

2015 Fall HOME IMPROVEMENT



Fall Home and Garden Clean-Up Project Tips

(StatePoint) Fall is the ideal season to tick items off your home exterior to-do list. The weather is finally cooler, making the work more enjoyable; and a thorough fall clean-up will give you peace of mind all winter.

Your MVP during home maintenance season can be the pressure washer. Up to 75 times more powerful than a garden hose, a

pressure washer is a versatile tool that offers an efficient way to get a variety of cleaning tasks done.

Deck

Once you're ready to stash away outdoor furniture for the season, remember to wash it down first for a deeper clean than a garden hose can provide. Before moving these items into storage, first let them dry completely.

Ensure your deck is free of mold and debris. A thorough clean will also serve to prep your deck for weatherproofing with a stain or sealant (another useful task to include on your fall checklist.)

Outdoor Surfaces

Rejuvenate driveways, patios, sidewalks and other large flat surfaces quickly and with

no streaking using accessories like the Briggs & Stratton Surface Cleaner that works on a 14-inch diameter in one stroke. It features a dome shape to control overspray to protect walls and flower beds.

Grill

Cleaning your grill is a breeze with a pressure washer. First disconnect the propane tank and move it away from

the area. Disconnect any electrical lines. Prop up the hood and remove the grates. Treat the entire grill with a degreasing solution, working from the bottom of the cart up to the grill bed. Let the degreaser work for a few minutes. Be careful around gas hoses, connections, electrical components or heating elements.

Using a general medium-pressure spray pattern, flush detergent and rinse any residue, working from the top down. Let the grill dry thoroughly, then coat with nonstick oil to help reduce future buildup.

Safety

Operate a pressure washer only outside, far away from windows, doors and vents to reduce the risk of carbon



monoxide gas from accumulating and potentially being drawn towards occupied spaces. Always wear goggles and closed-toe footwear when operating a pressure washer. Don't spray near children, pets, electrical wires, or power lines. After use, allow the unit to cool down before storing.

Efficiency

To switch between

jobs more efficiently, consider a unit that offers versatility in its function. For example, The POWERflow+ model from Briggs & Stratton has a high pressure mode -- ideal for cleaning tough grime -- and a high flow mode which delivers up to five gallons of water per minute to rinse away soap and debris on delicate surfaces like patio furniture, vehicles and second story windows.

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Quick, Inexpensive Ways to Give Your Home a Fall Facelift

(StatePoint) A seasonal home makeover doesn't need to cost a fortune or be difficult to execute. Quick, easy and innovative ideas can give your home the fall flair needed to celebrate the season.

“Seasonal décor updates should jive with your home's style, while also adding something extra to the mix,” says Eric Cohler, who has been listed as a top international designer by House Beautiful and Elle Décor magazines. “Keep it easy though, so that when the season is over, you won't end up with a lack of motivation to refresh and a space that feels passé.”

To add autumn elements to your home without completely revamping your interior, consider these ideas:

Rotating Gallery

A digital photo display is the easiest way to showcase seasonally suitable photos of friends and family. In fall, that means Halloween portraits, autumn picnics, trips to the pumpkin

patch, and back-to-school photos.

Consider rotating the artwork displayed in your

Seasonal sets of cabinet hardware can keep the look fresh in your home. All you need is a screwdriver and a few hours.

design and shopping experience by allowing you to truly customize hardware for cabinets and furniture. The interactive site

of cabinetry hardware and view the different looks on different style and color cabinets.

From kitchens

pop with bold colors. Think orange, purple and black for Halloween flair, or greens, reds and browns for a natural effect.

Hardware is easy to swap out and you can give your home a fun, fresh fall makeover inexpensively and without much hassle. To check out 20 unique color options, visit www.Amerock.com.

Curtains

Another easy way to make a quick look-and-feel change to a room is by swapping out curtains. It's a great way to customize

a space to better fit the mood of the season. What's more -- a quarterly rotation of window treatments presents a much-needed opportunity for a good cleaning. Be sure to store your freshly laundered linens in a sealed bag so they don't collect dust. When they make their appearance the following year, they will be vibrant and fresh.

Fall can be a particularly busy time of year; however, a few easily implemented ideas can go a long way to add a festive vibe to your home.

home to highlight seasonal colors. Whether you want to get spooky for Halloween or focus on fall's natural hues, this task won't take long to do and will greatly impact the look and feel of each room.

Pops of Color

“With relatively little effort, you can add bright, bold colors to your home by swapping out the knobs and handles on your cabinets, credenzas and other furniture,” says Cohler.

A free web-based application, Splash by Amerock, offers a new interactive

and first of its kind product line allows you to test various colors and shapes

to bathrooms to bedrooms and living areas, you can make your rooms





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What to Know Before Upgrading Your Home's HVAC System

(StatePoint) Not all home upgrades require a ton of research. But for more complicated repairs and replacements, being informed can help you make better decisions.

