

Use **WOOD ASHES** to:

- 1. De-skunk pets.** A handful rubbed on Fido's coat neutralizes the lingering odor.
- 2. Hide stains on paving.** *This Old House* technical editor Mark Powers absorbs wet paint splatters on cement by sprinkling ash directly on the spot; it blends in with a scuff of his boot,
- 3. Enrich compost.** Before the organic compound get applied to soil, enhance its nutrients by sprinkling in a few ashes, says the host of radio's *You Bet Your Garden*, Mike McGrath. Adding too much, though, ruins the mix.
- 4. Block garden pests.** Spread evenly around garden beds, ash repels slugs and snails.
- 5. Melt ice.** *TOH* building editor Tom Baker finds it adds traction and de-ices without hurting soil or concrete underneath.
- 6. Control pond algae.** One tablespoon per 1,000 gallons adds enough potassium to strengthen other aquatic plants that compete with algae, slowing its growth,
- 7. Pump up tomatoes.** For the calcium-loving plants, McGrath places 1/4 cup right in the hole when planting,
- 8. Clean glass fireplace doors.** A damp sponge dipped in the dust scrubs away sooty residue.
- 9. Make soap.** Soaking ashes in water makes lye, which can be mixed with animal fat and then boiled to produce soap. Salt makes it harden as it cools.
- 10. Shine silver.** A paste of ash and water makes a dandy nontoxic metal polisher.