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Remodeling Tips

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Let the SUNSHINE IN

People are attracted to homes infused with natural light. Perhaps we humans intrinsically perceive that we will flourish in these environments. And the fact is—our daily lives are made easier, safer and healthier when careful thought is given to the natural illumination of our living spaces.

(continued on page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE

- Let the Sunshine In
- Complete Design/Build Services
- A Stone's Faux
- Getting More Space
- Bang for Your Buck

WOW! Complete Design/Build Services!

We can help make your dream home come true.

Coastal Builders, Inc. offers one-stop professional design/build services for homeowners like you. We know you have a busy lifestyle, so we make remodeling kitchens, bathrooms, and exterior additions extra convenient. From plans and permits to final installations, our professional staff and design experts have more than 30 years experience and can help you maximize your space and make more room for living.

From concept to completion, the convenience offered by a full service, whole-house remodeling

company can be yours. Coastal Builders, Inc. has interior/exterior design, architectural, and engineering services available. We can help you plan, budget and create your dream house. After the design has been completed, Coastal Builders, Inc. employs some of the best "Lead Carpenters" in the area. Lead Carpenters stay with you from the beginning to the completion of your project. Contact us today to find out more about our design/build services. Call **(410) 461-9908** or visit our website: **www.coastalbuilders.com**.

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Let the SUNSHINE IN



A tubular skylight brings daylight to an otherwise dark hallway.

Photo: Courtesy of VELUX (www.veluxusa.com)

(continued from page 1)

In older homes, windows were often placed according to how they would appear on the exterior, rather than how well they served the individual rooms. Electric lights made up for any deficiencies in interior lighting. Now that energy costs have risen, homeowners are becoming interested in maximizing sunlight to provide the interior light needed in their homes. The quality of their lives may be enhanced in the process.

When planning a home remodeling project, the position of the home on its lot should first be analyzed. Whenever possible, new window placement should be designed with consideration for each room's orientation. This can help optimize both daylighting and energy efficiency.

In general, locating the majority of the windows on the south side of a home will let in maximum winter sun and minimum summer sun. An overhang or eaves designed to shade out the direct summer sun is advisable. Windows that face the east and west may let in too much sunlight in the summer and offer far less winter sunlight than south-facing windows. North-facing windows can lose heat in cooler months and, therefore, should be de-emphasized.

Retractable awnings outside are an efficient way to reduce solar heat gain in the summer, while allowing light to penetrate the home during the winter. Adjustable interior window blinds and shades are also versatile—permitting some viewing, yet screening out sun and heat when necessary. Choosing energy-efficient windows is the final step in the equation.

A second consideration is the location of the window in each room. Positioning a window to one side of the room, or adjacent to the ceiling, will reflect daylight off the wall and ceiling surfaces into the space. This significantly brightens the room without the need for additional electric lights. Interior windows, glass partitions and glass doors provide a way to borrow natural light from other rooms, allowing it to reach deep into the darker areas of the house.

A skylight or roof window adds even more light—as well as visual drama—to a room and can be particularly useful when wall space for windows is unavailable. In dim interior areas of the home, such as a hallway, installing a standard skylight may be difficult. A tubular skylight is thin enough to fit between roof rafters or trusses and ceiling joists, thereby offering an easy, less expensive daylighting solution. ■

Photo: Courtesy of Simpson Door Co. (www.simpsondoor.com)



These interior doors maintain privacy, yet allow two rooms to share natural light.

A Stone's Faux

Do you applaud the attractive stone façades on many of the new homes going up these days? You secretly wish you could have that look for your own home, but you are sure it would be too expensive.

There is a good chance what you are admiring is not natural stone, but manufactured stone veneer instead. Natural stone is heavy and requires a concrete base to support its weight. It is expensive to transport to the job site and time consuming to install.

Manufactured stone veneer is durable but lightweight, so it can

Get More **S P A C E** Without Adding Any

Even though your bathroom may be short on space, it need not lack style, character or the feel of a more spacious spa-like bath. What's more, you don't have to spend thousands of dollars to pump up a pint-size bath. We suggest the following ways to trick the eye into seeing more space than is truly there.

Expand the Ceiling. Create the illusion of a taller bathroom by having it painted the same color as the walls. This produces the visual sensation that the walls extend farther up than they do. Or create a roomier feel by having crown molding installed. The crown molding should be painted the same color as the ceiling so it doesn't break up the line of vision, making the space seem lower to the floor.



The Adjustable-Length Curved Shower Rod from Moen adjusts to fit shower enclosures from 54- to 72-inches.

Photo: Courtesy of Moen (www.moen.com)



In addition to a mirror, this cabinet by Robern provides welcome storage.

Photo: Courtesy of Kohler Co. (www.kohler.com)

Add Depth. One of the most cost-effective and easiest ways to optically enlarge a small bathroom is through the use of paint. Pick soft creams, light neutrals and pastels to open up the space. Lend some contrast by adding bright towels or accessories.

Round It Out. It is possible to "add" space without tearing out a wall. Have a curved shower rod installed in your shower. Simply switching from a straight rod to one that curves outward can add up to seven inches of elbow room—not to mention immeasurable style.

