

The Ranch Report

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National Survey Reveals Roof Damage Is One Of The Top Issues That Stress Out American Homeowners

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Roof damage is among the top 3 stressful issues for homeowners next to burst pipes and flood damage according to a new national survey by Owens Corning Roofing. While a roof is one of the most important items protecting most American's single largest financial investment, 69% of homeowners admitted to rarely, if ever, looking at their roof or hiring a professional to do so in advance of unpredictable weather seasons. Nationwide, the survey also found that 70% say the cost of repairs would be taxing, but only 29% of homeowners have money set aside to address unexpected roof damage.

Specific to Austin, the survey found that 40% of Austin homeowners admit they don't currently have money set aside to repair or replace unexpected roof damage and yet in the last three years only 3% say they always check or have their roofs checked before the start of a season that typically brings bad weather.

"Understanding the importance of checking their roofs and knowing the basics of roof maintenance and damage can help ensure homeowners are better prepared for upcoming weather," says Tracy

Sanders and Luke Evans of Sanders Roofing and Exteriors. "It can literally make a huge financial impact for you and your family."

Checking the Condition of a Roof

According to Tracy Sanders and Luke Evans, there are a few simple steps Austin homeowners can take to identify issues and make sure their roof is ready for upcoming weather: WIN (Walk the Attic, Inspect Your Ceilings, Note Outside Changes).

Walk the attic:

Often, early warning signs of current or future roof problems are visible in your attic long before they become apparent from the inside or the outside. Look for daylight coming from around any of the roof penetrations (e.g. chimney, soil pipe, vents, etc.) and check for any signs of moisture or staining on the underside wood of your roof including mold.

Inspect ceilings: The first and simplest check that you likely do without even noticing it, is to occasionally inspect the ceilings in the rooms on the highest level of your home. Check for staining or discoloration on the ceilings of these rooms and hallways, especially during or after heavy precipitation.

Note outside changes: At the start of each new season you should conduct an external visual inspection of your roof from the ground. Things to look for include: curling, blistering, damaged or missing shingles; missing granules including circular shapes; sagging shingle rows; moss or discoloration; and shiny shingles. **IMPORTANT:** A close-up inspection of your roof is recommended at least once a year, but if you are uncomfortable, inexperienced or have any doubts about your or your spouse's ability to do this safely, you should not try this and should call a professional roofing contractor instead.

Importance of a Certified Contractor: According to the survey, more than 54% of American homeowners say that finding a contractor they could trust would be stressful – in fact, it is so

(Continued on Page 3)



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crucial that most homeowners (75%) said they would be willing to pay more money to find a contractor they could trust. The survey also found that for three quarters of Americans (75%), the single most important sign to know if a contractor can be trusted was a certification by a national roofing manufacturer.

To find a trustworthy local roofing contractor, Owens Corning recommends the following:

- If someone says your entire roof needs to be replaced, but you are unsure, get a second opinion, especially on newer roofs
- Check to make sure that the contractor is fully insured and make sure you get proof
- Confirm that a contractor carries valid state & local licenses and fully understands local knowledge of codes
- Check that the contractor is affiliated/certified by a trusted national roofing manufacturer
- Make sure the contractor has good standing with the Better Business Bureau; you can find out by visiting <https://www.bbb.org/en/us/search/>
- Looking for a trustworthy and reliable contractor in your area, but don't know where to start? Visit <https://www.sandersroofs.com/> or, for a list of additional reliable, vetted independent contractors in your area, visit www.owenscorning.com/roofing/contractors.

About Owens Corning: Owens Corning (NYSE: OC) develops, manufactures, and markets insulation, roofing, and fiberglass composites. Global in scope and human in scale, the company's market-leading businesses use their deep expertise in materials, manufacturing, and building science to develop products and systems that save energy and improve comfort in commercial and residential buildings. Through its glass reinforcements business, the company makes thousands of products lighter, stronger, and more durable. Ultimately, Owens Corning people and products make the world a better place. Based in Toledo, Ohio, Owens Corning posted 2017 sales of \$6.4 billion and employs 19,000 people in 37 countries. It has been a Fortune 500® company for 63 consecutive years. For more information, please visit www.owenscorning.com/.

