

HOUSE TO HOME

WINTER 2018-2019

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



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Explore

Big Sky

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Cutting your electricity bill down to size

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, heating accounts for the biggest portion of your utility bill, or about 45 percent of the energy expense. With the winter solstice heralding in snowstorms and cooler temperatures, Explore Big Sky spoke with NorthWestern Energy public relations specialist Jo Dee Black to get a few pointers on how to lower your electricity bill in the winter.

In the Big Sky area, electricity is supplied by NorthWestern Energy and Vigilante Electric Coop. While there are variables in electricity use for individual households, Black said there are several things any homeowner can do to lower their electricity use without sacrificing a warm home.

Programmable thermostats are a direct way to reduce the cost of heating. These units can be set based on your daily routine, perhaps turning on the furnace in the morning when you wake up, then automatically lowering the temperature while you're away at work.

For those who use a block heater in their vehicle in order to warm the engine when it's particularly cold, Black said it can help to use an outdoor-rated timer that turns on the power to the extension cord about a half hour before you plan to start your car, when temperatures drop below zero. "It may not be necessary to have your car plugged in for the whole night," she said, adding that the engine heater uses a lot of electricity—the same amount as running a 1,500-watt hairdryer.

Apart from actually turning the heat down, homeowners can practice overall energy conservation as a way of balancing the consumption of those running heaters. Black says to be diligent about electronics usage. After a weekend of skiing, she said to make sure your boot dryer is turned off and unplugged. Radios, televisions and computers also can stack up the energy usage.

It might also be helpful to switch to energy-saving lighting as well. By replacing five traditional incandescent bulbs that are in high-use locations with energy-efficient LED bulbs, Black said you could see a \$75 annual savings in energy costs. Many new appliances are also made to be more energy efficient, and are labeled "Energy Star" for their energy conservation.

Finally, Black said NorthWestern Energy offers free home audits to qualifying residential customers. The customized report includes recommendations for cost-effective energy improvements.

For those who might be struggling with energy costs, Black said there are three programs that can help. NorthWestern Energy offers budget billing so that customers can pay the same amount each month. This monthly cost is the average of the last 12 months of electricity bills.

Assistance may also be available through the Low Income Energy Assistance Program. Gallatin County residents may call HRDC in Bozeman, while Madison County residents can contact Action Inc. in Butte, to learn more about qualifications for this program. One-time emergency energy assistance, regardless of income, is also available through Energy Share of Montana.

Visit northwesternenergy.com/save-energy-money/residential-services/residential-services-montana to learn more about energy saving tips from NorthWestern Energy.

Wood-burning stoves can bring unrivaled comfort into your home

BY BAY STEPHENS
EBS STAFF WRITER

"Hygge" (pronounced "hooga") is a Danish word that fails to translate into English, yet encapsulates a deep sense of coziness, warmth and togetherness that Scandinavians associate with long and cold winters.

Along with good company, the warmth of a fire—either quietly flickering atop a candle or cracking and snapping in a fireplace—contribute to this sense of safety, a contentedness rooted in comfort despite austere outside conditions.



Winter is a great time to be cozy and warm by a fire—or a woodstove, which can also effectively heat a home.

If you're considering a woodburning fireplace to add to the pleasures of the holiday season and the depths of winter, here are some tips and background to consider.

Types of Wood Stoves

Usually made of cast iron or steel, woodstoves fall into two main categories in terms of how they function: catalytic and non-catalytic. Both meet Environmental Protection Agency standards for smoke emissions by allowing complete combustion of all fuel, but they go about it in different ways, according to the EPA website.

Generally speaking, non-catalytic stoves are simpler to operate and require less maintenance; the EPA actually recommends catalytic stoves to individuals who like technology and are prepared to properly maintain the stove to operate at peak efficiency.

EPA-certified stoves will have a permanent metal label on the back, which means that they put out less than 4.5 grams of smoke per hour. Before federal emission standards were issued in 1988, wood stoves put out between 15 to 30 grams per hour.

Size of Stoves

One size does not fit all, or at least isn't necessary to heat all spaces. A small stove can pull its weight when it comes to heating a family room or cabin in warmer months. In larger homes they can be used for "zone heating" the favorite hangout rooms in the house, according to the EPA.

A medium stove can effectively heat small houses or energy-efficient, medium-sized homes, and would be suitable for a winter hut. Large stoves are best for big, open-plan houses that tend to be drafty.

