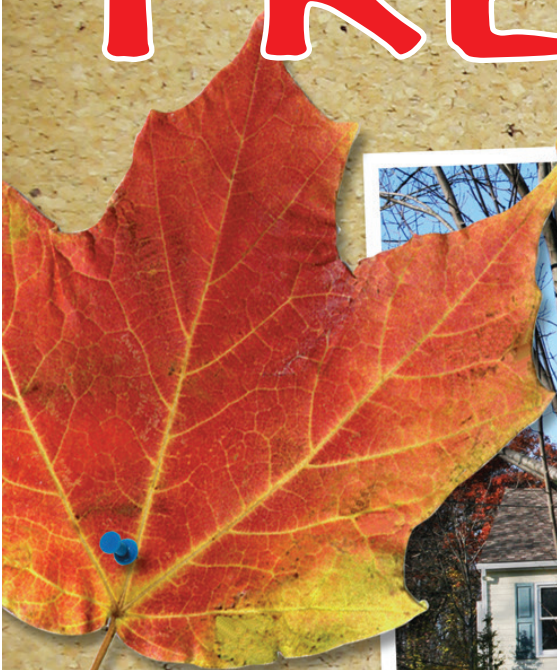


FRESH LOOKS FOR



Fall



All-electric homes on the rise; more environmentally friendly

When asked to think of modern homes, many people might think of minimalism, neutral colors, open concept floor plans, and large windows without treatments. While each of those features are components of modern homes, just what qualifies as “modern” is ever-changing and often a reflection of what buyers are looking for. And lately, many buyers are looking for all-electric homes.

A recent study by the U.S. Energy Information Administration found that the number of all-electric homes had increased over the previous decade. In fact, the EIA study found

that 25 percent of homes in the United States used only electricity. All-electric homes are generally considered more environmentally friendly because they lessen homeowners’ carbon footprint by reducing their need for fossil fuels like natural gas. Electric heat pumps, induction stoves and electric fireplaces are just some of the technologies that can be found in all-electric homes.

Though the design style of all-electric homes needn’t be modern, there’s no denying that the growing popularity of such homes makes them an option for homeowners with modern sensibilities.



An electric fireplace is just one of the technology options in all-electric homes.



815-539-5142

*Industrial - Commercial - Residential
For low-pitched, flat roofs*

- New Construction**
- Re-Roofing**



**705 Illinois Ave. • Mendota
[815] 539-5142**



GENERAL CONTRACTOR

*Quality work and craftsmanship
is our promise. We're proud of
the reputation we've earned as
contractors in our community
for over 37 years.*

**705 Illinois Ave. • Mendota
Call our office at [815] 539-7867**

What to know about floor-to-ceiling windows

Modern homes showcase many dazzling features, but perhaps none draw as much as instant attention as floor-to-ceiling windows. Often seen in high-rise apartments that boast panoramic city views, floor-to-ceiling windows also are right at home in single-family dwellings.

Homeowners considering floor-to-ceiling windows may have lots of questions. The following rundown can provide some basic information that can help homeowners decide if floor-to-ceiling windows are right for their homes.

Cost

Cost is often the primary consideration when mulling a home renovation, and that's even more significant as the world confronts the rising costs associated with inflation. The cost of installing floor-to-ceiling windows depends on a host of variables, including how many windows will be needed and where homeowners live. According to Modernize®, a service that facilitates connections between renovation-minded homeowners and local contractors, a floor-to-ceiling window wall costs somewhere between \$700 to \$1,600 per linear foot. Framing and glazing will add to those costs. Homeowners considering floor-to-ceiling windows are urged to receive several estimates for the project prior to choosing a contractor.

Lighting and energy efficiency

One of the more appealing aspects of

floor-to-ceiling windows is all the natural light they allow in. Of course, all that light also can drive up energy costs on sunny summer days. One way around that is to install energy efficient windows. Such windows include extra insulation to prevent cool air from escaping the home on summer days, which can reduce the need to lower the thermostat on your air conditioning. A wall of glass also can provide less insulation against the cold. The extra insulation in energy efficient windows also helps keep warm air from escaping a home in the winter. Energy efficient windows may cost more than less efficient alternatives. However, over the long haul, a wall of less efficient floor-to-ceiling windows will likely cost more due to excess energy consumption.