About Sanders Roofing and Exteriors: Sanders Roofing & Exteriors has been pushing the limits for the past 10 years to become the most reliable roofing company in all of Central Texas. Tracy and Kim Sanders and Luke and Michele Evans are the operators of Sanders Roofing & Exteriors, overseeing its day-to-day success. As a family owned and operated company, much of our business comes from referrals. If we don't do our job to your satisfaction then you won't recommend us to your family, friends, and neighbors – and everyone loses! We promise quality workmanship and products for every job, and our customers can testify to the high standards we maintain. Sanders Roofing & Exteriors is a proud Owens Corning "Platinum Preferred Contractor". For more information, visit <https://www.sandersroofs.com/>.

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Elsa England Elementary School	704-1200
.....	8801 Pearson Ranch Road
Cedar Valley Middle School.....	428-2300
.....	8139 Racine Trail
Pearson Ranch Middle School	704-1500
.....	8901 Pearson Ranch Road
McNeil High School.....	464-6300
.....	5720 McNeil Dr.

LEANDER ISD

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.....	11501 Staked Plains Dr.
Stiles Middle School	570-0000
.....	3250 Barley Rd.
Vista Ridge High School.....	570-1800
.....	200 S. Vista Ridge Dr.

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PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

Sometimes, the seemingly smallest items can make the biggest difference in a child's life. That's where the Rainbow Room comes in. It's our 24/7 resource center located in the CPS offices where caseworkers can come to gather essential items for children who are in crisis. We stock everything from toiletries to clothing to car seats. Thanks to the donations we receive, we're able to serve more than 650 children every month. But our need continues to grow. By donating to the Rainbow Room, you'll make an immediate and powerful difference in these children's safety, health, and comfort. Whether it's a teddy bear or a toothbrush, every item that you donate matters. To schedule a time to drop off donations, contact Marcus at marcus@partnershipsforchildren.org or 512-834-4756.



The Rainbow Room is a 247 resource center located in the Child Protective Services office where caseworkers can gather new and essential items needed for the kids in their caseload whose lives are in crisis. The Rainbow Room is in constant need of brand new items for the more than 700 children it serves each month.

Click on **donate items** on our homepage www.partnershipsforchildren.org

Items Needed:

- diapers/pull ups (all sizes)
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- pack 'n' plays
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Sundara Memory Care Hosts Lewy Body Dementia Caregiver Support Group



In Texas alone, roughly 1.3 million caregivers provide an average of 20 hours a week of unpaid care for friends and loved ones with Alzheimer's or related dementia. Caregiving is a demanding undertaking and results in such high levels of stress that 65 percent of caregivers will have a major health crisis before their loved ones die of the disease.

Many people think that Alzheimer's is the only type of dementia and that one type of support group will suffice, but Sarah Hyde-Williams understands that is not the case, which is why she started the North Austin Lewy Body support group, for those struggling with caregiving for a loved one with this type of dementia.

"Our support group truly focuses on education and support,"

said Sarah Hyde-Williams, Support Group Leader. "Our participants can expect an understanding counselor's heart when coming to our group. I will truly focus on hearing the participant and validating their feelings whatever it may be on a given day."

Sarah has been leading support groups both in mental health and dementia worlds for 15 years and Kelly Hudson, co-facilitator of the support group and owner of Sundara Memory Care has been in the dementia field for over 25 years. With their knowledge and compassion, they are able to provide valuable support for caregivers.

"These groups educate and inform participants about dementia and help caregivers develop methods and skills to solve problems," says Christian Wells, President of the Alzheimer's Texas. "They

encourage caregivers to maintain their own personal, physical and emotional health as well as providing peer guidance on how to care for the person with dementia."

Sarah Hyde-Williams hosts the group at Sundara Memory Care in Round Rock, TX the second Monday of every month at 6 p.m.

When: 2nd Monday of every month at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Sundara Memory Care, 1000 Rusk Rd. Round Rock, TX 78665

Contact: Sarah Hyde-Williams (832) 794- 8810

For more information about support groups offered in Central Texas call (512) 241-0420 or visit www.txalz.org.