Maintenance and Safety

To maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of a woodburning stove, regular maintenance is a must. Chimneys and pipes should be cleaned and inspected a minimum of once a year, according to Big Sky Deputy Fire Chief Dustin Tetrault. Additionally, woodstoves are required to be a minimum of 36 inches from walls unless a non-combustible material, such as masonry, is installed behind the stove.

Wood stoves also require regular ash removal, and that the ash be disposed of in a dedicated metal container that rests on a non-combustible surface away from the house.

Firewood should similarly be stored where it does not have contact with the exterior of a home, such as on a wooden deck or stacked along a wall. Tetrault recommends storing firewood a minimum of 30 feet from a home if possible, or in a non-combustible storage box next to the house for smaller amounts of firewood.

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Used Furniture Store not only buys your used furniture, it has more than 2,000 quality pieces for sale in its Bozeman showroom on West Main Street. PHOTO COURTESY OF UFS

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Jill Zeidler: Fusing fine art and functionality

BY SARAH GIANELLI
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

It's been two years since ceramicist Jill Zeidler opened a retail and working studio space in the Big Horn Shopping Center, and the artist's business is flourishing. The space, just down the hall from Bugaboo Café, is light, airy and clean, very much like the hand-formed functional and decorative stoneware thoughtfully displayed around the room.

On the working side of the studio, clay is in various stages of metamorphosis, from a heap of yam-shaped lumps to tall, smooth cylinders nearly ready for the kiln, a gleaming piece of equipment that will work its magic—or misery—on whatever she puts in it.

“There are a lot of ‘seconds’ [with ceramics],” Zeidler said. “You can work so hard on a piece, put it in the kiln and it could crack or a fleck from the atmosphere could land on the piece ... it’s really unpredictable.”

But it's the challenge of that unpredictability and having her hands constantly immersed in the making process that has kept Zeidler engaged with the medium since she discovered it prior to earning a degree in the art form.

When Zeidler, who has been making her art in Big Sky for 15 years, transitioned from her home-based studio into a storefront, her business model also shifted, from a largely web-based wholesale clientele, for which she was supplying more than 25 stores nationwide, to a greater concentration on Big Sky and the surrounding region.

She now has the added benefit of walk-in retail traffic, and sells primarily out her gallery-studio, in Big Sky at Gallatin River Gallery and Rhinestone Cowgirl, in Jackson, Wyoming at Workshop, and online through Etsy.

“I’m definitely a global artist,” she said. “But the Big Sky clientele has been amazing. The collectors are what drive my business, but with the growth of tourism my business has grown for sure. But it’s always a hustle—if you want to work as an artist, you’ve got to work hard to get the exposure.”

While she says she’ll “always be making mugs for people,” Zeidler’s true passion is for large-scale sculptural pieces that serve as utilitarian fine art.



Ceramicist Jill Zeidler sells her work out of her studio and retail space in the Big Horn Shopping Center, at Gallatin River Gallery and Rhinestone Cowgirl, and online through Etsy. PHOTO BY TORI PINTAR

Her vases, platters and signature tall-lipped “gourd” bowls could just as easily sit on a coffee table as a decorative piece or hold a big salad on the dining room table. Often working in a contemporary neutral or pastel palette with occasional splashes of gold leaf or accents of grassy green are perfectly imperfect, just enough to retain an elegant handmade quality.

Another of Zeidler’s signatures is overlaying xeroxed images on her pieces. Stylized arrows, hearts, birds, flowers, trees, and horseshoes—nature being her greatest inspiration—are often incorporated like a faint, sweet stamp on her work. Currently, Zeidler is working on a line of new pattern-focused designs that will be released this spring.

This will be Zeidler’s fourth year participating in the Arts Council of Big Sky’s Auction for Arts at Moonlight Basin on March 22. This year, Zeidler has entered one of her large gourd bowls, an impressionistic take on the shape of a gourd, in the silent auction. She will also be featured in an exhibit in the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center lobby gallery called “The Wild Unknown” that opens March 10.

In addition to mugs and her more sculptural decorative work, Zeidler also makes cheeseboards and small bud vases—all in her minimalistic, but by no means sterile, style. She also does a lot of custom work, especially creating dinnerware sets for weddings and custom printing projects for businesses.

