

The Maple Lake MESSSENGER *Extra*

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Spray Foam Insulation Systems Inc: *filling all of your insulation needs*

By Brenda Erdahl

“Straight forward,” “good advice,” “fair price,” “prompt” and “professional” are some of the positive things customers have to say about Spray Foam Insulation Systems Inc. in Maple Lake.

Since 2004 the family owned company has taken care of central Minnesota’s insulation needs. Owner John Matthees and his “clean” and “courteous” crew handle everything from foundation waterproofing and foundation insulation to residential batting, Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam, blown fiberglass and attic re-blows.

Last winter Matthees purchased Lewis Insulation in St. Michael to more than double the size of his company. The growth required the construction of a new addition to his shop on Maple Ave NW in downtown Maple Lake. Today his crews provide insulation services throughout the metro and locally.

Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam

Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam is still relatively new in the world of insulation. It’s been slow to catch on but is still by far and away the best option when it comes to conserving heat and energy, Matthees said.

“There is nothing better than Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam,” he said. “Fiberglass has an R-Value of 3.5 per inch. Foam has an R-Value of 7 per inch. In one inch that is doubling the R-Value,” he said.

R-Value is a measure of insulation’s ability to resist heat traveling through it. The higher the R-Value the better the thermal performance of the insulation.

“If you have 2x4 walls in an old house, you can achieve the

energy codes of today,” Matthees said.

The other plus about Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam is that it doesn’t need ventilation to do its job, unlike other insulation products on the market.

Economically, Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam is more expensive, but the long-term return is well worth it. Matthees tells his customers it’s about 66 percent more cost on a new construction but has a seven to 10-year return investment. For customers remodeling an older home, it’s a good choice, but if you don’t have a significant remodel in mind and just want to increase your home’s efficiency, Spray Foam Insulation has an answer for that as well.

Blown Fiberglass and insulation removal

Blown Fiberglass is a popular and less intrusive way to increase the R-Value in existing homes. It involves drilling a hole outside and using it to blow in the cellulose insulation. Spray Foam Insulation Systems technicians can also remove old insulation with a vacuum and replace it with new insulation. This is a popular feature as well, especially when there is water damage due to an ice dam or other situation, Matthees said.

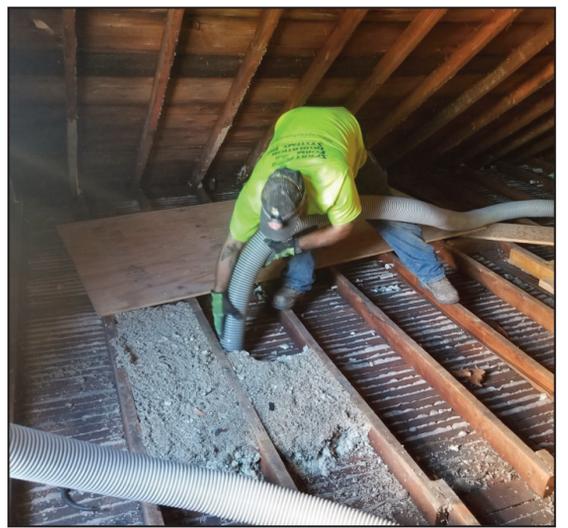
Matthees estimates his crews use the blown fiberglass technique in up to 700 homes over the course of the year. It’s a very in-demand service.

New Construction

March is the time of year when new construction projects are getting underway which means it’s busy season at Spray Foam Insulation Systems. Matthees and his crews insulate a lot of new constructions and 70 percent of them use Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam, he said. The other 30 percent



Above, right, John Matthees is the owner of Spray Foam Insulation Systems Inc. Matthees and his crew handle everything from foundation waterproofing and foundation insulation to residential batting, Closed Cell Polyurethane Foam, blown fiberglass and attic re-blows. Above, left, this was a roof tear off with foaming from the top down project that Matthees’ technicians completed. At right, Spray Foam technicians can remove old insulation and replace it to increase the R-Value in places like your attic.



Business Buzz

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choose to use traditional fiberglass batting. Luckily, Spray Foam technicians do it all.

Spray Foam Insulation Systems team

Spray Foam Insulation Systems technicians have years of experience under their belts. One of Matthees’ employees has been with him since he was 19 years old. Clients have called his crews “clean,” “professional,” “prompt,” “knowledgeable” and “great to deal with.”

Energy rebates

As a certified contractor through Center Point Energy, customers of Spray Foam Insulation Systems are eligible for rebates, especially for projects like attic upgrades that save energy in older homes. According to Matthees, his crews do a lot

of attic re-blows and clients are always excited about how much heat they can conserve.

Built from scratch

Matthees built Spray Foam Insulation Systems from scratch. Before becoming a businessman, he was on the road a lot, he said. Then one day he decided that wasn’t a good

way of life for a new father. So, in 2004, with no prior experience only a lot of research and preparation to carry him on, he opened his business. He worked alone for 1 ½ years before hiring his first employee and now he’s up to 13 technicians.

In 2011, he moved his shop from South Haven to Maple Ave NW in Maple Lake and has

grown even more with the purchase of Lewis Insulation and the construction of the new building.

Matthees owns the business with his wife Leslie.

For more information on Spray Foam Insulation Systems visit www.sprayfoamis.com see them on facebook or call 763-250-3619.



Ice dams can cause water to leak into your home and ruin insulation. This dam was caused by lack of ventilation and insulation. Spray Foam can help fix the problem.



This technician is removing inefficient or damaged insulation with equipment that works kind of like a vacuum cleaner. (Photos submitted)



Above, Spray Foam crews are also skilled at foundation waterproofing. For more information visit www.sprayfoamis.com see them on facebook or call 763-250-3619.

