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BEL-O Sales and Service's

# HOMEsense

Time saving, money saving and energy savings tips for your home.

Summer 2011

\$3.00



## MyWord

### Don't Worry, Be Happy

By Jim Lugge



Hello Friends,

Do you remember the old song, "Don't Worry, Be Happy"? Even if you never heard it, the title is the main point. But if you're like most of us, all of the concerns that life today brings sometimes makes that advice hard to follow.

Gallup recently released a survey of what people worry about, and some of the results will sound familiar – the economy, healthcare, energy costs, the environment and a bunch of other things, too.

So, how can I turn this focus on worry into an encouraging word for my friends? It's simply this. If you're concerned about where your dollars are going, you can trust us to provide the best value for the services we provide – with great warranties and guarantees to back up whatever we do. Plus, we offer a number of ways to make your investment in home comfort as easy to manage as possible.

## Is Your Home Comfort System Making You Sick?

Mold, bacteria, viruses...they're everywhere. Even scarier, with each breath you take you're breathing them in...and then they constantly circulate through your home via your home comfort system. Since fewer than 10% of home heating and cooling systems have filters strong enough to prevent mold and bacteria growth, this represents a vicious cycle that can affect the health of your entire family.

So, what's the good news? There are a few simple things you can do to make sure your home's comfort system makes you safer, not sicker:

**Focus on the Filter** – You probably know that in order to keep your heating and cooling system operating at peak efficiency, you need to change your filter on a regular basis. But many fiberglass panel filters have a *Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value* (MERV) of 3 or 4. A higher quality filter (pleated, and at least a MERV 8) can actually extend the life of your system – and then there are the unseen benefits. These high

quality filters can actually help avoid mold and bacteria growth.

**Keep it Clean** – If the filters you've used in the past have had a lower MERV, you could already have mold and bacteria growing on your system's blower coil. That's a lot of technical mumbo jumbo that really means changing your filter won't get rid of any contaminants already there. The only way to remove anything already in your system is to have it serviced and cleaned by a professional (like us).

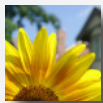
**Service on a Schedule** – Once your system is clean, you'll want it to stay that way – especially since dirt is the number one cause of repairs and breakdowns. Regular maintenance on a set schedule can keep your system working longer for fewer energy dollars.

Call us and we can set up automatic service reminders for you. We'll worry about your home comfort so you don't have to!



Your **Quick Call** Comfort Hotline:

**618-235-6626**



## The Smell of Summer Is In...Your Car?

MONEYWISE

Steaks on the grill, flowers on the breeze, sunscreen – the smells of Summer are all around. But you may have noticed a few unfamiliar scents in your vehicle, and it's not that forgotten fast food bag. In fact, certain odors can indicate serious problems with your car. Here are a few of the most common, and what you should know about them:

🐾 **Rotten eggs.** If you smell eggs or sulfur around your car, your catalytic converter may be having trouble processing the byproducts of combustion. To avoid ruining the converter (at a cost that can run upwards of \$300), have a mechanic check out your car as soon as possible.

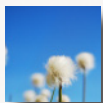
🐾 **Gasoline.** The only time you should catch a whiff of gasoline is when you're, well, at the gas station. If you smell gas, resist the urge to drive your car to the mechanic. Instead, have it



towed – the fumes could indicate a leak which is a serious fire hazard.

🐾 **The “new car” smell.** This is really the result of evaporating volatile organic compounds from plastic and rubber. The smell should go away as the car gets “less new” – in other words, only age can cure this one. However, keeping the windows down whenever possible can help speed up the process.

🐾 **Sickly sweet or oily.** Coolant from your car's engine has a very distinctive odor. If you smell it outside your car, check for puddles on the driveway. If you smell it *inside* the car, the passenger side floor may be damp, indicating a leak in your heater core. The solution could be as easy as replacing a leaking hose (about \$25) or replacing the core (which can be several hundred dollars). This kind of problem can start small and progress, so the sooner it's taken care of, the better.



## How to Avoid Craigslist Scams

HOME SMART

Craigslist is a great way to buy and sell items locally – and it doesn't hurt that both parties can save on shipping and other types of fees. As with all internet transactions, take precautions to ensure that you're not being scammed...

► **For Buyers** If you're purchasing a vehicle, any offer to ship the car after purchase is 100% fraudulent. Vehicles involved in this type of scam are often listed at very low prices. The seller will tell you that

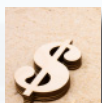
the car has to be shipped overseas and requires a complicated form of payment designed to gain access to your account information.

**Prices that are too good to be true probably are.** Pricing that is too low, especially on expensive electronics, could indicate that the goods may be stolen. If a price seems too low, ask the seller for proof of ownership.

◀ **For Sellers** Never, ever, send an item before you've received

payment. Some people ask for items under the guise of an “emergency” like a trip or birthday. Wait until payment is confirmed to ship anything you sell.