Whether or not Zeidler will retain her retail space in perpetuity is uncertain, but even if Zeidler shifts her model again, she isn’t going anywhere.

“I’ll never stop making art,” she said. “Even without a retail space, I’ll never stop working. I’ll never disappear.”

Watch Jill Zeidler create in her working studio and retail space located at the intersection of Highway 191 and Lone Mountain Trail in Big Sky. Visit jillzeidler.com for more information.

Sarah Gianelli is the former senior editor of Explore Big Sky and a version of this story was first published in the March 2, 2018 edition of EBS.



Zeidler creates hand-formed decorative and functional ceramics in her signature minimalistic style and light and airy aesthetic. PHOTO BY SARAH GIANELLI

SAV Digital Environments

Infusing innovation in design, technology and comfort

Synonymous with seamless design aesthetics, acute attention to detail and quality customer service, SAV Digital Environments is best known for its cutting-edge home and business technology integrations. Among its best integrations are home theaters. A few years ago, a Big Sky resident reached out to SAV to create a professionally designed home theater, media and entertainment room. From watching movies and playing games to jamming out on instruments, this multipurpose space required significant consideration.

SAV thoughtfully used top-flight electronics for this home theater, including a 4K projector accompanied by a 105-inch fixed, acoustically transparent screen; an in-wall 7.2 surround sound system hidden behind professionally designed and engineered acoustic panels; advanced electronic power, energy and thermal management; the latest in automated lighting, climate and audio/video control; and, last but not least, black leather, automated incline, theater-style seating with ratcheting headrests.

“From the overall design and environmental controls to the acoustics and, above all, the audio/video system, our end goal was to create a sanctuary for the family and their guests; a place where they could escape to after a busy day in the great outdoors that reflects their personality, their style and their personal enjoyments,” said Cory Reistad, SAV’s owner.

Cory and his team worked closely with the interior design duo from Clean Line Consulting, Reid Smith Architects, Big Sky Build and other local artisans to achieve a level of sophistication that would fully satisfy the clients.

“From the very first meeting, the theater was a collaboration between Cory Reistad from SAV, Russ Fry of Fry Steel and Wood, and us,” said Ashley Sanford, who co-owns Clean Line Consulting with her sister and business partner Kelly Lovell. “We had several brainstorming sessions and wanted it to be warm and inviting, hence the use of wood, wool carpet, fabric on the sound panels, and live-edge walnut in the floating shelves.



Instead of integrating a 16:9 format screen, SAV used a 2.35:1 screen, which eliminates black bars on the top and bottom allowing for full enjoyment when watching movies in widescreen, cinemascope format. PHOTO BY JON MENEZES

“Russ had previously fabricated wall hooks for a music store, so we worked to tweak them for our needs: in-sight storage of guitars, banjos, etcetera,” Sanford added. “Those became major design elements that are used quite often. With a family and a lot of guests, it became the perfect spot in the house to retreat after a long day on the slopes.”

Infusing innovation in design, technology and comfort, the end result was a place where the family and their guests could spend quality time together and enjoy an endless amount of entertainment options. Visit savinc.net or call (406) 586-5593 to learn more about our work.



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Headwaters Hosting

Seasonal refresh: Maximize your Airbnb occupancy rate during peak season

The busy season has quickly arrived. We are looking forward to guests staying under our roofs this winter and have been hard at work getting our properties tuned up. While guests should always be impressed by your property, it doesn't hurt to give it a makeover between seasons. This emphasizes the fact that you are dedicated to maintaining your property to present it in its best condition possible and to stay current and competitive.

We are expecting our best season yet at our Airbnb properties. Montana is a happening place and we are hosting a lot of first-time visitors this winter. Aside from this, the competition makes it harder than ever to put our properties above the rest in order to attract quality bookings and get the highest occupancy rate possible. One of the ways we look to outpace other listings is through a seasonal makeover. Here are some ideas from our interior decorator, Amy Hafemeyer:



Headwaters Hosting's Interior Decorator Amy Hafemeyer hard at work getting properties ready for the winter season. PHOTO COURTESY OF HEADWATERS HOSTING

Amy's six decorating tips for a seasonal refresh

- 1. Layers:** Layer everything from your living room to your dining table. This will add warmth and depth to a space.
- 2. Candles:** If you don't have a fireplace, light pine-scented candles around the house to create warmth and to circulate the scent of the holidays throughout your home.
- 3. Hot cocoa kit:** Have a cocoa kit on your counter: Fill cute jars with cocoa mix, candy canes and marshmallows. This comes in handy on a snowy night or when the kiddos come in from sledding.
- 4. Blankets:** Keep plenty of warm, cozy blankets handy to snuggle up in. From knit to faux fur, blankets also bring texture into a space.