For example, replacing your home's HVAC system is one thing you want to get right, as a good decision can benefit both your comfort

and pocketbook for years to come.

“Before talking to a contractor, homeowners should be prepared with questions,” says Karl Zellmer, VP of Air Conditioning at Emerson Climate Technologies.

According to Zellmer, here are some important factors to consider and questions to discuss with your contractor:

- *What size or capacity system is right for my home?*
- *What is the expected life span of my current system?*
- *How much should I plan to pay for a new system if*

mine has to be replaced?

- *How much will my monthly energy bill be reduced with a new system? Are there ways to reduce it even more?*
- *Will the new system*

reliably produce the desired air temperature and humidity levels evenly throughout my home?

- *What maintenance will the new system require? Will it automatically notify me*

when it needs servicing or repair?

- *What are the contractor's qualifications? Can they provide referrals from previous customers?*
- *Is my system*

environmentally-friendly? Are there any government and utility rebates available for buying certain “high efficiency” equipment?

- *Am I going to be adequately covered by a*

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warranty and how long will I be covered?

- Am I purchasing the most up-to-date technology available? For example, will I be able to remotely monitor and control my home's climate via the internet or a mobile device?

To view the results from recent homeowner research, and to learn more about what type of system might be best for your home, free resources are available at

www.ac-heating-connect.com.

If you own an older, problem prone system, it might be time to skip the repairs and opt for a replace-

ment instead. No matter your priorities, long-term reliability, modest operating costs and great year-round performance are key features to seek in your next HVAC system.



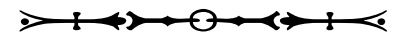
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Tips for Improving Your Kitchen for Entertaining



(StatePoint) If your home is the one your family and friends gravitate to for parties and seasonal celebrations, you need to make sure it can handle all that attention. Upgrading your kitchen can be one of the most rewarding home improvement projects for those who entertain frequently.

Here are a few upgrades that can improve your kitchen's visual appeal and utility for better entertaining

Open & Shut

Is your kitchen storage bursting at the seams? Do those cabinets that once looked so great now seem tired? Today's top

kitchens employ a combination of open shelving and closed cabinetry to deliver stunning looks and top functionality.

Install open shelving for things you use the most and for visually appealing dishes and glasses. It's easy for you to grab what you need and for guests to know where to turn for

an extra plate or tumbler. And open shelves are terrific for showcasing that favorite set of after-dinner glassware or that sleek new cappuccino maker.

But a well-designed kitchen also needs large cabinets to hide clutter and clunky appliances that consume precious counter space.

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Upgrade Your Range

Upgrading your range is a simple way to take entertaining to the next level. Your range should be the centerpiece of your kitchen, in terms of design and function. And these days, designs that combine sleek industrial lines with classic retro touches are all the rage.

But form needs to be matched by flexible function. Look for a range that comes in dual fuel, gas or electric, with choice of a single or double oven, such as the 36-inch professional style ranges from Verona, a luxury Italian brand from Euro-Chef USA. Their

new Classic Collection line comes in three colors, including stainless steel, matte black and gloss red, with a color-matched control panel, featuring teardrop control knobs, beveled doors, rounded handles and elegant plinth legs. More information is available at veronaappliances.com/verona-classic.

No matter what range you choose, opt for one with high BTU sealed burners and easy glide oven racks for easy access to your meals. And be sure to look for such advanced features as an infrared broiler and/or convection setting so you can cook quickly and precisely.

Proper Prep and Cleanup

Double-basin sinks and dual drawer dishwashers don't just look luxurious, they help speed prep work and cleanup.

If you have the space, nothing beats a tandem sink where you can use one basin for preparing the next course and the other for dirty dishes. That second

sink is also great for a helpful friend to start cleanup. Dual drawer dishwashers can help you complete post-meal chores faster. You can have one load of dirty dishes in progress while you enjoy dessert, and be able to fill up a second drawer with cutlery, coffee cups and dessert plates after the meal.

The key to upgrading your kitchen is to streamline it to make your life easier as host.



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Modern Design Tips to Set Your Home Apart

(StatePoint) If it's time for a remodel -- or even just a refresh of your home's dated décor -- it may be time to think modern.

Innovations in technology and design can offer your home efficiency, luxury and sophistication, and even improve

your home's resale value. Here are a few trends to consider.

New Kitchen

Whatever purpose your kitchen serves, be it simply a workplace for meal prep or the hub of the home, you can give the room a

clean modern look while retaining its functionality and aesthetic appeal.