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The meaning behind the shamrock

When talking about Ireland and its culture and symbolism, many different images come to mind. Affectionately known as the Emerald Isle, Ireland is perhaps best known for its bright green hue. Irish flags and even harps are symbolic of the nation, but there is perhaps one symbol that most widely represents the country: the shamrock.

A shamrock, by definition, is a young sprig of clover. However, plant experts actually have said that shamrocks are a

distinct species of the clover plant, believed to be the white clover. The word "shamrock" is derived from the Irish "seamróg," which translates as "young clover." Over the centuries, this diminutive plant has come to symbolize Ireland and many things Irish. The shamrock also is a popular symbol of St. Patrick's Day.

The shamrock and Irish culture are so intertwined thanks to Ireland's patron saint, St. Patrick. Legends attest to St. Patrick using the three petals of

the shamrock to illustrate the mysteries of the Holy Trinity to the Celtic pagans. Each leaf represented the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The shamrock of Ireland has three leaves, not four as many people believe. The number three had significance in Ireland long before St. Patrick began to convert the masses. According to Blarney.com, the number three was believed to have magical properties and was a recurring theme in Celtic folklore. Because the Celts

were familiar with the shamrock, it became easy to convert their knowledge of the shamrock to the magic of the trinity. The three leaves are also said to stand for faith, hope and love.

The four-leaf clover is a separate entity and a rarity. That is why the fourth leaf is deemed to be "lucky." But that lucky clover is not the traditional Irish symbol.

Thanks to their connection with Ireland, shamrocks are often gifted by the Prime Min-

ister (Taoiseach) to the President of the United States in the White House each St. Patrick's Day. They are presented in a special Waterford crystal bowl featuring shamrocks in the design. This practice started in 1952.

Shamrocks also can be seen on Irish clothing designs, the Erin go Bragh flag and the uniforms of several Irish sports teams. Of course they also are seen during St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The shamrock and Ireland will always be linked.



Irish flags and even harps are symbolic of the nation, but there is perhaps one symbol that most widely represents the country: the shamrock.

(Photo submitted)

The meaning behind "sláinte"

When hoisting a pint with loved ones this St. Patrick's Day, revelers will no doubt hear the word "sláinte" at some point. This may be a familiar toast on St. Patrick's Day, but it is one that many revelers likely don't understand.

St. Patrick's Day is rife with tradition, and many celebrants cannot imagine celebrating on March 17 without a pint of beer.

If that pint is the signature stout made by the Dublin-based Guinness brewery, then all the better. Saying "sláinte" before taking a sip of beer is a St. Patrick's Day tradition that utilizes an Irish expression. According to IrishCentral.com, the word "sláinte" is derived from the Old Irish word "slán," which means "healthy" or "safe." So St. Patrick's Day revelers who

say "sláinte" when gathered at the pub with loved ones are toasting the health and safety of their friends and families.

While "sláinte" is used in various contexts, in North

America it's most often employed as a toast before drinking. However, IrishCentral.com notes that sláinte is part of other expressions as well. For example, the phrase "Is fearr an

tsláinte ná na táinte" translates to "health is better than wealth" in English. And once the pints have been finished and it's time to call it a night, those same people who toasted "sláinte" may want to say "Go dte tú slán," which translates to "May you go safely" in English. When used in this context, the word

"slán," which has various meanings, is a way to say "farewell."

This St. Patrick's Day, celebrants who are out with friends or simply enjoying a pint at home with family can add a little extra joy to the holiday by offering the familiar and well-meaning "sláinte" toast before taking their first sips.

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Celebrate responsibly this St. Patrick's Day

Millions of people will celebrate St. Patrick's Day this March 17 with fanfare, food, parades, and, for many, adult beverages. Irish law prohibited pubs from opening on religious holy days like St. Patrick's Day until the 1970s. According to the culture and travel site Irish Central, it was feared that leaving the pubs open would be too tempting for some during Lent and would

lead to overconsumption of alcohol on this most solemn day. That begs the question as to how imbibing became tied to the St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Many of the traditions so closely associated with the St. Patrick's Day holiday are due to American influence. Some of the first parades and parties in honor of Ireland's patron saint originated not on the Emerald Isle,

but on American soil. Nowadays, many St. Patrick's Day celebrations feature alcohol, with some establishments even producing green beer for the occasion.

Fortune magazine states on average 13 million pints of Guinness will be consumed on St. Patrick's Day worldwide. Guinness joins Baileys Original Irish Cream and Jameson Irish Whiskey as popular Irish drinks to consume on the holiday. St. Patrick's Day is the fourth most popular drinking day of the year behind New Year's Eve, Christmas and the Fourth of July, according to WalletHub. Even if alcohol is part of the party, St. Patrick's Day celebrants can follow these tips to have fun responsibly.

- Do not drink and drive no

matter how much you've consumed. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, nearly 69 percent of crash fatalities on March 18 involve drunk drivers between midnight to 5:59 a.m.

- Ensure everyone you are partying with has a safe means of returning home, such as a rideshare, bus, taxi, or designated driver.

- Remember to eat well and stay hydrated throughout the day. Eating food with protein and fat before going out and while drinking can slow down the effects of alcohol. But even consuming such foods does not make it safe to drive after drinking.

- Remember to buddy up with other friends so that everyone



Even if alcohol is part of the party, St. Patrick's Day celebrants can follow these tips to have fun responsibly. (Photo submitted)

can look out for one another.

- If you are hosting a St. Patrick's Day party, downplay drinking by offering plenty of other beverages and a wide array

of foods.

St. Patrick's Day can be enjoyed in a responsible manner by being smart about alcohol consumption.

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