Privacy and fading

It's easy to be overwhelmed by the view floor-to-ceiling windows provide, especially in homes surrounded by serene natural settings like woods or properties that abut waterways. But that view outward also provides a view in, potentially compromising privacy. All that extra exposure to sunlight also can cause fabrics to fade over time. Floor-to-ceiling blinds and shades can protect homeowners' privacy and reduce fading on furniture, but this extra feature will add to the final cost of the project. Smart window tinting is another way to improve privacy and reduce fading, but this feature also will drive up the cost.



Floor-to-ceiling windows can be awe-inspiring. Homeowners considering such windows for their homes are urged to do their homework to ensure their homes are well-suited to this unique feature.

Fall Tune-Up Time

Call Grasser for your Furnace Check & Clean!

We specialize in **KEEPING YOUR HOME COMFORTABLE year-round!**

GRASSER'S
PLUMBING & HEATING, INC.
815-882-2111

404 W. Main St., McNabb, IL • www.grassersplumbingheating.com

THE TRUSTED LEADER IN CLEAN FOR OVER 70 YEARS

10% OFF YOUR TOTAL ORDER

Expires: 10/31/22 Promo Code: P15NP

AIR DUCT CLEANING

FOR A CLEANER & HEALTHIER HOME™

1-800-STEEMER® | stanleysteemer.com

Lasalle **815-224-1898**

CARPET • TILE & GROUT • HARDWOOD UPHOLSTERY • AREA RUG AIR DUCT

Minimum charges apply. Not valid in combination with other coupons or offers. Must present promo code at time of service. Valid at participating locations only. Residential only. Cannot be used for water emergency services. Certain restrictions may apply. Call for details.

Appliances • Cabinets • Furniture • Flooring • Lighting
Tools • Plumbing • Hardware • Paint • Electrical
Windows & Doors • Tile • Sinks • Building Supplies
Landscaping Material and so much more!

DONATE • SHOP • VOLUNTEER

*Helping families achieve strength, stability
and self-reliance through affordable shelter*

**A DISCOUNT HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE
WITH GREAT STUFF, AT A GREAT PRICE, FOR A GREAT CAUSE!**



Fireplaces can improve the appeal of a home. Various trends are popular this year, making fireplaces highly coveted features.

Fireplace trends help create attractive, comfortable rooms

Fireplaces are useful features in a home. Fireplaces are sources of ambient heat and also add style to indoor spaces.

Fireplaces can complement just about any interior style. Fireplaces can be traditional and burn wood or connect to a home's natural gas supply for on-demand ambiance. What's more, fireplaces may come in vented or ventless varieties, depending on homeowners' preferences and what is allowed by community building codes. That means a chimney or flue may not be needed — expanding the list of rooms where a fireplace can be installed.

Certain trends have emerged among fireplace fans in recent years. Here's a look at what's getting consumers fired up about these home decor elements.

- **Minimalist style:** Many fireplaces are designed in neutral colors with minimal trim that directs focus on the fire and not the appliance. When the fireplace is not in use, it blends in with surroundings and will not compete for attention with other design elements.

- **Convertible fireplaces:** Homeowners can choose between open or sealed fireplaces. A convertible fireplace enables homeowners to have the best features of these options. A convertible fireplace can be converted to wood from gas, or the opposite, in as little as 30 minutes.

- **Nature-inspired materials:** Natural stone continues to be a material of choice in fireplace surrounds. Light colors work well for a fireplace, and also fit with today's lighter color interior design preferences. Natural stone also works perfectly with both contemporary and rustic decor.

- **Vintage fireplaces:** Vintage continues to be a buzzword in 2022, and the choice to go vintage also applies to fireplace styles. A room decorated in vintage elements can be complemented with a vintage fireplace or one designed to look vintage.

- **Integrate into wall decor:** Fireplaces that are built right into a wall save space. One can have a television and a fireplace on the same wall. These types of fireplaces work well in modern home designs. Other fireplaces may be built into bookshelves or other wall features.

Fireplaces can improve the appeal of a home. Various trends are popular this year, making fireplaces highly coveted features.



