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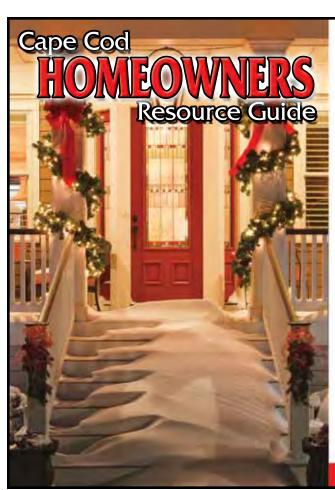
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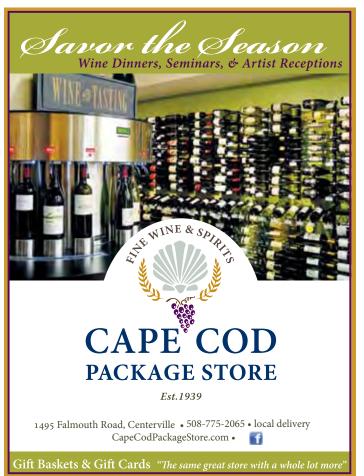


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# Holiday Entertaining Made Easy

The holidays are just around the corner, which means family and friends will soon get together at your home to celebrate. Whether you're hosting large or intimate gatherings, having a game plan in place well in advance of your event is essential. With a few simple steps, you can jump-start holiday entertaining - and increase your own enjoyment at the event.

#### Theme it

Whether you're hosting your get-together in November, December or into the new year, there's simplicity in creating a theme and sticking to it. For inspiration, check out your favorite holiday films or books; or pe-

ruse home and garden magazines or Pinterest for creative entertaining ideas. Once you have a theme chosen, the rest of the details will quickly begin to fall into place. The theme can involve the types of food and drink served, the colors and types of decorations you decide to use, or even your guests' attire.

#### Plan it

Send out invitations a month prior to the get-together. Invites can be extended through the mail in a creative way, like a holiday card or a small gift box or cookie tin that guests can bring to the party to take home edible favors. To save time and money, manage party invitations online, with a website

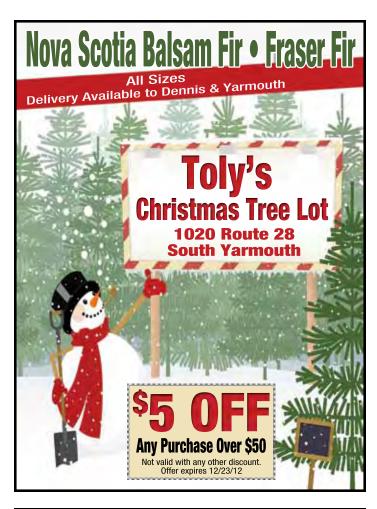
like evite.com or pingg.com. These sites can help you keep track of guest lists, send reminders and even generate post-event thank-you notes, ensuring you remain on-task, with minimal effort.

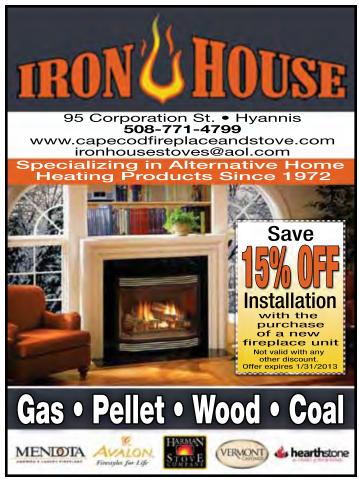


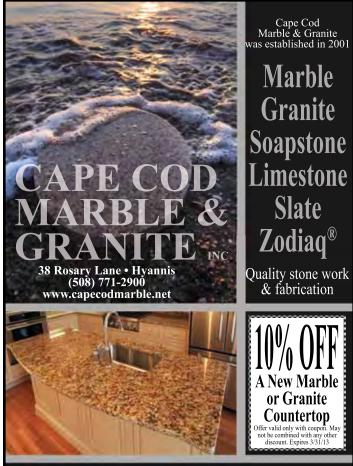
Two weeks prior to your party date, take some time to prepare the menu. This will ensure ample time to pick up all the needed grocery items, find any specialty items and avoid last minute runs to the store. Search for recipes with common ingredients and varying preparation times, so you can space out your cooking and baking in the days leading up to your event. Begin setting tables and decorating several days prior to your party.

#### Stage it

Consider whether your gathering will be a sit-down meal or more of a standing-room affair. If you're only serving drinks and hors d'oeuvres, consider clearing out areas for guests to converse. To keep guests mingling from room to room, strategically space out the food and beverages throughout the areas. If you are serving a full-course meal, be sure you have ample seating for everyone. Think creatively about places for your guests to sit. End tables can be covered with decorative tablecloths and placed in front of a sofa for additional, comfortable settings. Saw horses, a wood board, and a tablecloth can make a quick and easy table in a pinch. (BPT)









# **Color Tips From The Pros:**

### How to bring bold hues into the kitchen and bath

Why is it that some people can do daring things with color in their living rooms or bedrooms, but stick with the strongholds of beige and white in their kitchens and baths? As bright hues are surfacing in kitchen and bath design trends, existing oft-neutral palettes make it easy to introduce bold splashes.

