

Small Remodels Bring Big Rewards

By Chuck Grimsley, Chairman, Columbia Remodelers

Are you feeling a chill from those drafty windows or placing a bucket on the floor to cope with a leaky roof? Have you noticed that your home is looking a little worn and in need of repairs?

With rock-bottom lumber prices and interest rates for loans at all time lows, now is the perfect time to remodel! By incorporating some changes, you can improve the beauty and comfort of your home and increase its value at the same time. Consider these remodeling suggestions:

- **Replace home siding.** New siding revitalizes a home's exterior and can also solve pesky draft problems. Quality siding can improve insulation; reduce noise; resist damage from moisture, fire, insects, and other natural elements; and is easier to maintain. A 2007 Cost vs. Value Report from *Remodeling* magazine found that siding is the top choice in home investment as it yields an 83 percent recovery for midrange projects.
- **Install new windows.** Improve your view and lower your energy bill. New windows are easier to maintain because they require less cleaning and reduce costly air infiltration -- saving on your heating and cooling bills. New windows may be impact resistant, repel dirt and water spotting, and come with coatings that prevent heat loss or gain.
- **Repair or replace the roof.** Choose from a multitude of options to save energy, and stay warm and dry during the wintry months. Also consider new green roofing options, such as incorporating vegetation on the roof to collect rain and conserve energy, or adding reflective surfaces to keep the roof from retaining as much of the sun's heat.
- **Update the kitchen cabinets and sink.** You can modernize your kitchen without the effort of a complete kitchen renovation. New cabinetry and sinks improve kitchen appearance, enhance the use of your kitchen and also allows the homeowner to recoup 83 percent of the investment when they look to resell.
- **Refresh the bathroom or add a new one.** Just adding new cabinets, a sink, flooring or a tub can revitalize the bathroom and make it a quiet refuge for pampering. Or, adding a half bath can increase home value 10.5 percent and a full bath 20 percent, according to a National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) analysis of data from the American Housing Survey.
- **Add a deck or porch.** Expanding your outdoor living space with an area to entertain friends and family or for weekend relaxation is a popular remodeling project. A survey of remodelers has shown an increased number of calls for outdoor remodeling work, with 52 percent adding decks, 35 percent building porches, and 25 percent installing patios.

"Maintaining and upgrading your home just makes good financial sense," says Lonny Rutherford, CGR, CAPS, a remodeler from New Mexico and chairman of the NAHB Remodelers Council. "It's like servicing your car; you want to make sure your home stays looking nice and in good operating condition to preserve a major personal asset."

For more information about remodeling, including tips on how to hire a remodeler and to search for a professional remodeler in your area, call Columbia Remodelers at (803) 256-6238 or visit

www.remouncil.com or www.nahb.org/remodel.