ReStore
Habitat for Humanity
of LaSalle-Bureau-Putnam Counties

habitatstore-peru.org



1011 Shooting Park Road, Peru, IL 815-434-2041 Hours: Tues to Fri 10 - 6 Sat 10 - 5

Deck out your yard: Tips for building a ground-level deck

(BPT) - Whether you want to create a picturesque setting for al fresco dining, establish the perfect outdoor entertainment destination, or simply want a place to enjoy relaxing weekends, building a ground-level deck is an ideal way to maximize any outdoor space. Also called a “floating” or “platform” deck, a ground-level deck is a relatively easy and affordable DIY project. Due to its low profile, this type of structure doesn’t typically require safety railings or stairs, so the costs are comparatively

lower than building an elevated deck in terms of both materials and labor.

If you’ve got the skills, time and ambition, consider these helpful tips for how to build a ground-level deck that will transform your backyard into an outdoor oasis.

Planning and placement

A successful deck build starts with proper planning. While a ground-level deck typically does not require a permit, it is a good idea to check with your local builder’s office to confirm the building codes in your

area before you get started.

Next, consider how you plan to use your deck to determine the best location for it. Will you be hosting friends and family? If so, you may want to position your deck near the house. Are you envisioning a quiet outdoor oasis? Then, a secluded area of your yard might be best.

Foundation and ventilation

Once you know where you plan to build, assess the terrain to ensure proper water run-off and ventilation. Sustained dampness on a deck can lead to mold, rot

and decay. If you live in a location where the ground does not freeze, you could have the option to build the foundation with concrete deck blocks. Most areas where the ground freezes, you may need to use traditional concrete footings to build your deck foundation. It’s also recommended to install gravel under the structure to provide better drainage. Next, put stakes in the ground and string the perimeter to ensure the deck outline is level and square.

Installing the beams

At this stage, you should be able to see your deck starting to take shape. Lay the deck beams on top of the footings, making sure they are high enough off the ground

to allow for ventilation. Measure diagonally and tap the beams to line them up. Consider using temporary supports to hold your beams in place. Add additional gravel to level out the ground, if needed.

Attaching anchors and joists

Once the framing beams are level, attach angle brackets at the corners of the deck for additional support where the joists and beams meet. Use joist hangers to fasten the inner joists to the beam faces at regular intervals, using the spacing recommended by the decking manufacturer, as well as local building code regulations. This provides stability and gives you a good idea of how the decking will lay.

Laying the decking

Align the first length of decking with the outside edge. Once you’ve ensured that it’s even, install the remaining deck boards perpendicular to the joist. Make sure the boards are well-secured and gapped according to the decking manufacturer’s guidelines for proper ventilation. This is also important for preserving the warranty that may come with your decking material.

Finishing and enjoying

Once your decking is installed, use a circular saw to trim any overhang for clean, finished edges. After you’ve admired your hard work, make the space your own by adding plants, furniture and decorations to bring your outdoor oasis to life.



Due to its low profile, a ground-level deck doesn’t typically require safety railings or stairs, so the costs are comparatively lower than building an elevated deck in terms of both materials and labor.

BuildRite Home Pro's LLC
 When You Need it Built Right! BuildRite!
Office: 309-865-2129
Licensed Insured Bonded
Siding Concrete
Windows Gutters
Doors Pergolas
Decks Roofs

QUALITY GUARANTEED (multiple icons)

WARRANTY 5 YEARS
 ACCREDITED BUSINESS BBB A+ Rating
 CERTIFIED ANDERSEN CONTRACTOR

09142022

How to approach a basement remodel

A fully finished and functional basement is a dream for many homeowners. Such a space, when completed, can serve as an entertainment space, a man cave, an artist's studio, or any number of additional functions.

Despite their usefulness, finished basements are something of a rarity. In an analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Construction, the National Association of Home Builders® found that only around 24 percent of

single-family homes built in 2018 have basements. Homeowners who do not currently have a finished basement but are considering such a project can approach the remodel with a few key factors in mind. Careful consideration of these factors can ensure the project is budget-friendly and worthy of homeowners' investments.

• **Investment value:** Conventional wisdom among home renovation and real estate experts suggests that a basement remodel is best

if done to satisfy current inhabitants and not necessarily to appeal to prospective buyers once the home is put up for sale. Remodeling magazine reports that a midrange basement remodel costing around \$70,000 will provide a return of around \$49,000 (or 70 percent) at resale. Though that's not a poor return on investment, homeowners who are remodeling a basement solely for the potential ROI at resale can find other projects that provide a greater return.