Stainless steel appliances and hardware coupled with butcher block countertops harmonize nicely and are beautiful design elements that lend themselves to both modern form and function.

the home. While fireplaces may no longer serve as the primary way people heat their homes, they continue to be a focal point, both aesthetically and as a gathering place for family and friends, even in spaces characterized by modern design.

master bedroom or anywhere you want to create ambiance with a stunning focal point. Check out options specifically designed to fit smaller rooms or unique spaces -- like the REVO, which is only seven inches deep and features venting technology that opens up opportunities for installation in places and homes previously thought impossible.

From a resale perspective, a fireplace adds \$3,600 on average to the value of a home, and creates a design focal point that sets it apart from the rest of the inventory on the market.

Hidden Storage

For a modern look, the more devoid your space is of clutter, the better. And this goal in minimalism is informing many homeowners' design decisions. Look for spaces that can serve as hidden, unique storage solutions, like carve outs or drawers that extend from under the staircase or storage spaces built between rooms. These



Modern design is all about streamlined simplicity, so use this opportunity to rid your kitchen of clunky, clutter-causing gadgets you don't use -- especially those that don't match your updated look.

New gas fireplace designs are focusing on clean lines, sometimes replacing logs with materials like crushed glass, and the traditional masonry look with metallic fronts. For a high-end look, the MEZZO unit features a modern, see-through front.

Also consider incorporating a fireplace into your kitchen, bathroom,

Fireplace

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modern twists on traditional storage will allow you to keep those items you need, but don't want displayed, out of sight but not out of mind.

Modern design can set your home apart, offering sophistication and efficiency without compromising comfort.

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5 Things to Look for When Replacing Your Home's Windows

(StatePoint) Unlike some home improvements, window upgrades are complex, involving many moving parts. If you are in the market for an upgrade, don't rush into a decision until doing some research and evaluating what will work best on your home.

Here are five things to consider when replacing your

home's windows, according to the experts at ProVia:

- An energy efficient glass package: The right windows will protect your home and keep you comfortable all year long, limiting the sun's rays from coming through and fading your carpet and upholstery, as well as preventing cold air from entering your

home in the colder months.

“Test your current windows by touching them. If you feel the outside chill and air coming through, it may be time for a change,” says Wanda Angel, Brand Manager for Doors and Windows at ProVia.

Seek ENERGY STAR Certified

high-performance windows, ideal for the weather extremes particular to your region. They should have multiple panes and feature technologies, such as the ComforTech

that come with a lifetime warranty that includes glass breakage and seal failure. A comprehensive warranty should also be transferrable to the next homeowner, such as those

of the window, which is a rubberized seal that compresses to the sill, combined with a fin weather stripping on verticals and horizontals, will give you triple weather stripping

your house. While certain architectural styles, such as Colonial, once reigned, there's a new trend toward American Craftsman homes. Forward-thinking window manufacturers are responding to the call by offering grid patterns, stain and paint finishes suitable for this growing need.

Interestingly, a new window program at ProVia offers three new series of windows at a range of price points. The series includes ecoLite, Aspect, as well as Endure windows which come with top level innovations in window performance. To learn more, and to find resources on identifying the right windows for your home, visit www.proviaproducts.com.

Make an investment in your home with lasting impact. Seek windows that offer comfort, functionality and beauty for years to come.



Warm Edge Glazing System, which offers reduced heat loss, warmer glass temperature and reduced interior condensation.

- Warranty: Windows can cost thousands of dollars. Protect your investment by opting for windows

from ProVia. This feature can potentially increase your home's value when you put it on the market.

- Weather stripping: Prevent air infiltration through your windows with proper weather stripping. A bulb seal at the bottom

that acts as a true barrier against drafts, keeping you comfortable and helping reduce utility bills.

- Beauty: Your windows, like any exterior element on your home, should complement its architecture and add beauty to

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How to Conduct a DIY Home Energy Audit

(StatePoint) This fall, why not consider making needed improvements in your home to help increase energy efficiency and save big in the long run?

Here is a short checklist for a DIY home energy audit.

Seal Air Leaks

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, sealing air leaks around the house can save up to 30 percent of energy costs annually.

To find leaks, conduct a thorough visual inspection for gaps and cracks by baseboards, where the walls and ceiling meet, around door frames, and near cable and phone line wall plates.

Spot a gap? Caulk it. Use painter's tape for a cleaner job. Hold the caulking gun at an angle for best results, and apply in a continuous stream.

Improve insulation around windows and doors with weather-stripping. Measure the gap you need to fill to identify the width

of weather-stripping needed and determine whether you should apply it from the inside or outside. Before starting, read the package instructions to ensure you're using the right materials. Cut to size and install.

Lastly, check if your fireplace flue is open. If so, close it when not in use for additional savings.

Make Smart Upgrades

One quick way to check your windows for inefficiencies is to look for condensation, frost and other moisture. The Department of Energy also recommends closing your windows on a dollar bill. If you can easily pull the bill out, the window might be losing substantial energy and may require repair or replacement.

