

**Adding, upgrading a deck is great alternative to vacation spending**

Instead of spending on pricey vacations, more Americans are turning to money-saving alternatives in their own backyards. Upgrading or adding a deck is a great way to take advantage of outdoor living spaces.

Homeowners today are viewing their outdoor living space as extensions of their home. Among the 40 million homeowners who have an available outdoor living space, less than one-third prep their decks appropriately for the season, according to a Glidden brand survey. If you're planning on using your outdoor living space this season, you may want to consider improving or upgrading your current deck.

Although it now may seem like a challenging time to invest in your home, enhancing your outdoor living space can be cost-effective. Exterior and replacement projects bring homeowners the best return on investment, according to Remodeling Magazine's annual Cost vs. Value report.

"Outdoor living has become an increasingly popular trend over the last few years," says Stephen McNally, vice president of sales and marketing for TAMKO Building Products, Inc. "When selecting your future decking material, research all of your options to ensure you're purchasing material that best meets your needs."

When making a decision on your available decking options, you may want to consider the three common types of decking material:

**Composite**  
Representing 40 to 60 percent of new decks, composite decking is the latest trend in outdoor living spaces. Composite decking is made from a blend of woods and recycled plastic, vinyl or acrylic materials that prolong the life of the deck. Although the initial price of composite decking may be higher compared to other types of wood, the expected life-span can save money in the long run. Many homeowners are attracted to composite decking because it provides the appearance of real wood, requires little maintenance and typically comes with a longer warranty period. For example, TAMKO's EverGrain is backed by a 25-year limited warranty. "Composite decking requires no painting or staining which allows homeowners to spend more time enjoying their decks rather than working to maintain them," says McNally.

**Pressure-treated**  
Pressure-treated wood contains preservatives that provide protection against termites, insects and fungal decay. The wood product is placed into a depressurized cylinder. The cylinder is filled with preservatives under high pressure that forces them deeply into the wood. When the process ends, the cylinder is drained and the remaining preservative is reused. Applying preservatives is an attempt to slow drying which means less shrinkage occurs and the surface of the wood remains smoother longer. Although pressure-treated wood is usually found at relatively low cost, it is at high risk for moisture damage. In order to protect a pressure-treated deck against weather and premature aging, the wood requires regular power washing and yearly application of stain and sealer.

**Cedar**  
Cedar is another commonly used decking material because it is attractive, easy to work with and is naturally rot- and insect-resistant. Cedar wood decking material has less than half the swelling and shrinking tendencies of other domestic softwoods. If cedar wood goes untreated, over time it will lose its natural golden hue and may turn a silver grey color. The average lifespan of cedar is roughly 10 years and, in order to double the lifespan, regular applications of staining and waterproofing are highly recommended.

When you're ready to begin creating or improving your outdoor living space, research your options. Be sure you're picking the best available material to ensure your deck will last you many more summer months to come.

Source: estatesofsomerfield.com

# Happenings in Somerfield

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NEW HORIZONS OF ILLINOIS

**Choose right, use right: Tips for safe and effective use of pesticides and fertilizers**

It's that time of the year again when millions of do-it-yourself homeowners face the challenges of keeping problem insects and weeds away from home gardens and yards -- while staying within the family budget.

The pesticides and fertilizers available at local hardware and home improvement stores are designed specifically to help with these tasks, but choosing the right products and using them correctly is something every homeowner must consider.

"Nothing is more rewarding than picking healthy, home-grown vegetables, or enjoying a healthy lawn or a pest-free outdoor space with family, friends and pets," says Allen James, president of RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), a national organization representing the manufacturers, formulators and distributors of pesticide and fertilizer products. "The range of products available to homeowners is vast, but you have to use the ones that are right for your specific situation and use them responsibly."

Here are some basic guidelines to help homeowners choose the right products and use them correctly:

\* **Identify the problem** -- Different pesticides and fertilizers are formulated to work in various ways, so positively identifying the problem is vital. If this is unclear or unknown, ask a qualified expert or local extension agent.

\* **Determine the best method of control** -- Research the best, most effective, most economic solution to the specific problem at hand. Sometimes pesticides or fertilizer products are the answer, other times a different solution might be appropriate.

\* **Read and follow all label directions** -- If pesticides or fertilizers are needed, remember the label is the law. Read the label carefully for mixing and application instructions, as well as other precautionary information such as wearing proper clothing or product drying time after application.