• **Foundation:** The foundation of the home must garner ample consideration before beginning a basement remodel. Certain foundation issues, such as soft concrete, cracked or curved outside walls and cracks in the flooring, are indicative of significant issues with the foundation. These issues can be costly to address, and they must be remedied before the basement remodel can begin.



Homeowners who do not currently have a finished basement but are considering such a project can approach the remodel with a few key factors in mind.

• **Existing space:** Some homeowners may have bought their homes with partially finished basements or even finished areas that they simply want to remodel. In such instances, a pre-remodel inspection from a licensed home inspector can save homeowners lots of money and heartache over the long

haul. Partially finished or even aging finished basements might not have been renovated in adherence to codes, which could lead to costly violations down the road. An inspection in advance of a remodel can give homeowners an idea of what they will need to do to bring the basement up to code. Local officials also can provide a list of necessary permits and a detailed description of requirements to ensure the remodeled basement adheres to code.

• **Soil:** Soil surrounding the home should be tested prior to beginning the project. Radon is an odorless gas

found in soil that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency notes can increase individuals' risk for lung cancer. Radon can seep into basements and increase that risk even further if it is present at elevated levels in the soil surrounding a home. Radon tests are simple and inexpensive, and no basement remodel project should begin without first conducting such a test.

Finished basements are valuable spaces. Homeowners who want to finish or remodel their basements should consider a host of factors before beginning the renovation.

Let us make the kitchen you've always dreamed about a reality.



THE CABINET SHOPPE

116 2nd St • Standard

PH 815-339-4108 • Cell 815-481-7664

thecabinetgirl@hotmail.com

You & Your Business **Your Home** **Realtors/Contractors/Municipalities**

- Office Organization
- Financial Organization
- Kitchen
- Pantry
- Closets
- Basements
- Attics
- Garage
- Storage Units
- Restore Properties to SAFE Conditions
- Tenant & Storage
- Clean Outs
- Home Listing
- Readiness & Preparation

CEO *How Can I Help You?*

Curtis E Organizing

847.421.8651 | www.CurtisEOrganizing.com

Tina Curtis | Owner & Professional Organizer

CurtisEOrganizing@gmail.com

09/14/2022

HIGHSMITH HAUL AWAY
& JUNK REMOVAL

815-993-8673

Junk Removal
Estate Cleanouts
Furniture & Appliance Removal
Garage & Basement Cleanout
Light Demolition
& More

FREE ESTIMATES!

MENTION THIS AD AND GET 10% OFF!

HighsmithHaulAway.com

09/06/2022

LEAVE THE CLEANING TO US!

ILLINOIS VALLEY IVCT CLEAN TEAM, INC.

\$25 OFF YOUR FIRST CLEANING

CALL TO SCHEDULE YOUR FREE IN HOME ESTIMATE TODAY:

815.228.5273

WWW.IVCLEANTEAM.COM

"Creating free time for busy people since 2008"

Protecting your home when you're away

Vacation often serves as a well-deserved break from the hustle and bustle of daily life. When relaxing and recharging away from home, the last thing vacationers want to think about is the safety of their homes and everything inside them. However, the National Council for Home Safety and Security and Statistics Canada estimate that more than two million burglaries occur in the United States and Canada every year. That underscores the importance of protecting your home at all times, including when you're not there.

- Create the impression that someone is home. Just because you're heading off for parts unknown doesn't mean you can't create the impression that life is carrying on as usual within the walls of your home. Smart home technology now enables homeowners to set timers on lights and even home electronics like televisions and radios. Homeowners also can ask neighbors to pick up their mail or halt delivery until they return from their trips. Nothing says "no one's home" as definitively as an overflowing mailbox.

- Keep quiet on social media. A Credit Sesame survey of former burglars in the United Kingdom found that 78 percent acknowledged monitoring social media platforms such as Facebook and

Twitter as they try to find homes to burglarize. Individuals about to go on vacation should avoid sharing that on social media.

- Stay silent while you're away as well. Social media silence should be continued while you're on vacation as well. No matter how tempting it may be to share photos from an exotic location, such posts could catch the attention of all the wrong people. A recent report from MetLife indicated that 35 percent of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 check in from their locations via social media. That can alert criminals that no one is manning the fort back home.