Additionally, ENERGY STAR reports that homeowners who choose windows that have earned the ENERGY STAR save an average \$101-\$538 a year when replacing single-pane windows.

If it's time for an upgrade, look for ENERGY STAR qualified windows that offer innovative technologies and improve energy efficiency.

Exterior remodeling companies like Window World, an ENERGY STAR partner, offer more high-performance options featuring technologies like a Warm-Edge Spacer System, which blocks escaping heat between glass layers. Additionally, the company sells windows made with high-performance Low Emissivity Glass, featuring a microscopic silver coating that actively blocks heat gain during the summer and heat loss

during the winter. To further improve efficiency, Window World's replacement windows also contain Argon gas between their glass layers. Because Argon is denser than air, it acts as an ideal insulator.

For information about innovative and cost-saving energy efficiency options, visit www.WindowWorld.com.

Change Behavior

Do an audit of not only your home's features, but of the occupants as well. Are lights left on in empty rooms? Is the television on when no one

is watching it? From switching to cold water laundry cycles to taking advantage of sunlight for warmth and light -- modifica-

tions of energy and cost-saving resources don't need to be a sacrifice. To save energy, improve the com-

fort of your home and do your part to be more environmentally conscious, conduct a do-it-yourself energy audit. You'll likely discover many areas in your home that should be improved.

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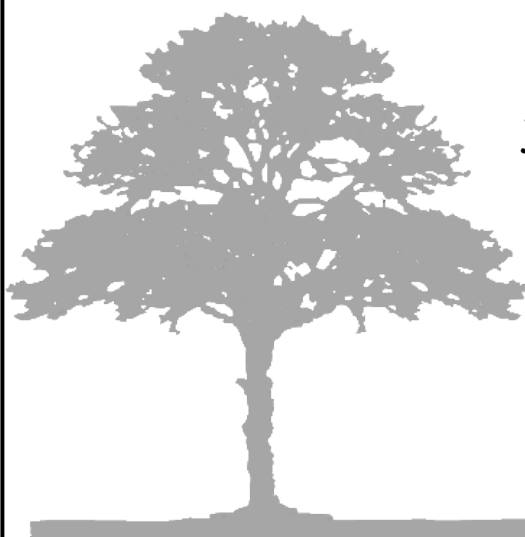
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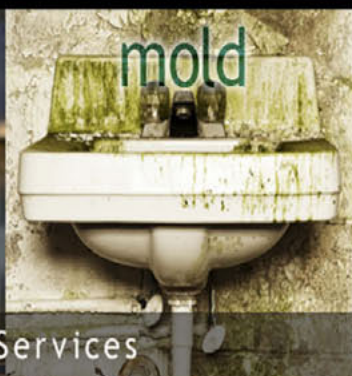
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Easy Interior Upgrades to Add Beauty to Your Home

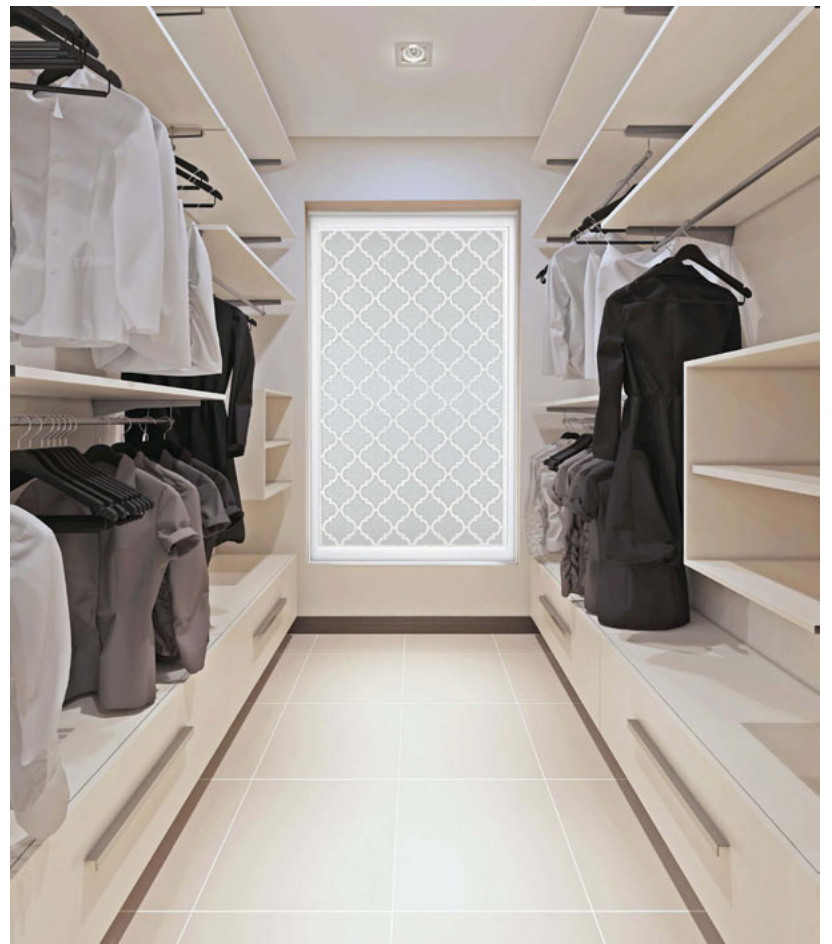
(StatePoint)
Making home upgrades? Why not make style a priority? There are many easy ways to add beauty to your home in the most unlikely spaces.

