

Clean Your Home Exterior in Six Easy Steps

(TF) — Spring cleaning doesn't have to be a long, painful process if you have the right tools.

Tom Krautler, host of the nationally syndicated radio show "Money Pit," recently discovered the benefits of using a pressure washer while developing several spring-cleaning segments.

"When I was researching the segments, I never realized how much effort people put into cleaning the exterior of their homes," says Krautler, who is also known as the "High-Tech Tool Guy."

"If you use a pressure washer, you'll be sipping iced tea on the front porch while your neighbors are scrubbing well into the summer."

Here are a few more tips from Krautler for using a pressure washer to clean your home's exterior.

1. The Solution is the Solution. Most pressure washers come with an injector to mix cleaning solutions into the jet stream. Krautler recommends only using solvents that are approved for pressure washer use. Unapproved solvents may not be environmentally sound and could eat away at critical pressure washers. In addition, some household solutions can be dangerous under pressure.

"Be sure to read the labels carefully," warns Krautler. One solution might work well for concrete, but it could harm metal. Some advanced detergents even contain special chemicals to protect surfaces against salt, air pollution and acid rain.

2. Know Your Nozzles. The key to effective pressure washing, says Krautler, is selecting the right angle. For example, Coleman Powermate (800-445-1805) pressure washers come with an adjustable wand or various color-coded nozzles to help you select the ideal spraying angle. As a general rule, the smallest angle delivers the most powerful spray.

For example, a zero degree angle is ideal for removing stubborn stains from concrete because it delivers a concentrated stream that cuts grease or dirt. On the other hand, if you want to scrape dirt away from your home, you should use a broader 15-degree angle.

3. Test of Strength. Pressure washers are designed to pack a punch. Krautler cautions that if you start spraying too closely, you could damage, instead of clean, the area. Hold the wand a couple of feet from the surface and gradually move closer if additional cleaning power is needed.

4. Ready, Aim — Be careful not to

spray directly at eaves, vents or light fixtures. High water pressure can knock out loose windowpanes or break them. Also, keep the angle of the wand pointing down so you don't spray up under the eaves of horizontal siding. This will prevent the siding from backing under pressure.

5. Stroke, Stroke, Stroke. Pressure washing is a lot like painting, says Krautler. If you get "nose happy" and randomly spray everything, you're bound to miss a spot. Apply the soap mixture to sit for five to ten minutes, as long as it doesn't dry. When rinsing, start at the top and work down to ensure the entire area is soap-free.

For additional pressure washer tips, The High-Tech Tool Guy recommends visiting Coleman Powermate's Web site at www.colemanpowermate.com. The site includes great tips on how to select and use the right pressure washer.



New Business

John Tyler, above right, has opened an appliance business on Richmond Street in Mt. Vernon in the former Video Fantastic building. He has in stock ranges, side by side refrigerators, washers and dryers and dishwashers. For more information phone 256-9300. Also pictured are employees Anthony Lear and Christina Tyler. Not pictured was Alex Tyron.

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I am a lifelong resident and farmer of the 1st District. I am also a Vietnam Veteran who was proud to serve his country.

As a father and community member I have been involved with kids in the county school system by donating numerous hours and money to the RCHS weight-lifting room.

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Thank You, Larry Leece

Kentucky unemployment rate declines in February

Kentucky's unemployment rate dipped from a revised 6.4 percent in January to 6 percent in February, according to the Department for Employment Services, a Cabinet for Workforce Development agency. Kentucky's February 2002 jobless rate was above the February 2001 rate of 5.7 percent. The U.S. jobless rate fell from 6.3 percent in January to 6.1 percent in February.

"A monthly survey of business establishments revealed that in February, Kentucky's employment increased by a net of 5,500. This is the first time in three years that the unemployment rate has decreased from January to February," said C. Cracraft, the department's chief labor market analyst.

Three of the nine major job sectors had employment increases in February, Cracraft said. The government sector had the highest job increase in February with 8,000 more positions. Cracraft said most of this growth (7,700) was due to education employees returning to work after winter break. The services sector had the second highest gain with 1,800 more jobs in February. Jobs in educational services (500), amusement and recreational services (500), social services (400), personal services (400), and hotels and other lodging places (300) rose while the business services category fell (-300). The construction sector started its seasonal employment increase for this time of year with 1,200 more jobs in February. Jobs in the special trade category, general building contractors and heavy construction all rose in February.

The mining and quarrying sector had 20,200 positions in both January and February 2002, but 1,000 more jobs than in February 2001. "For the first time in many years, the bituminous coal mining industry has added employment," said Cracraft. Agriculture was down by 2,900 jobs in February because of winter weather but jobs should increase in the spring. In February the manufacturing sector continued its downward

path, as a total of 1,500 jobs were lost. The durable goods category fell by 900 in February while nondurable goods manufacturing declined by a total of 600 positions. "From February 2001 to February 2002, manufacturing employment fell from 314,400 to 299,500 marking the first time in almost eight years that manufacturing employment has slipped below 300,000," said Cracraft. The trade sector reported a loss of 600 jobs in February. "Within retail trade, eating and drinking establishments gained 900 jobs in February but that was more than offset by losses in apparel and accessories, miscellaneous retail businesses and food stores. Most of the losses followed normal seasonal patterns of an after holiday retail slowdown," Cracraft said. The transportation, communications and utilities sector recorded 300 fewer positions in February 2002. Over the last year, the sector has lost 2,700 jobs mostly in transportation (-1,700). The finance, insurance and real estate sector had 200 fewer jobs in February.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics monthly estimate of the number of employed Kentuckians for February 2002 was 1,832,185. This figure is up 264 from the 1,831,921 employed in January 2002, and up 12,426 from the 1,819,759 Kentuckians employed in February 2001.

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