

LET'S REMODEL

Don't skimp when installing windows

Q: We are looking for replacement windows and many contractors have suggested vinyl windows. Can you help with what we should look for?

A: The vinyl windows that can be purchased in today's market have many features that you should consider a must.

First and most important to remember is that you are buying windows to last as long as the house does.

Another mistake that people make when remodeling is the "lowest price" consideration. Always look for quality and value for the home.

Quite often, when asked what to look for I suggest that you make sure the vinyl window is a virgin PVC honey-combed chamber vinyl system. Virgin PVC means that the vinyl has been extruded once. This ensures the structural integrity of both the frame and the sash. The honey-combed chambers create dead air space which will give you an insulation value. If one of the chambers are filled with foam insulation, that is all the better.

The next most important feature to consider is the glass. The glass represents

70 percent of the window and is the most important component to consider in energy efficiency. The glass must be double-paned. Double-paned glass provides dead air space. This will give also give you an insulator. The glass should be "Low E Glass" which stands for low emissivity. Low E reduces the transfer of heat energy through a window so that you reduce heat loss in winter and heat gain in the summer.

Argon gas, which is heavier than air completes the glass insulation by filling the gap between the panes. This will add to the cost a bit but will give you the thermal performance needed.

The last thing I suggest you consider is looking at the company you are choosing to replace the windows. Be sure the company has a strong background with references and jobs you can go see. Once again be sure they are licensed and insured and if possible look for a showroom so that you can see the actual windows. Be sure to check on the warranties that are offered by the manufacturer.

Jeffrey Burpee, president, Champion Window and Enclosure Co., Livonia (313)427-6560.



NARI-The Michigan Remodeling Association at 810-336-3232. Questions can be mailed to "Let's Remodel," 2187 Orchard Lake Road, Suite 103, Sylvan Lake, MI 48320. Answers are provided by members of the MRA, the local chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

Members include professional contractors, manufacturers, wholesalers, consultants and lenders representing all facets of residential and light commercial remodeling.

For your home improvement questions or a copy of our roster book contact Gayle Walters, executive director of

Members also answer questions on "Construction Talk" with Murray Gula on WEXL-AM 1340, 1-2 p.m. Saturdays. Call in your questions at 810-544-1340.

Local designers display furniture at Somerset

Neiman Marcus at the Somerset Collection, Big Beaver at Coolidge in Troy, is displaying a retrospective of fine home furnishings by the Art-Harrison interior design studio of Birmingham

through the first week in September. The pieces are the result of a collaboration of designers Arturo Sanchez and Barry Harrison and are shown in the windows and throughout the store.

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