Striking Bathroom

Performance and aesthetics can intersect when making bathroom changes. Upgrade water-hogging appliances with modern,

efficient models that are stylish and easily maintained. These choices can save you money on water bills and time on cleaning day.

Some designs, such as the Cascade



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high efficiency toilet (HET) from Mansfield Plumbing, even promote health. Its rimless design eliminates the germs and bacteria that hide in difficult-to-access areas. Both the round front bowl and elongated SmartHeight bowl design are approved to meet EPA standards for water efficiency, using just 1.28 gallons per flush -- a savings of 20 percent more water than older models.

If you have young children at home, consider adding a stylish Elementary juvenile toilet to a bathroom. Less than a foot high, the child-sized toilet makes potty training much more fun and successful.

Quick Design Elements

Installing decorative polyurethane millwork pieces makes for a fast, easy project, even for novice do-it-yourselfers. Only have an hour? Use out-of-the-box-and-onto-the-house pieces from a brand like Fypon, which come pre-primed and ready for installation. Try these five transformative projects:

- Surround your foyer entryway with pilasters and a crosshead. While

you're at it, surround room dividers with pilasters and a crosshead to make transitioning between rooms a unique experience.

- Add a two-piece ceiling medallion around the top of a light fixture or ceiling fan in less than 10 minutes. Interlocking pieces snap together quickly.

- For a bathroom upgrade, install moisture-resistant pilasters on both sides of your shower stall and a door crosshead overhead.

- Give tops of bathroom and kitchen cabinets style with corbels. Accent a boring kitchen island with decorative brackets or corbels.

- Add a large sunburst window pediment half round above a bed to serve as a decorative headboard.

Add Style Anywhere

Even your most utilitarian spaces deserve a style makeover. And windows are a good place to start. Whether your home is modern, contemporary or traditional, say goodbye to plain panes and consider something more interesting and elegant.

Acrylic block, glass block or decorative glass windows in any room -- even a closet -- add privacy and light. And brands like Hy-Lite offer vinyl-framed decorative glass windows with silk screened designs. Their Home Designer Collection features a range of styles, including baroque, prairie, mission and metro, to complement any home.

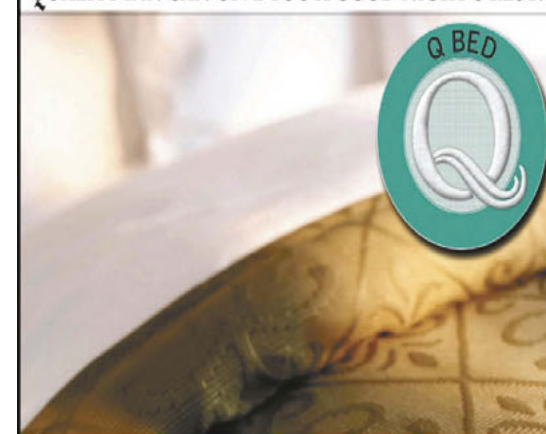
Tired of slinking down into your tub so that neighbors can't see you? Replacing your standard bathroom windows with privacy windows (including those that open to allow in fresh air) can make your bathing experience more enjoyable --- and private.

Make a house a home with projects that improve the look and performance of interior spaces.



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Great Ways to Improve Your Bathroom

(StatePoint) A bathroom can and should be much more than a utilitarian space. In the best circumstances, it will be a place to

gather your wits for the day ahead and unwind before bed.

But building a better bathroom is necessary before you can truly relax

in this space. To create the perfect at-home oasis, consider these ideas.

COORDINATE

If you have ever replaced an appli-

ance or fixture in your bathroom by necessity, you may have unintentionally created an uncoordinated look. If you're tired of being mismatched,

can provide a striking combination of style and performance.

Suite collections are easy ways to create a unified

Suite, offering a traditional English-inspired design. Suites include the essential toilets, sinks and bathtubs, and in some cases, whirlpools or air

Decorative privacy windows make for an ideal solution, with adornments and finishes that keep away prying eyes.