Pine-scented candles bring a forest aroma to your home during the holidays.

5. Color (or lack of): Try switching out colors to bring in soft creams and whites. Switch out duvets, and maybe bring in a lamp, throws or little rugs. Having this light palate makes the space feel even cozier and lets you be able to layer it easily.

6. Natural greens: If you can't have a real tree – and even if you can – bring in sprigs of spruce and place them throughout your home. This adds the color and scent of the season.

Don't have time to do it yourself? We are ready to lend a hand. Amy would love to get your Airbnb up to snuff for the ski season. Contact her through our website at headwaters.host for information.



A hot-cocoa kit is a creative way to warm up the kids after a day skiing or building snowmen.

Jill Zeidler

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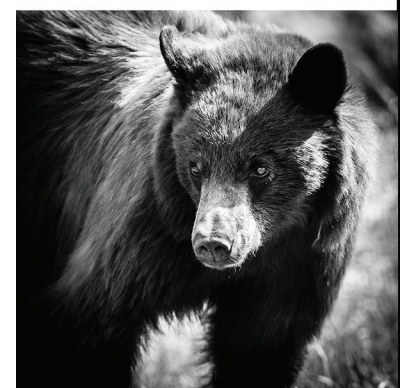
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The science of cellaring your wine

BY TYLER ALLEN
EBS MANAGING EDITOR

Wine has held a venerated place in human history for at least 8,000 years—evidence of its production was discovered dating back that far, south of the Georgian capital Tbilisi. While the techniques to make it have evolved dramatically over the millennia, especially during the last century, the ideas regarding wine storage have largely remained intact.

“Temperature control is important. Wine is a living thing and its storage and aging, throughout history, was done in a cellar that was dug out of the ground,” said Porter Elliot, head waiter at Buck’s T-4 Lodge in Big Sky, and a former sales representative for Bozeman distributor Winegardner’s Wines. “We’ve refined our techniques for making wine, but the storage understanding hasn’t changed—it’s better cold than warm. Wine cooks really fast [and] it does better when it’s in a cool, consistent place.” It can be damaged quickly by heat exposure, such as a bottle sitting in a parked car in the sun for as little as 20 minutes, he added.

Stacy Schroeder, a certified sommelier and Big Sky resident who retired from the fine dining industry in September, said that most Americans drink their red wine too warm and their white wine too cold—all varieties of wine should be stored at approximately 55 F. But wineries go to great lengths to keep their product at a consistent temperature before shipping it around the world.

“Alexander Valley Vineyards, in Sonoma, digs their own caves to store barrels,” Schroeder said. “Underground, the temperature doesn’t change, and the humidity is the same too. Beringer, in Napa, has their own caves where they store their barrels.”

Wine lovers have many options to replicate these conditions in their own homes, whether by purchasing a small electric cooler or building their own cellars.



The 12,400-square-foot Great Northern Lodge, designed by Centre Sky Architecture, has a giant wine cellar with many design attributes found in the rest of the home, including high vaulted ceilings and local stone. PHOTO COURTESY OF GIBEON PHOTOGRAPHY

Ben Emanuel, a project manager for Centre Sky Architecture, said clients who are interested in building wine cellars occupy a broad spectrum. “Some of our clients have been more passionate about wine, some are collectors, and others are thinking about the resale value of their homes,” he said.

Emanuel said that remodel projects tend to cost more than new construction, and the price per square foot can vary widely, from approximately \$500 to \$1,000, because there are so many variables and options. These include cabinetry; building materials such as iron, stone and glass; whether construction can take advantage of the property’s topography to utilize ground temperature; and how much a client wants to spend on mechanical controls.

In 2016, Centre Sky Architecture completed the 12,400-square-foot Great Northern Lodge near Whitefish Lake in northern Montana. The owners wanted the wine cellar to complement other features in the home, including the use of Sperry Stone, a maroon-hued stone used on Glacier National Park’s iconic Sperry Chalet. The cellar mimicked other attributes of the overall design, such as a domed vaulted ceiling that was clad with reclaimed brick.

