble out.

Once this hard part is completed, you can mix and apply the new grout. Smear the grout in small areas (a few square feet) using a sponge-faced float or a squeegee. You will want to use a circular motion when applying the grout and take care not to spread it into the corners at the tile/tub seam. Wipe off the freshly grouted area with a damp rag or sponge until the tiles are clean.

Finally, apply caulk to seal the seam at the tub, joint corners and wherever the tile meets a different material. If you don't want to watch all of your hard work go down the drain, make sure you allow the new grout and caulk enough drying time.

Send your questions to Here's How, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.

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FALL OUTDOOR PROJECTS

CATHY HOBBS
Tribune News Service

With fall in full swing and winter soon approaching, now may be the ideal time to get any outstanding outdoor projects out of the way. There may also be the desire, with the change of seasons to execute not only necessary repairs and preventive maintenance but also upgrade to include some outdoor entertainment that can be enjoyed during colder months.

Here are some ideas as it relates to fall projects.

1. House painting. Looking to give your home a refresher? While many choose to paint in the spring, the fall may be a good alternative season to refresh the outside of your home.

2. Outdoor Kitchens. Outdoor kitchens can be basic or elaborate. Some companies will even create an all in one unit that just has to be hooked up with the help of professionals such as an electrician and/or plumber. If you live in a colder climate, you will need to winterize your outdoor kitchen before freezing temperatures kick in.

3. Saunas. With so many opting for a “staycation,” saunas, which are relatively easy to install, allow for an appealing outdoor oasis.

4. Landscaping. The fall is a good time to give your landscape a “fall cleanup.” Pulling weeds and mulching can help prepare your landscape for the winter chill.

5. Fire pits. Fire pits are more popular than ever and are especially enjoyable on a chilly fall night!

6. Hot tubs. The transition from summer to fall is typically a time when people look to close up pools and open hot tubs. Hot tubs can come in different sizes and shapes and remain a popular outdoor addition.



Gutter and exterior maintenance can play an important role when it comes to fall cleanup.

7. Decks and patios. Decks can be built all year round and the fall is the perfect time to prepare the foundation and supports to build through the winter.

8. Pools. Many people looking to enjoy a summer pool often start planning and even building in the fall.

9. Repaving and resurfacing. In anticipation of winter potholes, now maybe a good time to execute any driveway or street repairs.

10. Gutter repair or replacement. This is an important part of maintaining your home.

Cathy Hobbs, based in New York City, is an Emmy Award-winning television host and a nationally known interior design and home staging expert with offices in New York City, Boston and Washington, D.C. Contact her at info@cathyhobbs.com or visit her website at www.cathyhobbs.com.



An outdoor kitchen is a popular amenity.
DESIGN RECIPES/
TNS

Six reasons for an agent 'no response' to an offer

RICHARD MONTGOMERY
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Monty: Our agent (buyer's agent) presented our "as-is" full-price offer to the seller's agent. The seller's agent has not responded, and it's been 72 hours. What are my options to get the seller's agent to respond?

Monty's Answer: A critical piece of information influencing my answer is missing. What is the acceptance date? You gave the seller a specific date to react to your offer. If that date has not passed, the proposal is still active. If the acceptance date has passed, the offer has expired. If it has expired, the seller has already reacted. They have rejected your offer by not responding.

The active offer

If the offer remains active, it is unclear whether your buyer agent has attempted to speak with the seller's agent. Successful negotiations most often require good communication. Assuming your agent tried to communicate, here are some (not all) possible reasons the listing agent has not responded:



No. 1: The seller is negotiating with a different buyer, who may have offered over the listed price.

No. 2: The listing agent has discounted your offer because they may not like an "as-is" offer. Check this link, <https://dearmonty.com/5-as-is-myths-selling-buying-home/>.

No. 3: The listing agent has dismissed your agent; this often happens when an agent has a "hard-to-deal-with" reputation.

No. 4: The listing agent may attempt to find a better "double dip" for both sides.

No. 5: They have accepted another offer, which could mean you and your agent may have misread the market.

Clarify 'as is'

When you are a buyer making an "as is" offer, be confident you are communicating what you mean by "as is." Are you waiving the home inspection, or are you waiving the seller from making any repairs the inspection reveals? The extraordinary sellers' market of the past two-plus years has created a new problem: homebuyers waiving home inspections. It is impossible to know if these inspection-free offers were inspired by creative homebuyers or by some real estate agents taking advantage of the situation. Because an agent has more to gain (a sale) and nothing to lose (they do not pay for defects found after the buyer moves in), the practice likely originated with agents. Here is a Dear Monty article about the potential consequences of skipping the home inspection, <https://dearmonty.com/is-it-wise-to-waive-a-home-inspection/>.

Home sellers are learning that a home inspection before they sell has several advantages besides reducing their potential liability. If the seller understands this, your "as-is" offer could be a turnoff.

Actions to produce a listing agent response

Because you have more information than I do, regardless of why the agent has not responded, here are several options that may motivate an agent response. No. 1: Contact the listing agent directly to get a status report. If they do not respond within 24 hours, move to option No. 2: Either amend your active offer or submit a new bid (hopefully after reviewing this response). No. 3: Contact your agent's broker and request they contact the listing agent's broker. Do not ask your agent to transmit the message but escalate the importance by doing it directly. No. 4: Contact your agent's broker, explain what has transpired and ask if you can be reassigned with a new agent.

Richard Montgomery is the author of "House Money: An Insider's Secrets to Saving Thousands When You Buy or Sell a Home." He advocates industry reform and offers readers unbiased real estate advice. Follow him on Twitter at @dearmonty, or at DearMonty.com.

