



URBAN concepts

With Thanksgiving a few days away and Christmas right around the corner, we have so much to look forward to and be thankful for.

Our good health, happiness, relationships with loved ones and being able to gather and spend time in person, with one another.

In this edition, we share an article on common maintenance "tips" and whether they actually work, or are just a myth. We also share information on Habilitat's Christmas Trees, local holiday events coming up in the Honolulu area and two unique recipes for the holidays.

We hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving, and enjoy the fall edition of Urban Concepts!

Mahalo,
Brett Hill Construction

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Home Maintenance Myths (or Truths)



In our 22 years of performed maintenance services for our clients, we sometimes get asked to confirm a maintenance tip that they've either heard of read from a questionable source. For the most part we can answer their questions because we've had experience with the particular topic, but every once in a while we are asked a maintenance question that would require us to do some research to verify the validity of the tip.

Use chlorine bleach to kill mold

The Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") and Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA") no longer recommend the use of bleach because using chlorine bleach to kill mold can do just the opposite.

On impermeable surfaces, bleach will work well to remove mold, however bleach contains 90% of water and mold will thrive when it comes in contact with water. When bleach is applied to a porous surface, the chlorine quickly evaporates and leaves behind a lot of water. This water often soaks into the surface allowing the mold to flourish and re-grow in the moist environment. Even though the surface may look bleached and clean, the remaining spores will root deeper and stronger, and will often return worse than before.

As an alternative, most hardware stores carry mold and mildew cleaners that are specific to removing mold and killing the mold spores that may linger.



Turning the air conditioner off when leaving your home saves energy

Most homeowners believe that turning off your air conditioner when you're not at home saves energy and reduces the cost of electricity. While it's true that if your air conditioner is not running, it's not drawing power, if you live in a home that gets warm rather quickly, your air conditioner will work a lot harder to cool your home when you return.

If you are planning to leave on a trip or be away from your home over an extended period of time, turning off your air conditioner will make economic sense. As an alternative, you can set the temperature on the thermostat to a higher than normal temperature - say at 80 - 82 degrees. That way your home will stay relatively comfortable during the time you're away and the humidity level in your home will remain low. Another alternative is to replace your thermostat with a smart thermostat that can be controlled remotely or on a timer. This will allow you to periodically run the air conditioner while you're away from home, so that the temperature in your home will remain at a comfortable level.

Using a lemon to clean your garbage disposal

There are a few videos on YouTube that recommend using a lemon to de-sanitize and freshen your garbage disposal. While the scent of a lemon makes everything smell clean, using it as a cleaning agent in your garbage disposal is not recommended.

The first problem it could cause is the rind, seeds and fibers getting caught in the blades of the disposal or in the drain line. In the most severe cases, the lemon rind or seeds could ruin the blades or any moving parts, meaning the disposal will need to be replaced. The second problem that could occur is the acid from the lemon juice will corrode the metal parts of your disposal including the housing.

As an alternative, pour 1/2 cup baking soda into the disposal, followed by 1/2 cup of vinegar. Cover the drain and let the mixture sit for a few minutes, then flush it with hot water.

Turning your lights on and off

Despite what you may have been taught growing up, turning your lights on and off when you enter and leave a room doesn't use more electricity than leaving your lights on constantly. While it's true the energy use is greater to turn on a light than having the lights on, it is only for a fraction of a second. Leaving the lights on in a room for over 15 minutes would use much more electricity than turning the lights on, then off, then back on when you enter then leave, then re-enter the room.



Using your appliances less will prolong the life of that appliance

There are times when homeowners ask why their particular appliance stopped working even though they hardly use it. They comment that there's no wear and tear on the appliance and yet it broke down. To answer that question, most appliances have a shelf life whether you use them constantly or not at all.

Appliances consists of a lot of electrical and mechanical components that together make the appliance run. Those components deteriorate over time and eventually need replacing even if it's not being used. Sometimes the component's life will actually be shortened due to lack of use. That's why it's always recommended that you run your appliances periodically even if it's just a few times a month. Your oven and cooktop, dishwasher, microwave oven, washer, dryer and air conditioner should periodically be operated to give the components a chance to run and to make sure it still works.

Using Coca-Cola in your toilet will remove the stains left by hard water

This seems to be a myth that is repeated quite often but amazingly Coca-Cola can actually remove hard-to-clean stains on the inside of a toilet bowl. You can either pour cola directly onto the stains themselves or cover the entire inside of the bowl by putting cola into a spray bottle and spraying on a light coating. In addition, letting the Coca-Cola sit for a several hours will improve its effectiveness. Before flushing, use a toilet brush to scrub away the stains and flush. This myth is actually a truth and it does work, but only for removing grime and stains. To disinfect, you will still need to use a disinfectant cleaner.

There are times when Coca-Cola is not the effective product for cleaning stains in your toilet bowl. In the most severely stained toilet and in areas where the water is very hard, Coca-Cola may not be as effective. In those cases, cleaners that contain hydrochloric acid will be much more effective.

HABILITAT'S
CHRISTMAS
TREES
HAWAII



Habilitat is a non-profit treatment center, that has been helping to guide and empower individuals to make positive choices in their own lives since 1971. When you purchase a tree through Habilitat, all of the proceeds go directly towards the program.

They offer three different types of trees to choose from, ranging in size from 4-7 feet, as well as three different types of specialty trees ranging in small sizes (2-4 feet) and larger sizes (8-10 feet). They also offer \$28.00 wreaths or door charms for purchase if you want that fresh Christmas tree smell in your house but don't have the space for a whole entire tree.