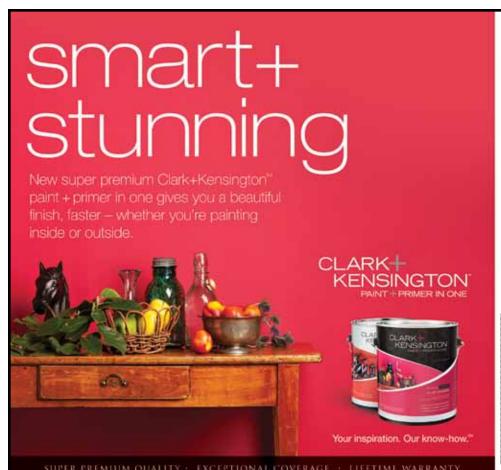
Whether it's with a vibrant wall color, a new faucet finish, a playful backsplash or even a brightly-colored sink, adding color instantly creates a personalized and pleasing look in your kitchen or bath. Debating the best way to bring new colors into your home? Consider these tips straight from two industry professionals:

- Find your perfect color match. Before you begin mixing and matching paint chips with backsplash tile, identify a color that has long resonated with your own design or fashion aesthetic. "If a client isn't able to answer this question instantly, all I have to do is peruse the closet," says Kohler interior designer Diana Schrage. "Chances are that repeated pop of color worn over the years belongs in his or her home decor as much as in his or her wardrobe." Once that signature color has been identified, Schrage says homeowners often feel more confident introducing those brighter hues in a more permanent manner.
- Harness the power of color. Color can have a big impact on mood and what happens in a space. Restaurants and retail outlets often enlist color psychologists to select colors that will encourage diners to splurge on dessert or draw shoppers into a store. So harness that same power in your home. Kohler recently made a color splash in the kitchen and bathroom with four bright and bold colors created in a partnership with color evangelist and design guru Jonathan Adler. Want your kitchen to be a comfortable space for your family that encourages an appetite in the



pickiest of eaters? Incorporate orange. If you long for a peaceful bathroom oasis, bring in calming blues and soothing greens. "Blue in all of its many shades is the universal beloved color in the whole color world," Adler says. "A crisp light blue is refreshing, calming and serene, it's like taking a dip in the Mediterranean itself."

- Choose a focal point. Incorporating color doesn't require a complete redo. Instead, focus on a smaller project within the space to create a focal point or accent. Color can act as an eye magnet to create a focal-point-worthy design statement that draws a room together visually and gives you a solid foundation on which to build out the room's design theme.
- Do your homework. If you're considering a fresh coat of paint, a bright backsplash or bold new sink, there are a variety of apps and websites to see how new colors can best be applied to your space. Once the research is done and the concept is complete, conquer any lingering hesitation by remembering Adler's last bit of advice: "Incorporating an exclamation of color in a more permanent manner, such as a sink, resonates not only with your own design aesthetic, it means more permanent happiness." (BPT)



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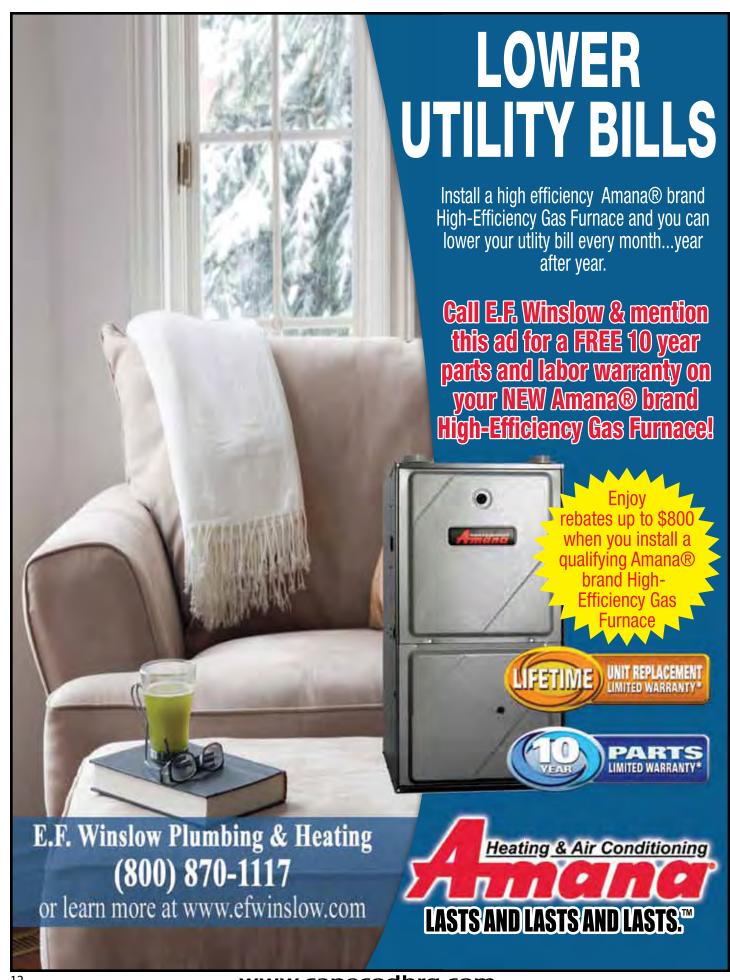
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# Carbon Monoxide:

## - The Invisible Killer

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that kills without warning. It claims the lives of hundreds of people every year and makes thousands more ill. Many household items including gas- and oil-burning furnaces, portable generators, and charcoal grills produce this poisonous gas. When cooking or heating appliances are kept in good working order, they produce little CO. Improperly operating appliances can produce fatal CO concentrations in your home. Running a car or generator in an attached garage can cause fatal CO poisoning in the home. So can running a generator or burning charcoal in the basement, crawlspace, or living area of the home. Following these important steps can keep your family safe.



### **Safety Tips**

- Have your home heating systems (including chim neys and vents) inspected and serviced annually by a trained service technician.
- Never use portable generators inside homes or garages, even if doors and windows are open. Use generators outside only, far away from the home.
- Never bring a charcoal grill into the house for heating or cooking. Do not barbeque in the garage.
- Never use a gas range or oven for heating.
- Open the fireplace damper before lighting a fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool. An open damper may help prevent build-up of poisonous gases inside the home.
- Install battery-operated CO alarms or CO alarms with battery backup in your home outside separate sleeping areas.
- Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion. If you suspect CO poisoning, get outside to fresh air immediately, and then call 911

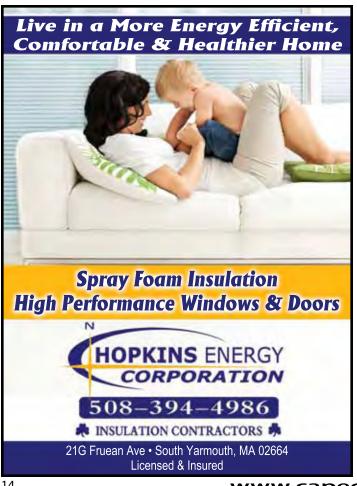
### **Know the Symptoms of CO Poisoning**

- Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:
  - Headache
  - Fatigue
  - Shortness of breath
  - Nausea
  - Dizziness
- High level CO poisoning results in progressively more severe symptoms, including:
  - Mental confusion
  - Vomiting
  - Loss of muscular coordination
  - Loss of consciousness
  - Ultimately death

If you suspect that you are experiencing CO poisoning, get fresh air immediately. Leave the home and call 911 for assistance from a neighbor's home. You could lose consciousness and die from CO poisoning if you stay in the home. Get medical attention immediately and inform medical staff that CO poisoning is suspected. Call the Fire Department to determine when it is safe to reenter the home.









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# Winter Storms & Nor'easters

while the danger from winter weather is widespread across much of America, Cape Cod is especially prone to the severe weather that comes from Nor'easters which often become most intense in New England. In addition to heavy snow and freezing rain, Nor'easters can bring gale force winds greater than 60 miles per hour. These storms can produce rough seas, coastal flooding and beach erosion. Danger may occur from intense winds, high tides, freezing and heavy rain or snow. One of the greatest concerns is the risk of losing power, heat and communications, sometimes for days as heavy snowfall and extreme cold can hinder repairs.

The National Weather Service refers to winter storms as the "Deceptive Killers" because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. Instead, people die in traffic accidents on icy roads and of hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold. It is important to be prepared for winter weather before it strikes: label and familiarize yourself and other responsible family members with the locations of the circuit breaker box, main water shutoff, and any gas line shutoffs. Investigate your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind, and check your insurance coverage. Before winter approaches, add the following supplies to your emergency kit:

- Rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways. Visit the Environmental Protection Agency for a complete list of recommended products.
- Sand to improve traction.
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- Sufficient heating fuel. You may become isolated in your home and regular fuel sources may be cut off.
- Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
- Adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Protect your property with durable hurricane screens and shutters. Hurricane shutters are affordable, lightweight, and easy to deploy with the push of a button, or you can even have the option



to operate them remotely via the internet. Much of the damage from Nor'easters and hurricanes can be prevented by storm shutters for the windows and doors.

Homeowners should be sure to take care of tree maintenance before winter arrives. Pruning and removing dead and damaged tree limbs from trees reduces the number of branches which can become projectiles or fall on your house from heavy wind and snow. Damage to homes and power lines can be prevented or reduced by pruning, and the removal of any dead trees.

A permanently installed generator can keep your heat on, and your refrigerator, computer and hot water running. And it is much more than just convenience in the winter when the heat is running, you can safely stay in your own home, and don't need to worry about your pipes freezing.

Be alert to changing weather conditions this winter. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service in the event of a storm. You can also contact the Cape Cod Chapter of the American Red Cross at (508) 775-1540 for further information or assistance.



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