**Some inquiries will contain links that may connect to viruses** that infect your entire computer or steal the addresses in your contacts. Never click on a link in a Craigslist response unless you know the person who sent it to you.



## Use Super Foods to Cut Cholesterol

# HEALTHWISE

Most people know that eating foods high in cholesterol leads to, well, high cholesterol. And most people know that eating a low-fat diet can help control cholesterol. But what many people aren't aware of is that there are foods that can actually help *lower* your cholesterol – and some of them may even be hiding in your pantry:

### Sources of Soluble Fiber

Even small doses of soluble fiber on a daily basis can lower cholesterol by up to 5 points. A daily dose of 7-8 grams of fiber can even help reduce cholesterol by up to 10%. How? As the fiber dissolves, it forms a gel like substance in the intestines that binds to cholesterol and keeps it from entering the bloodstream.

Oatmeal and oat bran are high in soluble fiber. If you're not a fan of oat products, you can also try apples, barley or kidney beans – all of which are fiber rich foods.

### “Sea” the Difference

Sorry, couldn't resist the pun. Especially since fish is a heart-healthy way of cutting cholesterol. Eating 2-3 servings of fish a week has significant health benefits. You can reduce your LDL (bad cholesterol) and triglycerides. Herring, sardines, tuna and salmon are all good sources of omega-3 fatty acids.



### Go a Little Nutty

Another great source of healthy fats is nuts, and one of the best is macadamia nuts. Almost 76% total fat, the monounsaturated nature of the fat helps lower bad cholesterol without preventing the formation of good cholesterol. Even though nuts are high in

protein and nutrients, you'll want to limit your intake. Most nuts are high in calories, so stick to a snack-sized portion a day – just a small handful.

### Have a Tea Party

Tea, especially green tea, contains a high concentration of polyphenols, one of the most powerful antioxidants. Three to five cups a day of green tea can provide an optimal dose of polyphenols.

### Part of a Plan

While what you eat is an important part of lowering your cholesterol, it should be a component of a healthy living plan that includes exercise and portion control. Summer is the perfect time to exercise, so

make the most of the warm weather and enjoy the great outdoors this season. When you put your health first, your whole family wins.

To get the most health benefit, use a combination of aerobics, strength training and flexibility exercises. It's all exercise, and it's all good for your heart.

## Did You Know?

*The original game of “Monopoly” was circular.*

*The raised reflective dots in the middle of highways are called Botts' dots.*

*The San Francisco cable cars are the only mobile National Landmarks.*

*Nails grow faster in warm climates and during daytime than in cold climates and at night.*

*Wal-Mart sells more apparel a year than all the other competing department stores combined.*



## MyWord

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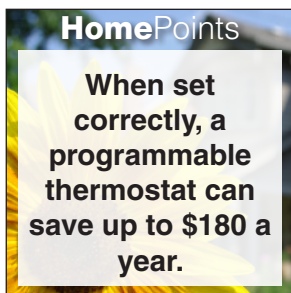
Not only that, our primary strength is providing energy-efficient services and products and environmentally friendly solutions that can also improve the air your family breathes. So, don't worry. Just call us when you need us. And we'll help take care of your concern.

We appreciate your business, and we look forward to keeping our friendship growing strong. Please give us a call whenever we may be of service.

In the meantime, enjoy your Summer!

Jim Lugge

P.S. The ads in this newsletter can mean big savings for you, so take a look. Or if you aren't able to use them, feel free to pass them along to your friends and neighbors. We'll be glad to help them, too.



## Are You a Fan of BEL-O? Then Become a Fan on Facebook

Search **BEL-O Sales and Service**, click Like and you will be directly connected to entertaining updates and great money saving tips.

You can even become friends with the **BEL-O Man** himself!



## Who Says You Can't Have It All?

If you want discounts on repairs, savings on energy, longer equipment life and priority service, join the club. The Discount Club.

Our regular Maintenance Agreement program comes with system Tune-ups twice a year – along with priority perks to keep you comfortable and save you money year-round. Call **Bel-O Sales and Service at 235-6626** today and find out more.

## Are You Paying for Air that's Making You Sick?

It's an oddity of life today. Airtight, energy-efficient homes provide the security of keeping air in. But they also bring the risk of re-circulating bad air that contains allergens, pollutants and dangerous molds.

The air inside your home can actually be **12 times** more polluted than the air outside. That means you could be shelling out money for air that's causing breathing and respiratory problems for your family – not

to mention the resulting medical bills and medicines. For an inspection of your indoor air quality and simple solutions to increase air caliber, call **Bel-O Sales and Service at 235-6626**.

P.S. The first 20 appointments are on us, no charge. So don't wait – call now!



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If your mailing address is not correct, please call us!

