

Creative decorating helps spring new life into home

Continued from page 4D assisting them in envisioning how a color can change the look and feel of a room," said Van Allen.

One new way is with the Pratt & Lambert Inspiration Cards. They provide an extra boost of confidence when pulling colors together by showcasing photographs of how professionals combine colors on walls, trim and accent areas in various

rooms. And, each of the 16 cards contain the exact color chips used to create the room design, along with tips to help consumers easily achieve the same look in their own home.

Try on a slip cover. If your furniture is tired and worn looking, or you need to match your new wall color with your furniture, you can lighten and brighten chairs, love seats and couches with the creative use of slip covers.

For less than \$100 dollars, you can either make your own, or buy them at your local home outlet store. It's amazing how an old piece of furniture can take on new life with a little help.

Give windows the treatment. If your draperies are heavy and dark, it won't matter what color your walls or furniture are. So, shop the sales for some sheers and taffeta panels that can help

brighten a room. Discount stores are great resources for inexpensive panels and curtains. Try adding something light with a beaded fringe to include a little sparkle and a bit of whimsy.

Lighten up. One sure way to quickly freshen up a room's decor is by replacing outdated lamp fixtures. For an entirely new look, this can be accomplished by replacing old shades. Or, try re-decorating

your existing lamp shades by applying fabric paint or using a hot glue gun to embellish shades with beads, feathers or other ornaments.

Tidy up and organize. During the winter our homes tend to become filled with lots of bulk and piles of things. While spring cleaning, bring in new wicker baskets or decorative storage boxes to hide away those items that have accumulated during the win-

ter months. This will allow you to have the tidy, minimalist look we often associate with spring.

According to Van Allen, "Just remember, spring decorating doesn't have to break your budget. Small, cost-effective improvements can really make a difference in your home's overall appearance, and most importantly how you feel about your surroundings."

Unseen benefits of energy efficient windows and doors

Continued from page 4D weather.

Using both Low-E and insulating glass will reduce home energy costs.

2. Make Low-E glass a must-have. That's because

Low-E glass on windows, door transoms and sidelights controls solar heat gain - a major contributor to air-conditioning costs.

Low-E glass can also protect against heat loss in the

winter.

3. Don't overlook the role of doors in contributing to energy efficiency.

Choose doors with energy efficient cores and sills, and frames that provide a barrier

to energy exchange.

4. Focus on efficiency, not bells and whistles. Window manufacturers achieve efficiency in different ways, from Low-E glass to argon gas-filled insulating glass

The bottom line is to make sure the products are tested and rated for efficiency using industry standards, no matter what technology is employed. Look for the Energy Star label appropriate for

your region.

For more information about achieving energy efficiency at home, visit www.jeld-wen.com or call (800) 877-9482, ext. (7793).

Easy-on, easy-off wallpaper is hottest new trend



PHOTO:APA CONTENT

Home improvement is simpler with easy to install and remove wall paper. The new generation of wallpaper can be removed in as little as 15 minutes.

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

Want to change the look of your living room or update your kitchen with new wall coverings but aren't sure you can do it yourself?

Think again.

Home improvement projects are getting a lot simpler thanks to new easy-to-install, easy-to-remove products.

"In the past, the perception of wallpaper has been that it's

difficult to install and nearly impossible to remove," says Tim Quinn, president of Chesapeake Wallcoverings. "We know that 90 percent of consumers are doing their own installation and removal. Now, wallpapering an average sized room is an afternoon project, and removal can be accomplished in as little as 15 minutes."

Home decorating programs

are increasingly showing designs that incorporate wall coverings. And the faux painting fad seems to be ending, perhaps because consumers have discovered the process is not always as easy as it looks on TV. The time is ripe for wallpaper's resurgence.

Products like Chesapeake's pioneering Easy-Walls collections virtually eliminate the

negative issues associated with wallpaper: involved wall preparation; difficult installation including booking, seam separation, peeling, and the deal-breaking difficulty of removal.

Historically, preparing a wall for wallpaper has involved sanding, cleaning solvents, and multiple coats of primer and wallpaper sizing. Easy-Walls requires no preparation other than simply cleaning the wall. The product is designed to adhere to a wall that has been covered with at least two coats of paint, preferably one of primer and one flat latex, Quinn says.

Wallpaper can tear, crease and rip during installation. And if you fail to book it, the seams will separate once it dries on the wall. Because the product is a non-woven mix of natural and synthetic fibers, booking is no longer necessary; it's made to be put on the wall immediately after wetting.

"This removable paper is much more forgiving than typical wallpaper," Quinn notes. "With traditional installation, the paste has to have enough 'slip' to allow you to realign it and move it around on the wall. This paper moves very easily on the wall and you can even take down an entire sheet and put it back on in a new position." Mistakes are easily corrected: simply smooth it with your hands and reapply it to the wall.