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particularly in a space where you seek serenity, consider upgrading all your fixtures at once within one suite collection. Such coordination

look. For example, collections from Mansfield Plumbing include the Enso Suite, a contemporary look with sleek lines, and the Waverly

message tubs; and are also customizable for variables like size and optional fixtures. What's more, this route makes good financial sense, as a suite collection offers less hassle and better value over a la carte purchases.

To match a privacy window to your interior design needs, consider those options from a brand like Hy-Lite, which offers vinyl-framed windows with silk-screened design styles inspired by a range of architectural schools of thought. Within their Home Designer Collection are diverse styles, including the Metro window, inspired by modern architecture, and the Prairie window with a transitional design versatile enough to accommodate many aesthetics.

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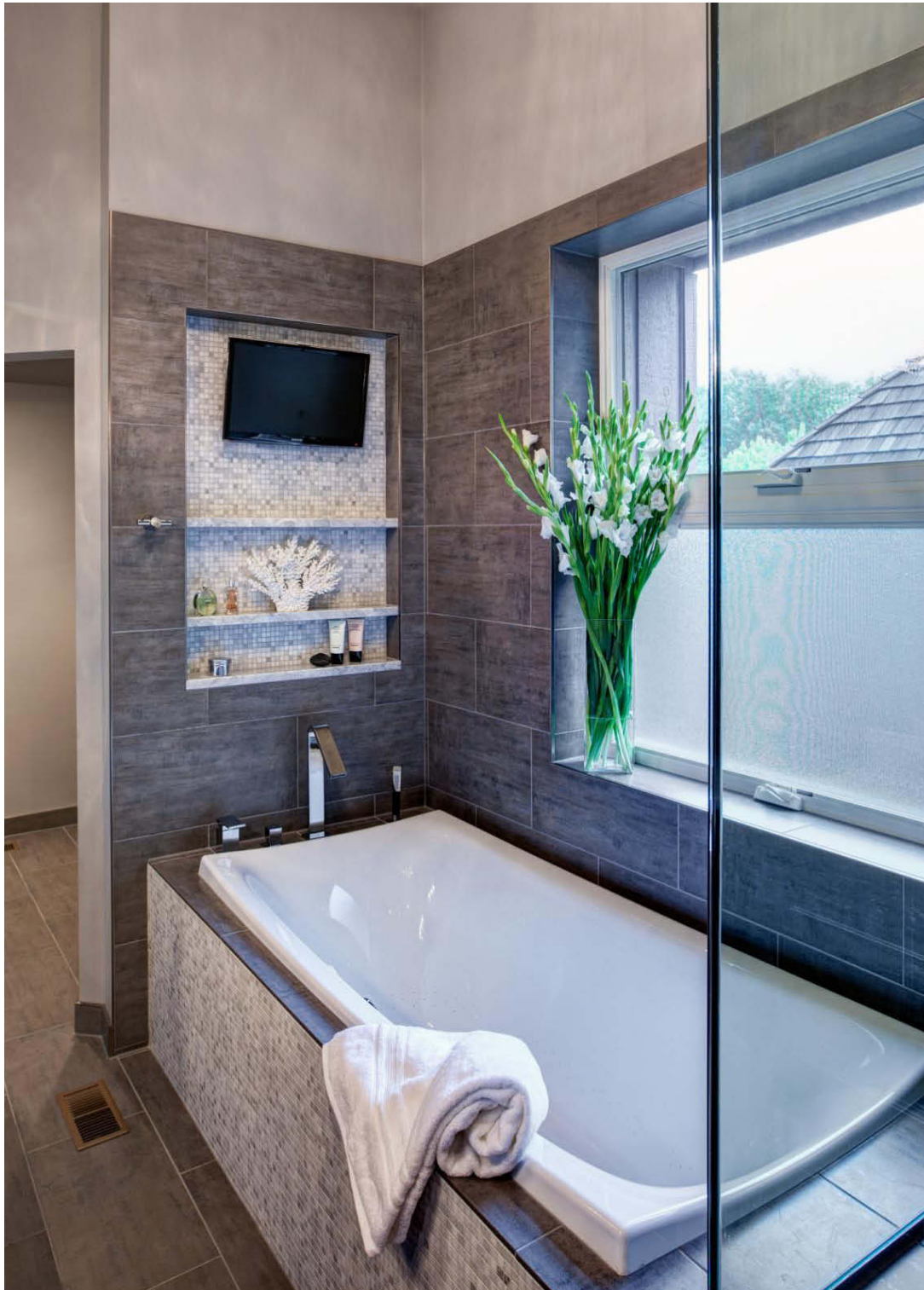
Decorative mill-work can offer your bathroom elegance and luxury. Remember, bathrooms are humid, so look for moisture-resistant polyurethane moulding and accent pieces, such as those from Fypon. These quick do-it-yourself ideas can be completed in an afternoon when using pieces that are pre-primed and ready for installation.

