



HOMELIFE | 1E

Decor trends

Curvy tubs and glass wall tiles are on the way in, but some current favorites are past their prime.



NEWS 2 USE | 2A

House broken?

You're not alone. Here are some common home defects to watch out for – from poor roof installation to a cracking foundation.

Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH

'Where The West Begins'

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 2006 | 50 CENTS

WWW.STAR-TELEGRAM.COM

FIRES



SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/
BRIAN LAUDERMILK

CREWS BATTLE MORE BLAZES

Discarded cigarettes may have sparked some of the eight area grass fires that started Friday.

FORT WORTH | 1B

WAR ON TERROR

MISSILE TARGETS AL QAEDA BRASS

A CIA missile hits a compound in Pakistan that was supposed to contain top al Qaeda officials.

NATIONAL | 21A

PHONES

VERIZON TO OFFER MUSIC

V Cast subscribers will be able to download music to their cellphones.

BUSINESS | 1C

AIRLINE

U.S. SUES OVER MILITARY LEAVE

The Justice Department sues American Airlines over its treatment of reservists.

BUSINESS | 1C

TO OUR READERS

The Saturday, Sunday and holiday hours for the DEL-IVER customer service phone line change today. The new hours are 7 a.m.-noon.

WEATHER



High 66
Low 47

Today: Partly cloudy with less wind.

NBC5 forecast, 18A

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HOME HEATING COSTS

Natural gas bills not as high as feared

STAR-TELEGRAM

Our balmy winter weather has taken the starch out of the gloomy forecasts of runaway heating bills.

Your monthly gas bills will still go up, but a sharp fall in fuel prices in recent weeks will cushion the blow.

The increase is likely to be about 30 percent or less from last year, not as much as 80 percent, as some utility and govern-

ment officials predicted late last year.

That relief is courtesy of a sharp decline in natural gas prices. They've fallen from a record \$15.78 per thousand cubic feet a month ago, amid an early cold snap and hurricane-induced production shortages, to a five-month low of \$8.79 per thousand cubic feet Friday on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Residential customers pay a direct

pass-through cost for the natural gas supplied by Atmos Energy that will show up for customers next month when they pay for gas they used this month.

"I'm hearing that prices could drop down around the \$7 per thousand cubic feet range," said Ron Gist of Purvin & Gertz in Houston.

STAFF WRITER DAN PILLER
REPORTS | 1C

Higher bills, some relief for consumers

30 percent: Expected winter gas bill increase

80 percent: Earlier winter gas bill increase forecast

\$15.78: Record natural gas price Dec. 13

\$8.79: Natural gas price Friday
\$6-\$7: Natural gas price forecast

FORT WORTH STOCK SHOW

Off to a galloping start



STAR-TELEGRAM/RALPH LAUER

Members of Parker County's Cowgirl Chicks riding team enter the Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum to kick off Friday night's "Best of the West" Ranch Rodeo.

At Garland plant, workers craft noted brands of a Stock Show fashion staple

STAR-TELEGRAM

GARLAND — The Old West is gone, but the cowboy hat lives on.

If you don't believe it, take a look around the Stock Show grounds this weekend. If you spot someone wearing a Stetson or Resistol, odds are it was crafted at Garland-based Hatco Inc., which has been turning out cowboy hats since the Depression.

Customers include former first lady Barbara Bush and Gov. Rick Perry.

"Today, the hat is the symbol of the Old West and the New West; we're hoping they wear our brand," said Gary Rosenthal, head designer for Stetson.

STAFF WRITER JOHN AUSTIN REPORTS | 7B



STAR-TELEGRAM/DARRELL BYERS

Nicole Solis uses a torch on a fur-felt cowboy hat to burn away any hairs left out of place at the Hatco Inc. finishing plant in Garland.

Animal arrival

Traffic on University Drive was trailer heavy as preparations were made for the start of shows. 6B

Where's the weather?

This year, the traditional cold and icy Stock Show weather would be a blessing, writes Bud Kennedy. 1B

Online exclusives

Watch multimedia presentations of cowboy hats being made and the grand entry at star-telegram.com

Riding for a cure

The All American Cowgirl Chicks are known for electrifying rodeo audiences. But they also raise money to fight cancer. 6B

DEMOGRAPHICS

Jose, Emily are most popular names for Lone Star babies

STAR-TELEGRAM

Make way for Jose. That's the most popular name for baby boys in Texas, according to the Social Security Administration. As for girls, Emily has nudged aside the competition.

Nationally, Jacob and Emily are the favorites.

Wondering what's in a name? "Emily" means "industrious," and "Jacob" means "supplanter," ac-

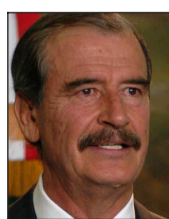
ording to baby-naming books.

In 1946, when the first baby boomers were born, James and Mary topped the charts.

The popularity of names has changed with the decades.

Experts advise caution when choosing children's names. Is your last name "Weiser"? Avoid the first name "Bud."

STAFF WRITER TERRY GOODRICH
REPORTS | 13B



FOX

MEXICO | ELECTION

Mail-in balloting is too complicated, critics say

In a historic first, Mexican expatriates will vote by mail in their homeland's 2006 presidential election, picking Vicente Fox's successor.

Though thousands are expected to participate, some area immigrant advocates say that the process is too complicated and that fear of deportation keeps many from exercising this right.

Others expect low out-of-country voter

turnout, saying the Mexican government had to rush to get a voting system off the ground.

"It was hurried," said immigrant advocate Jorge Navarrete Olalde of Cleburne. "I hope for better coordination next election."

Expatriate voters face another hurdle: Many don't have Mexican electoral cards.

STAFF WRITER DIANE SMITH
REPORTS | 20A