No matter how extravagant the construction and materials are, temperature control remains the critical component of every wine storage facility. And those who choose to invest in the future are bucking conventional trends.

Elliot said that 90 percent of the wine produced now is consumed within a month after its purchase and it’s changing the industry as winemakers try to make their product drinkable sooner. “Traditionally a wine cellar was something you cultivated to pass on to your children,” he said.

Whether you build a cellar with rock floors and drainage to spit wine into during hosted tastings, or store legacy bottles for decades in a small cooler, you have the opportunity to be part of a long and rich human tradition.



PHOTO: DAVID O. MARLOW

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Benjamin Keefe, owner of Gallatin Home Inspections, is an InterNACHI certified, professional inspector who wants to help other homebuyers with the process of home inspection.

Locals are witnessing the professional approach that Keefe and Gallatin Home Inspections brings to the home-purchasing experience.

“We just purchased a condo in Big Sky and we had an amazing experience working with Mr. Keefe,” said one recent customer. “His customer service was excellent and his thoroughness gave us a great deal of confidence in buying the unit. He was even able to get us the report the very next day. The software that he uses to write his reports makes it very easy to view and share the report. We look forward to working with Mr. Keefe again in the future.”

Being locally situated in Big Sky gives Gallatin Home Inspections knowledge of the area and allows for inspections to be done quickly and provide a short turnaround time. If you’re looking for a home inspection in the greater Big Sky area with a fully certified, local inspector, give us a call and invest in your future with confidence. For more information, call (406) 600-4368 or visit gallatinhomeinspections.com.



Benjamin Keefe, owner of Gallatin Home Inspections, is a certified home inspector who wants to help you have a positive home-buying experience. PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLATIN HOME INSPECTIONS

Lone Pine Builders

Mountain home considerations

If you’re planning to build a custom home in the mountains, there are many important factors to consider when selecting your lot and designing your home. Whether it’s your first time to Big Sky or you’re a long-time resident, never underestimate the influence of snow. It’s a major factor in our little hamlet of a mountain town and we’ve seen snow in every month of the year.

Site Selection

Site selection and home placement are primary decisions you should discuss with your architect and your builder. Ideally, the driveway should be south facing, allowing for more sun exposure to help melt the snow and ice that will inevitably be a factor. If the site does not allow for this, you will want to consider a heated driveway, which requires a large cost up front but can over time help reduce your costs for snow plow services.

Another thing to consider when designing your home and its roofline is a style that will allow for a roof with a steep pitch so that snow can slide off, preventing significant snow load from accumulating on the roof.

Additionally, position your home in a way that takes advantage of the mountain views.

“Large picture windows are a great choice and allow for significant natural light and dynamic views,” says Brian Scott, owner of Lone Pine Builders.

Flooring

If you’re going to be using your home year round, you’ll be bringing the elements indoors. Whether its summertime mud and dirt from hiking and mountain biking, or snow and ice from snowshoes and ski boots in winter, selecting a durable flooring material is key.

“We suggest an engineered hardwood floor with a rustic finish,” Scott says, pointing out that engineered flooring minimizes the natural movement caused by changes in temperature and humidity. “These specially designed hardwood floors also stand up to use of in-floor radiant heat and are more moisture resistant than traditional hardwood.”

For a mudroom or ski room, using a tile or natural stone makes for easy clean up and will be more scratch resistant than hardwood.



Site selection is a key component to building a custom home in the mountains. Consider a south-facing orientation and large windows to allow for picturesque views and natural light. PHOTO BY RYAN DAY THOMPSON

Outdoor Features

There’s nothing more rewarding than a soak in the hot tub after a long day on the slopes. Make sure to position the hot tub in an area that is protected from the elements and where it won’t collect snow that slides off the roof. There are many options for hot tub style, size and design so take your time and make a thoughtful choice; it’s an investment that should be serviced regularly and well maintained.

“A lot of our clients are also incorporating an outdoor firepit and entertainment area into their landscaping plan,” Scott adds. “It’s a great way to bring together friends and family to relax outside even during the colder months.”

Lone Pine Builders has been building custom homes in Big Sky since 2005, and the team is committed to thoroughly understanding its clients’ needs and expectations, meeting agreed-upon schedules and budgets, and maintaining solid relationships with clients and subcontractors, based upon honesty, reliability and mutual respect.

Visit lonepinebuilders.com for more information.



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