\* **Use only what is needed** -- Measure, mix and use the right amount of product needed for the task at hand. Don't

## Neighborhood Real Estate:

**Homes currently active on the market in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:**

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Bath	Price
♥ 1470 Somerfield	4	McKinley	2.1	\$329,900
792 Glenside Cr.	4	Durham	2.1	NEW - \$299,000
♥ 1482 Glenside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	NEW - SS \$269,900
3 Scarlet Ct.	3	Brentwood	2.2	SS- \$219,000
1512 Schoenherr Ave.	4	Durham	2.1	SS - \$239,900
775 Glenside Dr.	4	Augusta	2.1	\$309,900
1409 Somerfield	4	McKinley	3.1	SS- \$324,900
♥ 1433 Sage Dr.	4	Williamsburg	2.1	\$294,920
♥ 748 Dalton Lane	4	Monticello w/ Morning Room	3.1	NEW- \$409,904
♥ 1401 Glenside Dr.	4	Ravinia	2.1	PC - \$344,900
1425 Schoenherr Ave.	4	Ravinia	2.1	\$349,900
1404 Waterside Dr	4	Morgan	2.1	\$414, 886
♥ 1412 Waterside Dr.	4	Monticello	3.1	\$419,000

**Homes that are currently under contract in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:**

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Baths	Price
♥ 1533 Glenside Dr.	4	Hanover	2.1	\$305,000
1461 Waterside Dr,	3	Brentwood	2.1	\$239,900
1444 Waterside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	PC- SS- \$259,000
1492 Schoneherr Ave	4	Savannah	2.1	PC - \$269,900

**Homes that have sold in the last month in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:**

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Baths	Price
1486 Glenside Dr.	4	Savannah	3.1	Call for Price
1462 Glenside	4	Bridgeport	2.1	Call for Price
1521 Glenside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	Call for Price

♥ **Are My Listings**

PC = Price Change, BOM = Back on Market, NEW = New Listing on Market, SS = Short Sale, BO = Bank Owned  
Source Multiple Listing Service Of Northern Illinois - August 4th, 2009

over-apply, but don't under-apply either. Read the directions and follow them to the letter.  
\* **Store products in a clean, dry area** -- Always store any unused pesticide or fertilizer products away from weather or direct sunlight. Make sure all products are stored out of reach of kids and pets.

"The right pesticide or fertilizer can make all the difference, but each situation is unique," James says. "We have the right to choose the products we use, but we also have the duty to use them responsibly."

Pesticides and fertilizers are designed to improve quality of life. If used properly, they are a helpful tool. They control, kill or moderate unwanted and dangerous pest populations ranging from stinging insects to vegetable-destroying fungus to noxious weeds, and they help to minimize the risks posed to homeowners, families, pets and property. When used according to label directions and applied as directed, they have the potential to make a substantial positive impact on the productivity and usability of gardens and green spaces around the home. Improper use and careless handling can cause unnecessary, avoidable complications. Make sure all products are selected and used with care. For more information on the proper application of pesticides and fertilizers, visit [www.pestfacts.org](http://www.pestfacts.org).

source: estatesofsomerfield.com

### Do you have a Buyer for these Homes?



**NEW LISTING...Somerfield - 748 Dalton Lane, \$409,904 - 3600 Sq. Ft. Monticello Model with Morning Room, 4 Bedrooms plus a loft, 1800 sq ft of Finished Basement, with Bar, Home Theater, Family Room and Full Bath, lots of storage areas, Porcelain Tile, and upgraded Carpet, Family Room has Fireplace with Gas logs, Open Floor plan. Dual Staircase, 42" Oak Cabinets with Planning Desk. Large Walk in Pantry, Center Island with Breakfast Bar, First Floor Den and Laundry Room. Vaulted Ceilings in FR, LR, MB, and MBB. Ceiling Fans and so much more!**



**Somerfield - 1470 Somerfield Dr.—Unique McKinley Model - Priced at \$329,900 - 2400 Sq Ft.**  
Well Maintained Home offers 4 Bedrooms, 2.1 Baths, Hardwood Flooring, Large Deck and Beautiful Landscaping, Front Porch, Plenty of 42" White Cabinets, 1st Floor Den and Laundry, Under Ground Sprinkler System, Berber Carpet in the Family Room, 2.5 Car Garage, All Appliances Staying including Microwave and Washer/Dryer.



**Somerfield 1401 Glenside Dr. - Price Reduced - \$344,900 Ravinia Model -** Home offers Hardwood Flooring in Foyer, Living & Dining Room & Bath. Ceramic Tile in Baths, New Carpet in Family Room & 1 BR, Gourmet Kitchen w/ Double oven, 42" Cab. & Cook top in Center Island. Kitchen also has Box window great for plants, Recessed Lighting, Brick Front, Fenced Yard, Paver Patio, Large MB w/ Vaulted Ceiling & HUGE Closet. Jacuzzi Tub in MBB. Ceiling fans all rooms & more!