Christmas trees are currently available for pre-order through the Habilitat website, or you can call 808-235-3691 and one of their sales representatives will be happy to help you. Pick up for pre-orders will be available starting from December 3rd from 7am-4:30pm at various locations throughout the island. Starting the Saturday after Thanksgiving (November 26th), trees will also be available on a first come first serve basis at specific retail location across the island. These locations include, Stadium Mall, Kaneohe Safeway, Koko Marina Center, and Central Union Church.



HOLIDAY EVENTS

in Honolulu



Honolulu City Lights

The 38th annual, Honolulu City Lights event is officially returning this year. It will be kicking off at Honolulu Hale and will be going on for the month. The festivities begin on December 3rd at 5:30pm, with a night full of activities, including a tree lighting ceremony, block party, live entertainment, food trucks, a wreath contest and more! It is also confirmed that after a 2-year hiatus, the Public Workers' Electric Light Parade is also happening.



The Nutcracker

Hawaiian-themed Nutcracker presented in the 1858 Kingdom of Hawaii and accompanied by members of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. This performance by Ballet Hawaii, combines the timeless Nutcracker with the beauty and elegance of the Hawaiian monarchy. In this production, the flowers are hibiscus and plumeria, the birds are the native I'iwi and the famous Waltz of the Snowflakes is set to take place atop the slopes of Mauna Kea.



Where: Neil S Blaisdell Concert Hall
When: December 2-4

*Scan the QR code or visit the link below to buy tickets.



HOLIDAY POPUP MARKETS

in Honolulu

Malama Hawaii Makers Market

A Hawaii-based pop up marketplace that features a curated collection of local artists, makers, designers, collectors, food vendors, and more. Malama's mission is to take care of Hawaii's small, local businesses by creating a gathering place where they are able to showcase their work, meet their customer, and network with other local makers in a supportive and creative environment.



Location: Various locations throughout December
 -Upcoming market: Koko Head Elementary, Saturday 12/3
 -Waikiki Elementary School, the following Saturday 12/10
 Time: All markets run from 10 am - 3 pm
 *Free admission
 *Featuring live music by local artists
 *Visit their website for more details plus a list of the vendors that will be at each market: <https://www.malahawaii.com/>

A Pinch of Salt

A holiday shopping event at SALT at Our Kaka'ako, featuring a variety of local vendors and unique gift ideas.

Date: Saturday, 12/3
 Time: 10 am - 3 pm

*Family and pet friendly
 *Free admission



Art + Flea

A unique shopping experience for Hawaii's talented creatives to showcase their goods and talents. Featuring various local artists, vintage collectors, DIYers, food trucks, handmade aficionados, and fashion designers as well as live performances from up-and-coming bands and local DJs.

Where: Ward Village (former Pier 1 Imports Shop)
 Date: November 26 & 27
 Time: 10 am - 3 pm
 *Free Admission



Okinawan Sweet Potato

(For more details and nutritional facts, visit the produce showcase page in the Fall 2020 edition of the newsletter.)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound purple sweet potato
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Salt

(Recipe by Relle from keepingitrelle.com)

Okinawan Sweet Potato Mash

Intructions:

- Prep Time: 5 mins
- Cook Time: 15 mins
- Total Time: 20 mins
- Servings: 4

1. Peel and cut the sweet potatoes into 1 inch cubes.
2. **For steaming:** Fill a large pot with 1 inch water. Place the steamer basket in the pot and fill with cubed potatoes. Cover and steam the potatoes for 10-15 minutes or until fork tender. **For boiling:** Fill a large pot with water and set over high heat. Once water has come to a rolling boil, add about a teaspoon of salt per liter of water. Place potatoes into the pot and boil for 12-15 minutes or until fork tender.
3. Remove the steamer basket from the pot and drain excess water.
4. Place the cooked potatoes in a large bowl. Add heavy cream, butter, and a pinch of salt. Using a potato masher and mash until smooth and well combined. ENJOY!

Tips:

- *Avoid using an electric mixer to mash potatoes. This will release too much starch and give the mashed potatoes a gummy texture.
- *Add the heavy whipping cream in batches until you get the right consistency that you like. Each potato will vary in starch and dryness.



PRODUCE SHOWCASE ~ RECIPES

Recipe ideas to transform traditional Thanksgiving sides into healthier, unique dishes using produce that can be sourced locally.

Daikon

(For more details and nutritional facts, visit the produce showcase page in the Spring 2022 edition of the newsletter.)

Ingredients:

- 1.5 pounds daikon radishes (this recipe uses purple, but any daikon radish will work)
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and cracked black pepper
- Lemon wedges for serving (optional)

(Recipe by Liz Rueven at kosherlikeme.com)



Roasted Purple Daikon Radish

Intructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.
2. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.
3. Lightly scrape the radishes to remove any surface dirt.
4. Remove tips and tails and cut radishes in half, lengthwise. Cut across the sections, making half rounds.
5. In a large bowl, toss radishes with olive oil, salt and pepper.
6. Distribute radish pieces on prepared pan, making sure pieces do not touch each other.
7. Roast for 25-30 minutes, until pieces can be pierced easily with a fork.

Tips:

- *Best when eaten warm, straight out of the oven.
- *A quick spritz of lemon adds a nice zing.