



EMILY NELSON, Free Press

Rich Emmons works quickly to paint a residence on Summit Street in Burlington before Tuesday's predicted thunderstorms.

# Soggy summer dries up business for area painters

## Contractors, homeowners find weather frustrating

By Connor Boals  
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Summer is the time for homeowners and property managers to lay down a fresh coat of paint — assuming it stops raining, that is.

The enduring wet weather has turned painting season into an exercise in frustration for homeowners and painting contractors alike.

Lori Lavigne, office manager for Stephens Group in Williston, said fewer exterior painting jobs were being scheduled this summer than last, largely because of all the rain.

"We've had to reschedule some exterior work," she said. "Sometimes even two or three times."

Lavigne said the Stephens Group has done plenty of estimates, but because of the rain, many of the jobs have never come through.

All is not lost. "We're doing a lot of interior jobs," she said.

### Wet paint

Days with measurable rainfall (0.01 inches or greater) since June 1:

**Burlington:** 39 days  
(total 14.99 inches)

**Montpelier:** 43 days  
(total 17.16 inches)

**St. Johnsbury:** 46 days  
(total 17.67 inches)

Source: National Weather Service, South Burlington

Ed Martin, owner of What's Broken, estimated his exterior painting jobs are off 10 percent from previous summers.

"People aren't calling as much," he said. "I think it's mainly just the rain."

Martin said he's had his fair share of gutter cleaning and interior painting jobs this summer.

The difficulty with exterior jobs is that they require a full day or multiple days, something this rainy summer hasn't afforded home-

owners. Thirty-nine of the past 72 days have seen measurable rainfall in Burlington, according to National Weather Service.

Gene Richards, owner of Champlain Apartments, which owns and rents residential properties throughout Burlington, is having a property on Summit Street painted this week. The contractor started in the back of the house Monday morning but couldn't finish the front because it started raining in the afternoon.

Richards said with the school year quickly approaching, he's worried that the work force for painting will significantly drop off.

"Moisture also creates more peeling," Richards said.

Richards is fortunate. He said he had many of his properties painted last summer. But it's still tough to keep things maintained with all the rain, he said.

"We normally have a crew do all the porches," he said. "We haven't been able to touch them this summer."