Failure to book traditional wallpaper can result in seam separation and peeling. Improper wall preparation in a humid spot like a bathroom can lead to mold growth behind the paper. Because there is no vinyl in non-woven wallpaper, vapor lock, which traps moisture behind the paper, is unlikely to occur. The product is totally breathable, making it ideal for use in high-humidity areas like the bath and kitchen.

Forget the hours of scratching, wetting and scraping or steaming and harsh chemicals associated with removing wallpaper. You can take down removable wallpaper in a matter of minutes, Quinn says.

Simply start at a corner and pull, and the entire sheet will come off in one piece. "This product is perfect for anyone who wants to be able to quickly and easily change a look of a room in the future - parents decorating a nursery who know they will need to redecorate as soon as the child grows, or renters who will need quick, clean, easy removal when they move out."

Easy-Walls is currently

available from most wallcovering retailers and large home centers. Six design collections, each with 120 or more patterns, are currently available.

The per-roll cost of the product is usually \$1 to \$2 more than regular wallpaper, but is offset by reduced preparation and installation costs. For more information or to see a live demo, visit www.easy-walls.com.

The Charlotte Post



WORLD OF REAL ESTATE

Realtors, Mortgage Funding, Investors, Contractors, and More!

To join this page of ADVERTISERS Please call

- Your Personal Executive:
- Pat McNair ext.106 •
- Jeri Thompson ext.104
- Sheryl Bradford ext.107
- Fran Farrer-Nash ext.113
- Dennis Darrell ext.105

OWNING YOUR FUTURE

Homeownership is a national priority. HUD is the nation's housing agency committed to increasing homeownership and dedicated to helping first-time buyers and minority families become homeowners. Each year, HUD programs and services help tens of thousands of families accomplish the dream of a lifetime: owning a home.

Most likely, you'll need to borrow money to buy a house. Getting a fair deal will help you to keep your home and boost your home equity wealth. Home equity is the part of the value of your home that belongs to you—the value of your house minus what you owe on the mortgage. Your goal is to get a loan that doesn't include high fees or a high interest rate. With low fees and a low interest rate, you can pay down your debt more quickly and own more of your house.

Watch Your Wealth

The wealth you accumulate in a house is no different than money in a checking or savings account. Be as careful and attentive to your home equity as you would be to your bank account. Be cautious about refinancing or borrowing against your home equity. Remember, refinancing isn't always a good idea. Don't let someone sell you a loan you don't need or can't afford. Be wary of pitches like "NO CREDIT, NO PROBLEM" or random mail promising favorable mortgage rates. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

For more information, call 1 (800) 569-4287 or go to www.owningyourfuture.gov and select "Buying a Home."

Spiff up around home with a few helpful tips

Continued from page 4D

Once you begin to collect you will discover you have more than you thought. Make sure everyone in your family knows where you want items stored. In the long run you will shop less and save more.

- Adding shelving to the bedroom walls, about 12 to 14 inches down from the ceiling, could get toys, pictures, books and more up off the floor (for safety sake only store soft toys on the section of shelf that passes over the headboard of the bed). We'd be willing to bet that you could store at least 30 percent of bedroom clutter along these shelves.

- Being creative helps. In the kitchen, we'd be willing to bet that you have more than one size glass. Furthermore, we bet they don't easily stack. Lay a tray atop the glasses that you use less frequently and load the ones that you use most often onto the tray. When you need to get to the less frequently used glasses, all you have to do is slip the tray out of the way — or gently lift it to remove one of the glasses from below. In this way you can double or even triple cabinet storage.
- A closet door can be a priceless storage device. All you need to do is add a layer of pegboard to the inside and you have an instant acces-

- sories shelf for ties, belts, etc.
- There are file cabinets that are made to be installed in a closet. Their overall depth is 22 inches, which leaves just enough room to close a sliding door — and you don't have to remove the baseboard to make it fit.
- Add a toiletry shelf over the bathroom door. Make it part of the door trim. It will add interest to the bathroom and help to clear clutter from your sink or counter.
- Use a simple inexpensive one-piece towel bar mounted on the inside of a kitchen cabinet door to store pot lids. Slip the lid edgewise between the door and the rack and the pot handle will keep the lid from

- falling through. Free up the pot lid drawer for other more important storage.
- Finally, clean old things up until they sparkle. Make them look so very new that you won't ever want to purchase a replacement. This way you won't have to worry about storing the old one until you get tired of looking at it.
- Regular cleaning is also a superb way of making everything you own last longer and, in most instances, work better.
- Besides cleaning, it is important to perform regular maintenance on everything you own that is mechanical.