- Switch from a traditional lock and key to a lockbox. Individuals who travel frequently can take a page from the realtor notebook and switch from a traditional lock and key lock system to a lockbox. Lockboxes require that a code is entered before a box containing a key can be unlocked. Homeowners who want this added measure of protection don't even need to put a key inside the lockbox, which typically covers a lock, making it extremely difficult for potential thieves to pick the lock.

Before leaving for vacation, individuals can implement various strategies and safety measures to protect their homes and their belongings while they're away.

Revitalize your landscape on a budget

Many homeowners think they have to spend tons of green to get green in their landscape, but that isn't necessarily so. Homeowners can improve their landscapes without digging themselves into financial holes. These strategies can help anyone save some cash and still end up with attractive gardens and more.

- Use stones or gravel for a walkway. If commercially installed pavers or cement walkways are not within your budget, there are some affordable alternatives. Flagstone or individually purchased and spaced pavers and pea gravel can be used to create pathways. Some construction sites even offer free stones when asked. Soften the look with moss or other plants on the perimeter.

- Remove some lawn. Lawns can require hours of upkeep that may involve the application of expensive fertilizers and weed-killing products that are not always so eco-friendly. Reduce the size of a lawn by putting in a mixed planting bed of perennials or ornamental grasses, or use landscape fabric and mulch.

- Look for free mulch. Municipal recycling centers may offer residents access to free mulch made from grinding up leaves, branches and other plant debris collected throughout the town. Simply bring a few containers to the recycling center and spread the mulch for an ornamental look or to insulate landscapes over winter and protect against weeds.

- Repurpose old items into planters. Old wheelbarrows, barrels, watering cans, and other items can be repurposed into container gardening vessels. Figure out if items marked for the garbage bin can be incorporated into garden features instead.

- Invest in plants that are easy to propagate. Perennials are the gardener's friend when it comes to saving money. These plants sprout anew each year, and many, such as sedum, catmint, ferns, hostas, and black-eyed Susans, can propagate by division. Figure out the best times of year to divide the plants and start growing them in individual containers before planting the sturdy new shoots in the ground. A single variety of plants



Some handy ideas can help homeowners transform landscapes without spending too much.

grouped together in mass plantings is affordable and easy.

- Shop end-of-season sales. Garden centers may begin to make room for holiday items come the fall. Take advantage of reduced costs on remaining plants and landscape accessories during this time of year. Plants can be covered or allowed to thrive indoors until they can be planted in the spring.

- Pool your resources. Homeowners planning on a big landscaping or revitalization project may want to speak with neighbors to see if they're interested in doing the same. Contractors guaranteed business from a few homes in the same neighborhood may be willing to negotiate lower prices for the volume of work on things like driveway repaving, deck- or fence-building, or installation of paver patios.

Some handy ideas can help homeowners transform landscapes without spending too much.

SITK

kitchen & bath

Let's imagine together!



somekitchen.com

815.879.0604

1619 N Main
Princeton, IL

01162019

AGG

Construction, Inc.

815-780-8777

16 Gunia Drive • LaSalle, IL

COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL

aggroofing-lasalle.com

▲ LICENSED ▲ BONDED

▲ INSURED

IL License # 104.016473

5-STAR RATING ON GOOGLE!



Top 5 ways to reduce your home energy costs this fall

(BPT) - As temperatures begin dropping this fall, you may be worrying about rising energy costs. Fortunately, there are a number of simple, proactive steps you can take that will save on energy and expenses for your home - while also increasing comfort - today and well into the future. On top of that, you will also be helping to increase the value of your home with these effective energy-saving measures.

Consider these five steps to help your home become more energy-efficient.

1. Give your furnace or boiler a checkup

Get in the habit of having your furnace or boiler professionally tuned up and cleaned at least once a year, ideally just before the weather starts turning colder. Just as you perform regular maintenance on your vehicle, make sure your entire HVAC system is in top condition - and replace your furnace filter at least every 90 days - to help your HVAC system run more efficiently. This will reduce your utility bills over time, while keeping you and your family warmer.