Newly Listed Directory

Saturday, Oct. 8, 2022

MORNINGSIDE, SC



1021 So Alice, SC, IA 51106 • \$125,000

Welcome Home to this sweet and amazingly updated- 2 bedroom/1 bath bungalow with character and charm as you step onto the covered front porch and through the new front door. Convenient location to schools and shopping. Move in Ready with NEW: HVAC 2022 and exterior/interior paint, shingles (2019). New(2020) all plumbing/sewer lines, main electrical panel and wiring, tile bath, LVP flooring, all doors, some windows, new blinds, kitchen cabinetry & appliances, plumbing and light fixtures. Beautiful backyard w/ alley access.

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OF SIOUXLAND**Pam Kavanaugh Edwards****712.259.4074****Tim Swanson****712.253.9117****ELK CREEK, SC****OPEN SUNDAY 10/9 FROM 12:00-1:00****5224 Lynx Court • \$475,000**

Story & 1/2, 1855 sq ft, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bath, oversized 2 stall heated garage. Main floor primary suite with walk-in tile shower, double vanity & walk-in closet, open kitchen with island, and LR with fireplace, main floor laundry and guest 1/2 bath. Upper level has 2 large bedrooms with walk-in closets and full bath with double vanity and storage areas. Full basement with approximately 917 sq ft of future finish waiting for your ideas with rough ins for wet bar and another bath. Convenient Sioux City neighborhood and Sgt Bluff Schools. HOA \$250 per month includes, Club House, fitness center & pool, snow removal, lawn care mowing/fertilizing, irrigation.

WHISPERING CREEK, SC**NEW CONSTRUCTION****2655 Albatross • \$729,750**

2132 sq ft ranch w/ walk-out lower level. Main floor: 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, laundry and 3 stall heated garage. From your first step into this front entry and you are stunned by the wall of windows, hardwood floors, wooden beam tray ceiling and contemporary design elements and gorgeous built-ins alongside the electric fireplace. This open concept is total function and luxury all in one. There is a covered concrete deck right off the dining area which is fabulous for entertaining or enjoying that quiet cup of morning coffee. Primary suite features large walk-in closet & the luxurious bath has dbl vanity, tile walk-in shower and soaking tub. 10 year tax abatement.

335 SIOUX POINT ROAD, DAKOTA DUNES, SD 605.422.1413**WWW.DUNESREALTYSIOUXLAND.COM**

Wait till ornamental grasses are brown to cut them back

JEFF RUGG

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Question: We are discussing when to cut down our ornamental grasses. I want to see them last through the winter and let the birds eat any seeds. My husband wants to cut them down in the fall because he says it is easier then. The plants are still upright and not beaten down. We can burn the grass in the fall when we are doing fires in the fire pit. They make a good fire starter. In the spring they are wet, and we don't do cookouts in the fire pit. He doesn't want grass in the compost pile because of the seeds. Is there a better time to cut them down for the health of the grass?

Answer: Don't cut them down when there are still green grass blades. In the fall, plants are transferring carbohydrates from leaves into storage areas, such as roots, tubers and bulbs. Once the leaves are brown, it doesn't matter to the plant if the dead parts are cut off. However, in cold climates, the tall grass collects more snow, which helps insulate and water the grass root system.

It is easier to do landscaping tasks when the weather is pleasant. Fall is fine and if you are in an area prone to wild-fires, getting rid of the dry grass is a good idea. For many gardeners, late winter or very early spring is when we are looking for something to do outside to help curb our cabin fever. This is a perfectly good landscaping task that can be done after the snow has melted and before most plants have begun growing in the spring.

Planting garlic

As many gardeners know, fall is a good time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. What some gardeners don't know is that garlic is a bulb in the lily family that can be planted in the fall for harvesting next summer. They should go in the ground four to six weeks ahead of when the ground usually starts to freeze. Plant individual garlic cloves an inch or two deep and about six inches apart in an unused part of the garden. They may need a few inches of mulch to protect them from drying out over the winter.

The two main groups of garlic are called hardneck and softneck. Hardneck garlic has a strong flower stalk in the spring that comes up from the center of the group of cloves. It does best in colder climates, like



It's fall: Time to plant spring-flowering bulbs.

those that grow bluegrass lawns. Soft-neck garlic doesn't have a strong flower stalk and has cloves that are stacked up on each other. It grows best in warmer climates, like those with Bermuda grass lawns. There are other differences between the two groups. The softneck varieties are capable of being stored for over a year and their flavor is milder.

Amaryllis

Speaking of bulbs, if you have amaryllis bulbs that have been growing outdoors for the summer, it is time to bring them back indoors. They should not be exposed to a frost. Let the plants dry out until the leaves fall over and turn yellow. Don't be in a hurry to cut the leaves off. They need to transfer nutrients into the bulb before they die. Cut them off leaving a short neck on the top of the bulb.

Leave the dormant amaryllis bulbs in a cool, dry location for a month to three months. They don't have to be stored in the flowerpots. When you are ready for them to bloom again, plant them in new potting soil, water thoroughly, and put them in a warm, sunny spot. Don't water again until roots develop or until the soil dries out to prevent the bulb from rotting.

When the leaves start to grow, keep them in a room with bright sunshine and temperatures in the 50s to 60s preferred. Warm temperatures will speed up growth, but it will take six to eight weeks for them to bloom. Once they are blooming, cool temperatures will allow the flowers to last much longer.

Email questions to Jeff Rugg at info@greenerview.com.