



## Reducing my “carbon footprint” with Geothermal and even better, reducing my utility bills

FROM RODNEY SHULL, ALBAN ASHI-ACCREDITED HOME INSPECTOR, CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

For the last seven years my wife and I have enjoyed the cozy comfort of oil-water baseboard heating along with a heat pump system for air conditioning in the summer.

With the cost of oil and the oil burner needing replacement, we decided to go the geothermal route and at the same time reduce our carbon footprint with this clean, green, renewable technology. Geothermal is basically a way to tap into the earth and capture free, renewable energy by using the temperature of the ground as a source for heat and cooling energy. This energy is tapped into by a “loop” system. These loops are placed underground and are sealed with water and a type of environmental antifreeze. For cooling the fluid passes through a condenser and for heating through coils to produce an even comfortable temperature year round.

Geothermal gives us lower operating costs, is comfortable year round, and

supplies excellent de-humidification during cooling. It lasts longer than ordinary air conditioners and heat pumps, has fewer moving parts, and operates for years with little maintenance. No outdoor unit is required and the equipment is heavily insulated for quiet operation. We are getting cooling and heating, as well as supplemental water heating, from a single unit.

The Geothermal system reduced our electric bill by about 30% and our oil consumption (of about \$3700 per year) to zero. We have reduced our energy dependence and our need to import fuel. We have increased the value of our home and received a tax credit from the federal government. Donna and I are happy campers!

We look forward to many years of cooling and heating comfort from mother earth and feel good about reducing our carbon footprint.

## FROM THE DESK OF ARTHUR S. LAZEROW

### FOGGED GLASS CAN NOW BE REPAIRED

Fabulous news about a common window deficiency – fogged dual glazed windows - that has caused Realtors and their clients problems for years. The statistics are surprising. Three percent of every double and triple glazed window sash suffers thermopane seal failure annually. That’s a lot of windows and many of them are in homes on the market for sale.

Until now, the only correction was replacement at the cost of hundreds of dollars for each window. **Glass Guru**, a franchise system from California, has a repair process that costs half the price, and about 50% of all fogged windows can be restored using this venting system. The restoration is guaranteed for ten years, but is actually a permanent correction.

The principals of Alban, Sandy Watkins, our general manager, Terry Toms, our financial manager, their husbands and I are bringing Glass Guru to metropolitan Washington DC starting this month. Property owners desiring to have crystal clear windows as a pre-sale spruce-up for their home can now accomplish this at a reasonable price. This is an easy “staging” improvement to make a house look crisp and bright. Call the *Glass Guru* at 1-877-545-GURU for a free estimate anywhere from Hagerstown to Annapolis.

## ALBAN STAFF

**Marty Blackwood, ASHI Certified Inspector and Alban Chief Inspector**  
Cell: 240.463.1400

**Rodney Shull, ASHI Certified Inspector and Director, Customer Relations**  
Cell: 540.270.0520

**Joe Dempsey, ASHI Associate Home Inspector with Logo Privileges**  
Cell: 202.577.8047

**Robert Montiel, ASHI Associate Home Inspector and bilingual in Spanish**  
Cell: 240.559.0906

**Lee Eyer, ASHI Certified Inspector**  
Cell: 301.674.2199

**Quintin Satterfield, Chief Lead-Paint Inspector**  
Cell: 301.807.2122

**Arthur S. Lazerow, ASHI Certified Inspector and President of Alban**  
Cell: 301.807.9022

**Sandra Watkins, Director, Lead-Paint Division and Alban General Manager**

**Terry Toms, Bookkeeping And Finance**

**Tina Yarborough, Inspection Scheduling**



FROM JOE DEMPSEY, ASHI ASSOCIATE, CHIEF, HOME ENERGY AUDIT DIVISION

## Cash for Clunkers - Appliances

One of the most successful economic stimulus and energy saving programs the federal government has tried was the Cash for Clunkers automobile program that ended August 24th. Some 400,000 gas guzzlers were taken off the road. The federal government announced two weeks ago another Cash for Clunkers program, this time for household appliances.

Although the rules have not been formulated, the \$300 million program is designed to boost sales of energy-efficient appliances. It will be a combined economic stimulus for the hard hit appliance makers and an energy and utility cost savings measure with long term

implications. The program will authorize rebates of \$50 to \$200 for purchases of high-efficiency household appliances. The individual states will be tasked to create their program with DOE approval and federal monies. Program development deadline is October 15 with the funds being awarded by the end of November.

Appliances qualifying for the subsidy payments must have Energy Star labels. Energy Secretary Steven Chu said "These rebates will help families make the transition to more efficient appliances, making purchases that will directly stimulate the economy." Stand by for more news this fall.

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