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Dine Well, Do Good with Water to Thrive at Chef's Table Austin 2018

Chef's Table Austin is the signature fundraiser supporting the mission of local non-profit Water to Thrive, which has built more than 850 water projects in rural Africa in the last 10 years bringing clean, safe water to more than 450,000 people.

Chef's Table Austin brings its supporters together with some of Austin's top chefs in an exciting, fast-paced evening. The centerpiece of the event, to be held Thursday, September 27, at Brazos Hall, is a high-energy live auction of menus and dinner experiences created by our chefs, giving each winner a unique opportunity to have that chef cook specifically for them and their guests. The 2018 lineup is spearheaded by Austin's renowned and Chef's Table Founding Chef David Bull of Second Bar + Kitchen, with the full lineup to be announced by mid-August.

All proceeds for the event benefit Water to Thrive operations, making it possible for the charity to sustain its mission of bringing clean, safe water to rural African communities in need. Each dollar raised for operations allows the organization to bring in nearly \$6 for water, and to maintain its 100 Percent Promise that every dollar donated for water projects goes directly to fund water projects.

In addition to the live auction, to be conducted by Heath Hale and his Cowboy Auctioneers, and the opportunity to mix and mingle with some of Austin's top chefs, the evening features a VIP reception, open bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and an extensive silent auction including a Hamilton in NY experience.

Tickets for this year's fundraiser are on sale now. For just \$95, or \$175 per couple, you'll have access to the main event



which features the silent and live auctions, food and drink, and chances to win prizes. Purchase VIP tickets for \$150 each or \$280 per couple, and your benefits include early entry to the event, exclusive silent auction items, one-on-one time with our chefs, preferred seating for the live auction, specialty appetizers, and more.

For more information about Chef's Table Austin and to purchase tickets, go to chefstableaustin.org. Here you will also find photos, chef bios and menus, and sponsors from past years of this event. Check our website and Facebook event page for updates and promotions leading up to the event.

We hope you'll join us for Chef's Table Austin 2018, and help us continue to build wells and change lives!

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by Jim and Lynne Weber



Common Spotted Whiptail

Small to medium-sized slender lizards, whiptails and racerunners can be distinguished from other lizard species by their generally granular dorsal (topside) scales, larger rectangular ventral (underside) scales arranged in transverse rows, long tails, and forked, snake-like tongues. Additionally, these species belong to the genus *Aspidoscelis*, from the Greek *aspidō* or 'shield' and *skelos* or 'leg', relating to their well-developed limbs that enable them to sprint at rapid speeds. Terrestrial and diurnal, these lizards are primarily carnivorous or insectivorous, actively foraging for food while temperatures are warm, and quickly skirting between objects for cover.

Just over 10 inches long, the Six-lined Racerunner has seven light dorsal stripes with a greenish wash on the head and upper body that fades to brown posteriorly. Males may also have a blue throat and belly, and juveniles often have more distinct stripes, lack the green wash, but have a bright blue tail. Females lay clutches of 1 to 6 eggs from May to August. Associated more with sandy soils, this lizard can occupy a wide variety of habitats, including grasslands, riverbanks, floodplains, and juniper woodlands. Spiders and grasshoppers are their chief prey, and

Of the 22 species occurring in the southwest, Central Texas is home to the Common Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis gularis*) and Six-lined Racerunner (*Aspidoscelis sexlineata*).

The Common Spotted Whiptail has a brownish-green body with 7 to 8 longitudinal yellowish-white stripes and similarly colored spots in the margins. Its tail is up to twice the length of its body, reaching a total length of just about 12 inches. It is found in prairies, grasslands, rocky hillsides, dense thickets, and canyon bottoms, often near water. Males are larger than females, having a red, orange, or pinkish throat and sometimes a blue or light blue belly. Females have a white or cream-colored underside, and lay 1 to 8 eggs in July, typically in a separate chamber of their underground burrow, sometimes as deep as 11 inches. These lizards scare easily and often retreat in a straight line, but can best be viewed from April through August when their insect prey are most abundant.

(Continued on Page 8)



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RANCH REPORT

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Six-lined Racerunner

adults actively forage during the day, but as summer temperatures rise by July, their activity becomes bimodal, peaking in the morning and late afternoon to avoid the hottest parts of the day.