- Install a set of pilasters on both sides of your shower stall and a door crosshead overhead.
- Surround mirrors with lightweight polyurethane mouldings. Paint, faux finish or stain the mouldings to complement the bathroom.
- Install a small wall niche in a focal point of the room to display a flower arrangement or artwork.

- Add distinction to the room with crown mouldings.
- Give cabinets and shelving dimension and visual appeal with brackets or corbels.

There's no place like home. And within your home, there's no place like the bathroom. Give this important room your full attention when making home upgrades.

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Why You Should Aerate Your Lawn this Fall

(StatePoint) Fall is a great time to aerate the lawn. Whether you do it yourself or hire a lawn care professional to do it for you, aeration at least once per year provides a number of benefits to your lawn, say experts.

The main benefit is to relieve compaction and increase pore space, which promotes gas exchange and microbial activity in the soil and creates a better, more supportive environment for lawn health and

vitality. Aeration also promotes better soil drainage, which helps keep disease at bay and allows more water to percolate into the soil from rain or irrigation, meaning less runoff and more water getting where it needs to go.

“Ideal aeration timing depends on turf type and geography,” says Lloyd Von Scheliha of Exmark Manufacturing, a manufacturer of turf care equipment. “But annual aeration provides valuable agronomic benefits

to virtually any turfgrass.”

With that in mind, here are some tips from the experts at Exmark to get the most benefits from aeration:

- Timing: Ideally, aeration should

take place during times of active growth to help with recovery. Avoid aeration during times of heat stress or times preceding dormancy. It’s typically best to aerate cool season grasses in the spring or fall, while with warm season grasses, it’s best to aerate in late spring or early fall.

- Proper equipment: Use gear that meets the needs of your lawn. For example, Exmark offers a 30-inch Stand-On aerator that makes quick work of even large properties with the ability to easily maneuver around

landscape features. • Follow-up: After aeration, it’s a good idea to water the lawn, as well as a good time to apply fertilizer or overseed if needed. Be careful not to apply a pre-emergent if you plan to overseed, however, as it will prevent the new seed from growing.

Don’t let this important, but often overlooked lawn care task escape your attention this season. At the ideal time for your lawn, either take it upon yourself or hire a professional to give your grass a better chance at thriving.



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Questions (And Answers) About Chimney Maintenance

How often do I need to have my chimney swept?

This depends on a number of factors, starting with the type of fuel used:

Wood-burning: to supplement or as a main source of heat undoubtedly requires an annual inspection or cleaning. A good

furnaces create some problems. The temperatures are much cooler and higher levels of water vapor are produced. The water vapor contains chlorides and combines to form hydrochloric acid, which accelerates the deterioration process inside the flue. Often times, blockages and collapses occur. This can lead to danger-

veloping a history with a chimney professional will help determine the chimney make up and how frequent you should have the venting system inspected.

Is it a messy job?

Your home should never be compromised during cleaning. Precautions are made with the use of a specially

brushable soot and creosote from the venting system. Your chimney sweep should also inspect accessible portions of the chimney to determine whether additional concerns exist or higher level of inspection is required.

How long does it take to sweep a chimney?

business? This is the first thing that should be considered. Your friends and neighbors rely on good companies that grow stronger through the years. Experience counts! References should be available from the company

Does my furnace technician clean the chimney for our

furnace/boiler?

No! Many people believe that the technician who services their furnace/boiler cleans their chimney because the pipe that leads to the chimney gets removed. This is not true...you must call a reputable chimney company to perform a chimney cleaning.

Have more questions about chimney cleaning and maintenance? Call the Chimney Doctors at 731-424-0217 or visit them at 730 Airways Blvd in Jackson, TN. Visit the Chimney Doctors online at www.thechimneydoctors.com to view their showroom, products and brands, and a list of their services.



chimney professional can help determine this based on your burning habits, such as type of wood burned and chimney condition. Burning one to two cords of wood is often a good gauge.

Gas flues: gas is a clean burning fuel; however, today's high efficiency gas

ous carbon monoxide fumes entering the home.

Oil flues: venting problems exist with many chimneys. Sooty build-up leads to blockages and obstructed flue passages. Routine maintenance is required to the heating system and to the chimney, which vents it. De-

signed vacuum which enters the system and controls the soot and dust from entering your home.

What happens during a chimney cleaning?

During a chimney sweep service, the chimney professional removes all

The average chimney cleaning and inspection takes about an hour.

Is there a difference in chimney sweeps?

