

Limited Opening of State Park and Forest Facilities Scheduled

By DCNR

HARRISBURG - As the warmer spring weather sends more Pennsylvanians looking for safe recreation opportunities, a limited number of state park and forest facilities are scheduled to reopen in the days and weeks ahead.

The reopenings include at least one restroom in day-use areas in state parks, forests and marinas effective May 8; all nine marinas in state parks effective May 8 unless otherwise designated; and all three public golf courses in the system. State park facilities in counties in the yellow phase of reopening will also be open to the public beginning on May 15. More at https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/DCNR_details.aspx?newsid=650

Updated Guidance on Ambulatory SURGICAL

"Elective" Procedures Now Permitted to Resume

By Rep. Joe Emrick

NAZARETH - All over the Commonwealth, "elective" surgical procedures and necessary medical testing like hip replacements, endoscopies, mammograms and many other critical procedures have been put on hold to help reserve resources and space due to the pandemic. Last week, I signed a letter to the Pennsylvania Department of Health urging it to consider permitting health networks to resume these procedures.

This week, the Department of Health announced new guidance that will do just that, allowing hospitals and surgical centers to resume non-emergent surgeries and procedures, as long as the facilities remain prepared should they need to respond to COVID-19 cases. Click here for more information.

http://links.pahousenews.com/q/DR344e45J_nBrWRezKKf_H1j04_b6Vyk8XKxMpvdSepv7-EgOxDsXj-16lSw



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We'll be using Zoom to host this meeting. You will need access to a computer so that you can see and hear us. A microphone or headset is important. A webcam is optional (but nice to have). You may want to test your settings a few minutes prior to joining us.

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Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Buying vs. Being Sold To

Well the advertisements have started in the trade journals for all the marketing experts that can make an air conditioning contractor rich this spring. There was a passionate discussion this week on one of the blogs I follow about what is good sales technique and what constitutes pressure. What it really boils down to is a homeowner making a decision based on all available information. Some of that information will invariably have to come from a contractor and if it is slanted, the decision to replace a system may be one that was based on partial truths.

Reasons to replace instead of repairing a system are usually made when something is broken. The questions at that time are what will it cost to repair the system and how reliable will it be afterward. Opinions from a service based technician and a salesperson may vary widely. There are some pricey repairs I would still suggest on a system over 10 years old and I was accused of "nickel and diming" my customers when I mentioned that on the blog. Here is

what you need to consider when making your own decision. Does the repair require opening the refrigerant system? I mean removing the refrigerant and replacing major components like a compressor. If not, and the system has been leak-free and reliable up to this point, an electrical repair like a motor is probably well worth doing. An air conditioning system should last 20 years if it was not a builder grade model and not run in the winter. That excludes heat pumps but they should last 15 years without a problem. The amount of energy you can save by upgrading to a 16 SEER model from say a 12 SEER is not going to account for much in your energy bill. Some salespeople use that as an inducement but you won't know it was wrong until several months after you paid for a new system.

Rebates are helpful but \$100 won't go too far if your new system is \$10,000. Some parts fail more commonly than others and for that reason we search out electrical parts made in the USA and ones that are rated higher than the original parts so that they do not fail every few years. It seems that most smaller contractors are more tuned in to a homeowners problem more than some of the franchises but that's just my opinion.

The bottom line is to get accurate information and get a second opinion if something doesn't seem right with what you are told when your system breaks down.

Ken Field is the owner of Field's Service, Inc. and Slate Belt Energy Services. He has over 40 years of experience in heating, air conditioning and is certificated by RESNET and BPI in various areas of energy conservation. He can be reached at 610-599-8832 or at www.SlateBeltEnergy.com

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Farmers Markets Prepared to Safely Open Amid COVID-19

By Michael Ortoski

PORTLAND - Farmers markets, like grocery stores, offer life-sustaining food and essentials and have been provided guidance from the Department of Agriculture on ways to safely operate and minimize risks during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

The guidance also offers farms the opportunity to open an on-farm stand to sell raw produce, eggs, or shelf stable packaged foods such as jams, jellies, or baked goods without additional food safety licenses. More information about Pennsylvania's farm markets is available at pafarm.com.

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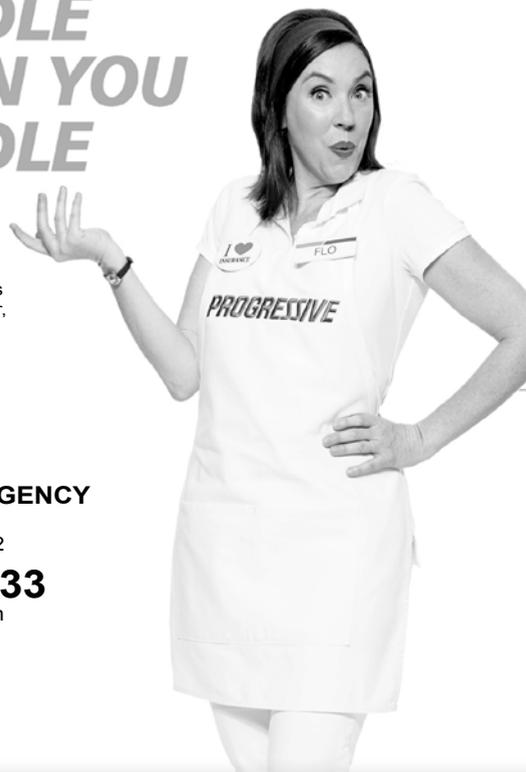
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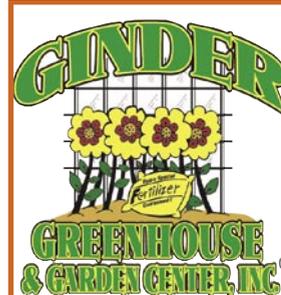
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