



Spreading Holiday Cheer Through Service: A Volunteer's Story

This holiday season, the spirit of giving shines brightly through the actions of John and Jessica, owners of Innovative Design LLP—a Veteran- and Female-Owned business in Washburn County, WI. Their generous gift of time and expertise brought warmth and accessibility to the home of a fellow Veteran. By installing a handrail on the exterior steps and a grab bar in the entryway, they've made a disabled Veteran's home safer and more comfortable, enabling them to age in place with greater ease.

John and Jessica's dedication is a heartwarming reminder that giving isn't just about monetary donations; it's about offering skills, effort, and care to make a real difference. Their work enhances the holiday season for this Veteran, ensuring their home is a safe haven for years to come. As we celebrate the holidays, let their example inspire us to give back to our communities in meaningful ways. Together, we can make this season a time of safety, comfort, and joy for all.



Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity Honored by 100 Women Who Care of Burnett/Polk County.

We're thrilled to announce that we had the opportunity to present our mission to 100 Women Who Care of Burnett/Polk County, where we competed alongside three other incredible nonprofits and proudly placed second! Thank you to 100 Women Who Care for this wonderful platform to share the stories and experiences of our clients and the impact of Habitat for Humanity. We're grateful for your support in building stronger communities together!





Hours:

**Wednesday - Saturday:
9am - 5pm**

**Sunday-Tuesday:
CLOSED**

**Phone:
(715) 635-4771**

Donation hours are by appointment. To schedule an appointment, please call the ReStore during business hours. We are unable to schedule pick-ups of donated items.



Office Hours:

**Monday- Friday:
8am-4pm**

Located At:

**1357 North River St.
Spooner, WI 54801**

"Ensuring Fireplace Safety: Preventing Chimney Fires and Damage

As temperatures drop, many of us begin using fireplaces and wood stoves to heat our homes, whether in older houses or newer ones. For those unfamiliar with managing a fireplace, it can be challenging to know where to start. Fireplaces and wood stoves are designed to safely contain wood-fueled fires, typically using wood pellets or logs, to provide warmth (Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d.). The chimney directs the smoke and gases produced by the fire outside, keeping harmful fumes from entering your home. These gases include smoke, water vapor, unburned wood particles, hydrocarbons, tar fog, and minerals (Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d.).

As these byproducts leave the chimney, they cool and form a residue called creosote (Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d.). If this creosote builds up over time and the temperature inside the chimney becomes high enough, it can ignite, causing a dangerous chimney fire (Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d.). Restricted airflow and burning unseasoned wood are factors that contribute to the buildup of creosote.

To ensure your fireplace operates safely, it's important to follow a few precautions. Always use a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers and sparks from escaping. Avoid burning paper in the fireplace, as this can increase the risk of a fire. Before going to bed, make sure to completely extinguish the fire. Additionally, store ashes in a metal container with a lid, and place the container outside at least three feet from your home to prevent the risk of a fire (Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d.).

Regular chimney inspections and maintenance can help prevent hazardous creosote buildup and ensure your fireplace remains a safe source of warmth during the colder months.

Winter Roof Protection: Preventing Ice Dams and Damage

Winter is one of the most challenging seasons for roof damage, with elements like heavy rain, sleet, and snow testing the integrity of our homes. One of the most notorious issues in Wisconsin winters is ice dams. These occur when repeated cycles of freezing and melting cause snowmelt to accumulate at the edge of the roof, where it refreezes into an ice dam (Michigan.gov, n.d.).

To prevent ice dams from causing costly damage, there are several steps you can take. First, ensure your rain gutters are clear of debris, such as leaves and sticks, to allow snowmelt to flow freely off the roof (Michigan.gov, n.d.).



It's also helpful to remove snow from your roof as much as possible. Tools like snow rakes can help you clear snow safely from the ground, reducing the risk of ice dams and preventing the risk of your roof collapsing from the heavy snow load (Michigan.gov, n.d.).

Lastly, proper insulation and ventilation are critical for winter roof maintenance. Insulation reduces heat loss from your home's interior, while ventilation helps keep the attic cool enough to minimize the freeze/thaw cycles that contribute to ice dam formation (Michigan.gov, n.d.).



Stay Safe This Winter: Tips for Proper Snow and Ice Removal

Living in the Midwest means facing the reality of ice and snow, and while many of us have been clearing snow for years, doing it improperly can lead to safety risks. It's essential to wear the right clothing for protection against the cold. Dress in layers according to the weather, and make sure to wear waterproof boots with good traction, thick socks, head coverings, mittens or gloves, as well as sunscreen and lip balm to protect exposed skin (State Farm, n.d.).

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<https://wilddrivershabitat.org/>

Proper technique when shoveling is just as important. Push the snow rather than lift it, and if lifting is necessary, use your knees instead of your back to avoid strain (State Farm, n.d.). Clearing snow sooner rather than later can also make a big difference, as snow becomes harder to shovel once it starts melting and refreezing (State Farm, n.d.). Take your time, work at a steady pace, and take breaks as needed. Once the snow is cleared, reduce ice buildup by mixing ice melt with sand and spreading it evenly on sidewalks and driveways. After the ice has melted, scoop up the leftover salt and dispose of it properly (State Farm, n.d.).

Citations:

Michigan.gov. (n.d.). Preventing roof ice dams. MI Ready. <https://www.michigan.gov/miready/be-informed/winter-prep/preventing-roof-ice-dams>

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (n.d.). Chimney fire precautions. <https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/chimney-fire-precautions>

State Farm. (n.d.). Winter sidewalk safety. State Farm. <https://www.statefarm.com/simple-insights/residence/winter-sidewalk-safety>

Wild Rivers
Habitat
for Humanity®
Upcoming Events



Cars for Homes
2024

Ongoing | [habitat.org/carsforhomes](https://www.habitat.org/carsforhomes)
*Build strength, stability, and self-reliance
through shelter.*



Support Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity through our Cars for Homes campaign! Donate your car, and when you designate us as the recipient, the proceeds will help build and repair homes for families in need. It's an easy way to make a big impact!

Support Habitat this Holiday Season!

If you or your spouse are 70.5 or older and have an IRA account, you may want to consider a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) as a tax-efficient way to give back. By using a QCD, you can make charitable contributions while avoiding federal and state taxes on the amount donated.

As you think about the holiday season and the new year approaching, consider some other great ways to support Wild Rivers Habitat while also gaining some great benefits.

Talk to your financial advisor about how a QCD can also fulfill your Required Minimum Distribution obligations. To ensure your donation is processed before the end of the year, it's best to plan and make arrangements early. This strategy benefits both you and the causes you care about!



Scan Here to Donate!