Let There Be Light. Light has a profound effect on the perception of room size. If you don't have a bathroom window, halogen lighting is a good solution because it offers precise light rather than the scattered light provided by fluorescent bulbs. If you have enough height in the room, consider having soft-diffused lighting installed, or several recessed lights. A skylight is another option that can make a room appear significantly larger.

Bring It into Focus. Create a focal point for the bathroom by having at least one sensational new item installed, such as an exquisite vanity or an eye-catching sink. An area of interest like this draws attention away from the size of the room.

Reflect on the Space. Mirrors are a welcome addition to any small bathroom because of the light-enhancing and reflective qualities they provide. Visually opening up a bathroom can turn it into a warm and inviting retreat that would rival any larger bathroom.

be applied to interior or exterior walls without any additional structural support, providing a cost-effective way to achieve the popular look of natural stone. It is fabricated from an aggregate that is poured into molds where it captures the contours of natural stone. It can accurately replicate the look of rough-hewn stone, as well as smooth river stone and anything in between—to fit your architectural style and personal taste.

Visualize manufactured stone veneer on a kitchen island, in a wine cellar, or at a bar. The material is non-combustible, just like natural stone, so it is safe to use for a fireplace, too. The only limit is your imagination. ■

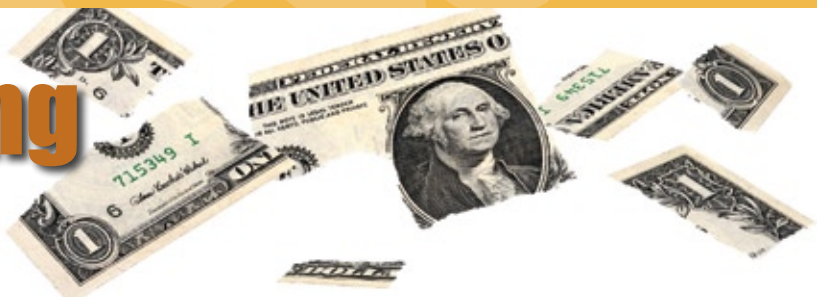


Before



Photos: Courtesy of Eldorado Stone (www.eldoradostone.com)

Get the Most Bang for Your Energy Buck



Many homeowners these days are looking for ways to save on energy costs—not just on home heating and cooling—but in all areas of energy consumption. Ken Ely, a home heating and energy efficiency expert with Lennox Industries, offers the following look at how the average dollar is spent on household energy consumption and advice for controlling expenses to make that dollar go further.

Heating and cooling accounts for approximately 45 percent of the average home's utility bill—or about 45 cents of every dollar. To cut down on costs, be sure to schedule annual routine maintenance on your heating system to ensure it's running as efficiently as possible. If the heating system is more than 15 years old, consider having it replaced with an Energy Star-qualified system, which will be more energy efficient and can help lower utility bills. Programmable thermostats are another way to maximize energy efficiency. These devices automatically control the temperature to use less energy at certain hours of the day, such as nighttime or when homeowners are away from home.

45¢

Household appliances, such as refrigerators and clothes washers, are responsible for about 20 percent of a home's energy bill. Make sure appliances are clean and free of dust and lint to ensure proper ventilation and to increase their efficiency. In addition, check refrigerator and freezer doors to ensure they are sealed tight to prevent cool air from escaping. When washing dishes, use the air-dry setting on automatic dishwashers rather than heated drying to conserve energy. Finally, be sure to clean the lint trap in your clothes dryer before every load of laundry, which will help increase the drying efficiency of the machine.

20¢

Heating water accounts for approximately 13 percent of a household's energy bill. Consider insulating a tank water heater with a water

heater jacket that can be purchased at most hardware stores. Homeowners also can lower the temperature setting on the water heater to save energy. Some water heaters come from the factory already set at 140 degrees or higher, but a setting of 115 degrees can provide comfortable hot water for most uses. Finally, consider having the water heater replaced, if the existing one is more than 10 years old, as it probably is operating at an efficiency level of 50 percent or lower. You may want to look into the option of a tankless water heater.

13¢

Eleven percent of the energy budget for an average household goes to lighting. Switching out traditional incandescent lights with more efficient fluorescent or LED lighting is a quick and easy way to save on utility bills. In fact, by replacing 25 percent of lights in high-use areas with fluorescents, homeowners can save about 50 percent on lighting-related energy expenses. Energy Star-qualified fluorescent lamps also last six to 10 times longer. Energy Star-qualified residential LED lighting uses at least 75% less energy, lasts 25 times longer than incandescent lighting and provides optimal light color. For exterior lighting be sure to use compact fluorescent or high-pressure sodium fixtures—which are more efficient—and consider motion sensors that operate lights automatically.

11¢

The energy lost through windows can account for about 10 percent (and as much as 25 percent) of a home's heating bill. Look for cracks or holes around windows, and apply a sealant where necessary to prevent air from escaping the home. During the winter, be sure to keep blinds open during the day to allow sunlight to enter and heat the home naturally. Also, consider installing tight-fitting, insulating window shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing. Finally, to maximize a home's energy efficiency, have single-pane windows replaced with double-pane low E or even more energy efficient windows, such as Andersen's EcoExcel.

10¢