A few factors should be considered when hiring a chimney sweep: How long has the company been in



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Top Home Improvements that Help Sell Your Home

(StatePoint) While certain home upgrades provide obvious aesthetic enhancements, it's important to ensure the projects are worth the expense.

The following three home improvements provide especially impressive returns on their respective investments, making them excellent choices to consider with an eye on selling your home.

Bath and Kitchen

Bathroom and kitchen renovations are great bets, according to the National Association of Realtors. However, ripping out these rooms and building them completely anew is an extreme expense that might not give you an immediate investment return.

Instead, check out refinishing services, whose work

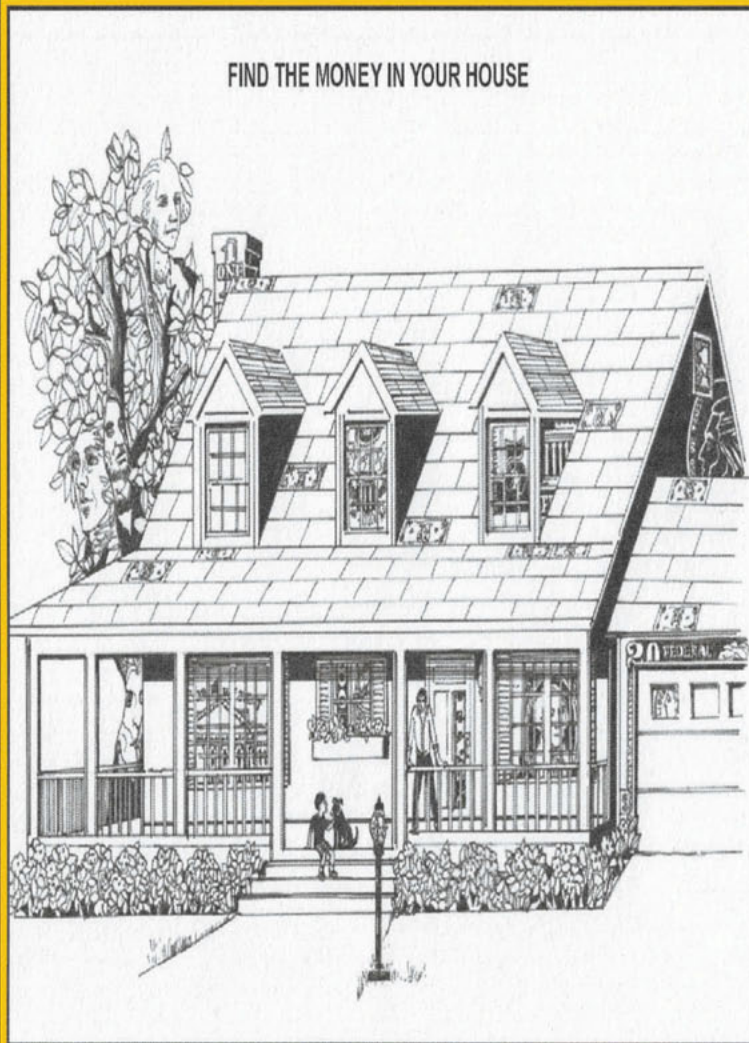
can provide more value than a full replacement. For example, Miracle Method takes ugly bathtubs, countertops, faucets and other fittings, and refurbishes them to look newly installed. This service will increase the useful life of those fixtures by more than 15 years, at a fraction of the cost and time of a replacement.

In fact, company president, Chuck

Pistor, started out as a very satisfied customer of this franchise. When he realized how efficient and economical the concept was for homeowners, he bought the company.

Wash Your Windows

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"The difference in the light streaming in, and the overall impression of the home after a professional window cleaning, is amazing," says Rik Nonelle, president of Window Genie, a well-known window cleaning and window tinting franchise.

Reaching those upper level windows for a good exterior cleaning can be tricky and dangerous to DIY, however. For a more detailed and precise job, consider using a professional service; it's an affordable way to give your home a facelift.

New Floors

New floors, particularly the latest in engineered flooring, are high in demand

among potential home buyers. It's no wonder; since engineered flooring is comprised of wood layers stacked cross-grain and bonded together under heat and pressure -- a process that makes them stain resistant and more durable where pets' claws and children's toys are concerned

"Today's engineered floors have the beauty and durability of wood, and are available in every color and style you can walk upon," says Tom Wood, president of the popular mobile franchise concept, Floor Coverings International. "Investing in new flooring can dramatically increase the resale value of your home."

With its mobile capability, a local

franchisee of Floor Coverings International can bring up to 3000 samples right to your door, a great convenience when you are in the process of updating your home for sale. Neutral tones, such as pale gray or a dark walnut stain will make the home-selling process easier.

Affordable home improvement franchises and cleaning services that offer great value abound. For those planning to sell their homes in the near future, considering each project's return on investment is important when choosing which home upgrades to make.



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