Like many lizards, whiptails and racerunners have developed the ability to allow the tail to break free of the body when grasped by a predator. Called tail autonomy, this process involves wriggling the detached tail to distract the predator while the lizard itself is able to escape. Complex adaptations have evolved to enable the tail to be released along a series of fracture planes, which usually occur through weakened vertebrae, and not between them. Most amazingly, these species also have the ability to regenerate the tail, albeit slowly, so it can be lost again if necessary.

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, check out our books, *Nature Watch Austin* and *Nature Watch Big Bend* (published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.

GUESTS IN YOUR ATTIC

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



Who doesn't enjoy seeing squirrels scamper from tree to tree? Everyone loves seeing birds at their feeders. Who doesn't love seeing the does with their fawns? We live side by side with wildlife. Is it any wonder that conflicts arise between humans and the animals?

This is baby season for raccoons. You may find that a mama raccoon has taken up residence in your attic or garage. The best advice we can offer you is to leave her alone. Within a couple of weeks, she will lead her babies out of your attic or garage to live in the wild. If you just can't wait, here are a couple of things you can try. Put a bright light in the area at night and play some LOUD music. Some say talk radio is best. You can throw some moth balls in the area or ammonia-soaked cotton balls. She will probably choose to move the babies to a darker, quieter place outside. When she moves out, it's your responsibility to find out how she got in and block the entrance or your attic will always look like an apartment for rent to wildlife.

We often receive calls from homeowners asking for advice on how to stop raccoons that are getting into trash cans. Solution: try using some bungee cords to secure the top. Another issue we hear about is that raccoons are eating food that is being put out for feral cats. Since raccoons are nocturnal, simply removing the cat food at night will fix the problem except in the spring when mama raccoons can be seen looking for food during the day. No, they are not rabid! They are just hungry. Some homeowners ask about trapping and relocating. While removal may seem like a solution, it usually only creates an enticing vacancy for another animal in search of a meal. Remove raccoons from an area and it's only a matter of time before others move in to take their place. Additionally, the survival rate of relocated raccoons is very low. Raccoons are territorial and putting a lone raccoon into an area already populated with other raccoons can often result in death as the other raccoons will consider him/her as an intruder.

There are products available that may help not only with raccoons but other animals as well. One such product is the motion-activated sprinkler. When an animal gets close to the food source, the sprinkler goes off and scares them away. Just do an internet search and I'm certain you'll find other products that may work as well.

With urban sprawl and loss of habitats, we need to learn to live in harmony with wildlife. TWRC Wildlife Center can often help you find solutions to your issues. Check our website at www.twrcwildlifecenter.org



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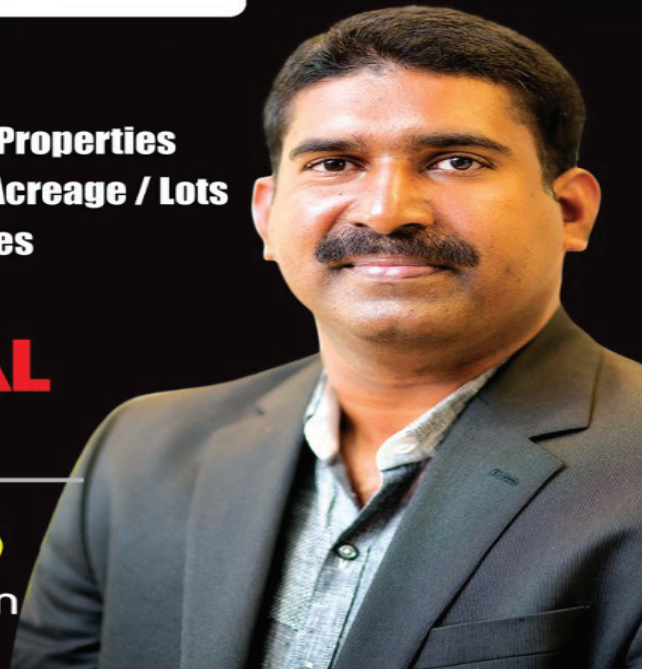
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