**Somerfield - 1412 Waterside - Monticello Model: priced at only \$419,000 -** This home has it all plus Elegance and Charm. Largest Model in Subdivision with 3400 Sq. Ft. has Open Floor Plan, Dark Oak Hardwood Flooring in Foyer, Kitchen, Breakfast Nook & Bath. Gourmet Kitchen with 42" Oak Cabinets, Planning Desk and Large Walk in Pantry. 1st Floor Den, & Laundry with Door to Back Yard. Pond view and Large Deck, Finished Basement with Bath and so much more!!



**1433 Sage Dr. - Somerfield - 294,920 -** This Elegant and Extremely Well Cared For Williamsburg Model offers 3 BR, plus a loft, Front Porch, Hardwood Flooring, Center Island, 42" White Cabinets, Large Brick Paver patio, Plus Finished Basement and so much more!!!



**149 Tecumseh - Winding Meadows - Priced Reduced - \$365,000 -** Brittney Model w/ a unique \$150,000 addition which is now a recording studio but could be a In law arrangement, Home Day Care, the ideas are endless. Updated Kitchen & Bths w/ granite & SS Appl. 1st Floor Den, 5 Bedrooms. Full Finished Basement. An amazing design & unbelievable possibilities in this 4000 sq. ft. home.

FOR MORE PHOTOS OF EACH OF THESE HOMES GO TO [www.soldalotofhomes.com](http://www.soldalotofhomes.com)

If your property is currently listed with another Real Estate Broker, Please disregard this notice



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Courtesy of: Eric Hamilton Mortgage Consultant  
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### Decrease Your Home's Carbon Footprint and Save

Let's face it, the earth needs our help and families everywhere are looking for ways to help out. Recycling, driving less and bringing reusable bags to the grocery stores are great ways to reduce your family's carbon footprint, but did you know there are things you can do to reduce the impact your home has on the environment, not to mention your wallet?

Hannah Keeley, lifestyle expert and host of the PBS program 'Hannah, Help Me!' offers energy efficiency tips that can yield big returns for your home, your budget and the earth.

#### Fill in the cracks.

Never underestimate the power of weatherproofing your home. Check all windows and doors for drafty areas. Caulking holes and cracks will keep your home from bleeding heat, not to mention prevent your hard-earned dollars and cents from leaking out of the house.

Or consider replacing your existing doors with more energy-efficient fiberglass options. Therma-Tru fiberglass doors offer five times the insulation value of wood, which will do a world of good in creating a more energy-efficient home.

#### Use less.

A seemingly obvious solution is to simply use less energy. Raising your thermostat a few degrees during the spring and summer months translates into big savings in both energy usage and utility bills. A programmable thermostat will automatically adjust your thermostat throughout the day, helping to control the temperature of your home even if you're miles away.

Lighting accounts for almost 20 percent of the average homeowner's monthly electric bill, but many people overlook this key opportunity to save energy and money. To reduce lighting bills, homeowners can choose lighting controls from Lutron Electronics. An incandescent bulb dimmed by 25 percent will use 25 percent less electricity and last four times longer than a bulb that has not been dimmed. Even better, dimmers allow homeowners to set the right light level for the mood and activity in a room.

#### Consider a dual-fuel system.

Installing a part-electric, part-gas hybrid heating and cooling system provides more control over your home's energy usage by automatically sensing and operating in the most economical mode. For example, as outdoor temperature increases throughout the day, the Heritage Hybrid (TM) comfort system from American Standard Heating & Air Conditioning will use an electric heat pump to efficiently cool your indoor air. When the weather turns cooler and heating with natural gas becomes more efficient, the furnace takes over. With a hybrid comfort system, you can save some serious cash -- even when confronted with unpredictable utility costs.

#### Make smarter choices.

Choosing the right home appliances is vital as well. No matter which room of the house we're talking about -- the kitchen, laundry room or otherwise -- an outdated or inefficient unit can drain your bank account and increase carbon emissions. To combat this, look for Energy Star certified appliances that way you know you're getting the most energy efficient products available.

Thankfully, increasing your home's energy efficiency doesn't have to be hard work or a strain on your pocketbook. By making a few smart choices, you can sit back and rest, in comfort, knowing you are doing your part to help reduce your home's carbon footprint.

Source: [estatesofsomerfield.com](http://estatesofsomerfield.com)

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