Pest-proofing your home

If your home not only provides shelter for your family and pet dog - but also for frisky mice, boisterous birds and other unwanted critters, it's time to focus your energies on "pest-proofing."

So why did these little visitors decide to make themselves at home on your property? Many homeowners don't realize that an uncapped chimney, loose shingles or open vents are a tempting "welcome mat" for an assortment of wildlife.

Pest-proofing will not only help you get rid of these animals, but will also prevent other wildlife from taking up residence, becoming trapped or injured on your property. This is also a good time to make those repairs that have been on your list of things to do for as long as you can remember.

One of the simplest ways to keep away unwanted house guests is to block off any possible entry points. However, before you seal up these areas, make sure no animals are already settled in your home. If you discover any wildlife, contact your local humane society, or a nature or wildlife group for advice on how to safely return these animals to their habitat.

Sealing off entry points

Once you've ensured that your property is tenant-free, look for any areas that would provide easy entry. The roof is one of the most likely entrance ways for birds and other creatures, so check for missing shingles and decayed roof boards. In addition, keep tree branches clear of your roof to ensure that squirrels and raccoons are not using them to gain access to your property.

To make sure your roof does not become a penthouse suite for little critters, install a chimney cap. They are quite inexpensive and can be purchased from hardware stores or woodstove companies. After you've installed the chimney cap, monitor it regularly to make sure it does not become blocked or plugged with debris.

Once you've inspected the toof, it's time to return to ground level and check your home's exterior for cracks and holes. Don't disregard small openings too readily, since mice and insects can easily wiggle through them and settle in for an extended visit. Seal any openings that you discover. Don't forget to check for gaps around the windows as

Open areas under your house and deck can also lead to problems. Skunks are wellknown for building their dens in these sites. Once you close off these areas, you can convert them into additional storage spaces.

Garbage is particularly tempting for raccoons that won't think twice about venturing onto your property for a midnight snack. So, keep them away by making sure your garbage cans are securely closed. If possible, put the garbage out the day it is to be picked up, instead of a couple of days ahead of

Garden Protection

After you've inspected your home, take a look around your garden. You've probably already noticed signs that various creatures have been helping themselves to your fruits or vegetables. The culprits may include birds, rabbits, groundhogs, raccoons or other wildlife.

Ripening fruits will draw birds from near and far. Scarecrows will help keep them away - until they catch on that the scarecrows are harmless. For more long-lasting solutions, try placing netting over fruit trees, tying paper bags over ears of corn or building wire mesh bird cages over berry crops.

In addition to garbage, raccoons are tempted by insects such as lawn grubs. They enjoy fruit and corn as well. To catch those pesky visitors use a cage trap and then release them into the wild. Make sure you wear thick gloves and handle the cage very carefully, since they will be less than thrilled about being caught and moved around.



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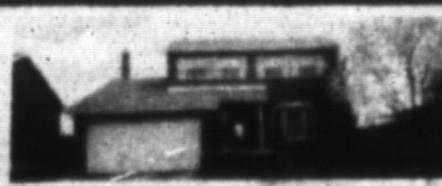
WANT A BUNGALOW?? \$154,900. Call Gladys Cranford' to view #82.



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n Dorset Park, Fenced backvard with deck



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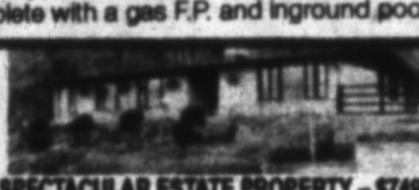
PEACEFUL COUNTRY - 100 ACRES vinyl siding. Picture-perfect setting. Asking \$425,000. To view #74 please call Helen Hardy".



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PLAN YOUR OWN COLOR SCHEME!

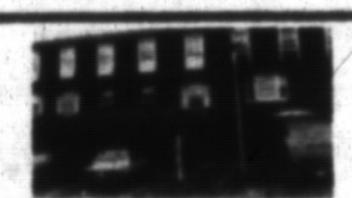


\$122,900. Contact W.J. (Jack) McCrudden, Broker,



\$244,900 - INVESTORS TAKE NOTE: yard. Contact W.J. (Jack) McCrudden, Broker fo





WHY RENT? house listed at only \$125,900. Feetures include vate yard. To view #6/7 please call Trish Fitzsimmons'



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Completely upgraded & decorated in neutral tones, fin. basement, 2-car garage, ceramic & hardwd. first & stone F.P. To view #10 please call Helen Hardy'.

\$157,500. Call Joan Hollings" for complete details. #46. QUIET RETREAT, Approx. 100 AC of tranquility. 20 AC clear, pond & stream. Older home presently on property mit available for executive home. Greatly reduced, no (office) or 875-2727 (home). #126

PORT ALBERT, 66' x 209'. Vacant lot in a nice sub

AUTHENTIC HOME

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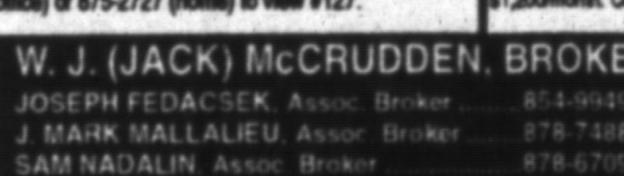
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