2. Go tankless

Looking for a great way to cut down on energy usage and also ensure more consistent access to hot water? Upgrading to a tankless water heater will save on energy and expenses compared to a traditional water heater. For example, Noritz EZ Series high-efficiency, condensing tankless water heaters are engineered to replace larger, conventional storage tank-type units, cutting both installation time and costs substantially. The wall-hung technology also has zero footprint in your home, which is a great space saver for smaller homes or if you

just need more areas for storage. Tankless water heaters efficiently provide continuous hot water - meaning no more cold showers - along with big energy savings. In addition, tankless water heaters like the Noritz EZ Series also result in reduced carbon emissions and have a longer life expectancy than traditional models. Tankless water heaters use top-mounted water connections, avoiding the need for additional and costly plumbing. Even better, you can often find money-saving rebate programs from your local gas utility for your new tankless water heater that will help cut the installed cost even more.

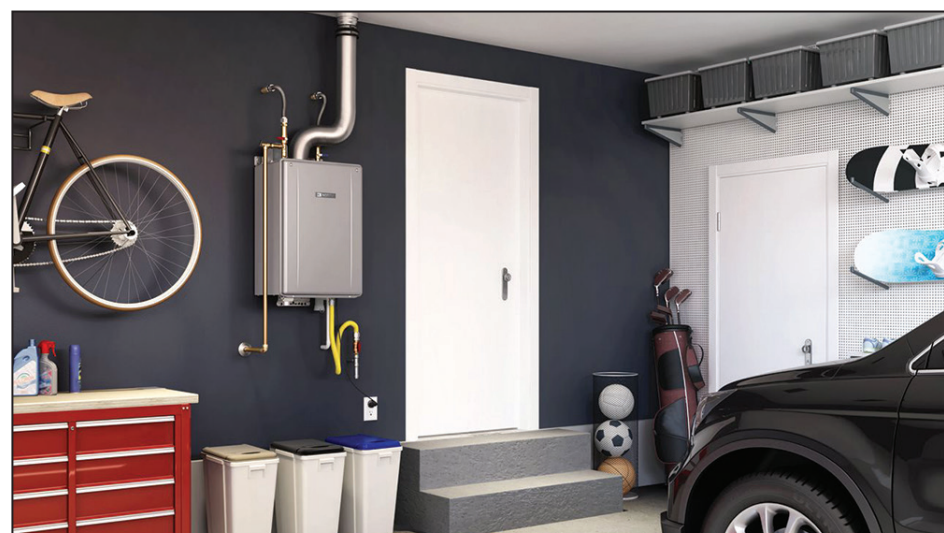
3. Insulate your attic

You're probably aware that heat rises - so if your attic is not properly insulated, you may be losing a lot of heated air through your roof every winter. Lack of good attic insulation can also lead to damage from ice buildup, which is costly to repair. If

you own an older home, it's a good idea to have your attic inspected for insulation before winter sets in. And while older homes are the least likely to have properly insulated attics, even if you have a newer home it's worth having a professional check to see if your attic is under-insulated. This can make a big difference when it comes to heating costs.

4. Make your thermostat programmable

If it's been a while since you upgraded your thermostat, you may be surprised at what new programmable thermostats can do to help keep your home comfortable while also saving on utility bills. The latest models provide much better fine tuning when setting your thermostat, allowing better control of the energy you're using to heat (or cool) your home. You can make sure you're not overheating your house when you're asleep or not at home. Traveling or on vacation? New smart



Upgrading to a tankless water heater will save on energy and expenses compared to a traditional water heater.

thermostats allow you to adjust your home's thermostat controls remotely, using your phone or another electronic device.

5. Check for leaks

Every year, homeowners lose a lot of heated (or cooled) air through leaks around areas like windows, doors and chimneys.

Inspecting your home for leaks can alert you to spots where you may need to improve caulking, flashing or weather-stripping for a fairly low-cost fix. For a longer-term solution, you may want to consider replacing older, less energy-efficient windows and doors with new ones. For help finding

leaks, call your utility company. Many provide energy audits to help customers locate trouble spots in their homes.

By taking a few of these proactive steps, you can help your family stay cozy and comfortable all winter, while also helping to save energy and protect your budget.



FENCES

Beauty • Security • Privacy

• Industrial • Commercial • Residential

Illinois Valley
FENCE & POOL INC.

2923 N. IL 178th Rd., Utica • 815-667-3667

www.ivfenceandpool.com

Over 29 Years Experience

Other Types of Fencing Available
Red Cedar • Chain Link • Aluminum

*Poly Vinyl Fencing & Products
That Are Practical & Beautiful!*

