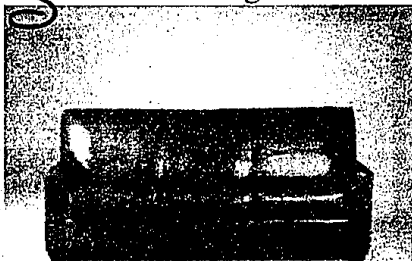


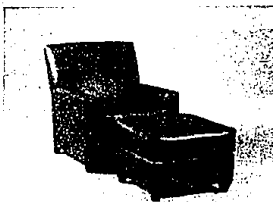


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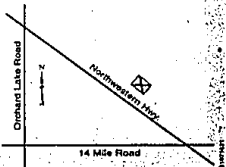
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## Fabulous FURNITURE 2001

### Sofas offer more than what meets the eye

BY LISA LUCKOW-HEALY  
SPECIAL WRITER

A sofa purchase is a big decision. This one object in your home makes a fashion statement. It is a trendsetter. It says something about your personal style. But it's more than a pretty face in your living space.

A sofa has substance. Knowing how to buy the right sofa for your lifestyle needs is the difference between a comfortable living experience and an object that doesn't hold up to its expectations.

"The structural components of a sofa are important considerations when making your purchase," said Cynthia Nenda, sales manager, Ethan Allen Furniture in Birmingham.

"A sofa should have a solid hardwood frame that's doweled, glued and screwed together. If the piece has a good frame, this will add to the comfort and durability of the fabric."

"If the spring system is good and the pillows are stuffed properly, the sofa will be more comfortable. If the fabric feels good to the touch — called the 'hand of the fabric' — it will add to the comfort level."

A sofa can look good on the outside. But it's about what is on the inside that really counts in a sound purchase decision — one not influenced strictly by style.

"The best sofa construction is one incorporating a frame of solid hardwood of maple or birch," said Kevin Konat, owner, Classic Interiors in Livonia.

"The springs are eight-way, hand-tied. Cushion seat cores should be double-wrapped with a urethane foam core followed by a spun poly-facron layer that's then put inside a tailored muslin casing."

Konat said the purpose of this type of frame design is to keep the frame stable. The spring design means that no matter where you sit, the entire spring system supports you where you are, and lends itself to long-lasting comfort.

"The double-wrapped cushions keep shape longer, and keep from flattening out quicker," Konat said.

While aesthetics are pleasing to the eye, comfort and durability are often at the forefront of the final purchase considerations.

"If a customer wants a down-filled cushion feeling, I'll ask him if he's tried it and likes the feeling of it," Nenda said.

"Down-filled sofas have an unstructured look. If you like a more unstructured look with some wrinkles in the fabric, it's a comfortable choice. Our down cushions have a spring down design in them to help them bounce back."

"If a customer likes something a bit firmer, I'd show them other styles and ask him or her to check the differences."

After style and comfort levels are selected, fabric is a major consideration.

"Upholstery is much like a fashion statement," Konat said.

"Fabric, color and patterns will come and go. But the fabric blend is important to the life of the sofa."

"Customers should think about where they will use the sofa and how it will be used. Will it sit in a highly used family room or a more formal living room? For durability's sake, a rayon-polyester or a polyester-cotton blend is a good choice, followed by chenille."

### Consider these as you shop for sofa

When making the decision to spend the money for a new sofa, keep the following purchase considerations in mind:

- Solid, hardwood frame
- Good quality spring design in seating areas
- Seat cushion structure (i.e. double-wrapped)
- Quality of tailoring

Ask yourself how you will use the sofa you plan to buy. A family with children and pets will get a longer life from a sofa that has a more durable fabric or leather. The same rule holds true for a room with high traffic.

A more delicate fabric can be used on a living room sofa that receives much less use and isn't subjected to the daily activities of children or pets.

"A customer can expect to spend approximately \$1,000 for a sofa that is on sale, and up to \$2,000 for a good, well-built sofa," Konat said.

"The average customer keeps a sofa six to seven years. If the right fabric is selected, the customer will tire of it before the sofa's structural integrity wears out."

"But it costs as much, if not more, to reupholster an old sofa as it does to buy new. The choices are really a matter of personal preference and budget."

## Budget Bathtub Liners

Company offers solutions for tub troubles

When was the last time you did a fantastic job cleaning your bathroom, only to realize the tub still looked less than stellar?

If the finish on your bathtub is chipped, peeling, faded or permanently stained no amount of cleanser and scrubbing will do the job. The bathtub needs to be fixed.

Visit our 12,000 sq. ft. factory showroom located in Madison Heights, where we sell over 8,000 bathtub liners and wall surround systems annually. We also sell a complete line of whirlpool, soaker tubs and hydrotherapy massage tubs.

Reglazing is an option, but only a temporary one. There's no guarantee the finish won't go bad again and the reglazing process is difficult and involves many dangerous chemicals.

The bathtub could be replaced, but there is even more mess involved, not to mention the cost.

There is another solution, though and Budget Bathtub Liners Co., with showrooms in Lincoln Park and Madison Heights, has the answer: a new bathtub liner or total complete system consisting of bathtub liner and wall surround system.

One of the hottest trends in bathroom remodeling, bathtub liners and wall systems fit over not only existing bathtubs, but also ceramic walls in your bathroom. That means less mess and less time between what your bathroom looks like now and a completely new appearance.

For a limited time only, bathtub liners are on sale from \$389 installed. Complete systems, which include bathtub liner and wall surround, are on sale from \$1,295. That's about 50-75% less than the cost of replacing an old tub and ceramic tiles which average about \$3,000 to \$5,000 and more.

Budget Bathtub Liner is able to offer the low prices, according to Dean Hartley, because of the large volume of business it does.

"We're the largest distributor of Acrylic Bathtub Liners and Wall Surround Systems in the country," Hartley said. "I'm proud of that."

When a homeowner places an order for a new liner, employees take 15 different measurements and several photographs of the existing bathtub. The measurements and photos are then sent to the company's factory, where a custom liner is made using one of 750

molds in stock.

In addition, seven colors and faux marbles finished are available along with a complete line of Delta and Kohler fixtures.

All Bathtub Liners and Wall Surround Systems are made of D/ABS Owens Corning High Impact Acrylic and carry a Lifetime Warranty. This is the same material football helmets and bowling balls are made from and the liners are about three times the thickness of those found at home improvement stores and are guaranteed not to chip or peel and to retain their finish. In addition, installation, which can usually be done in one day, is guaranteed.

Budget Bathtub Liners Co. is at 25170 John R., Madison Heights and 3387 Fort St., Lincoln Park between Emmons and Champaign adjacent to Mickey Shorr. The showroom is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sundays. For more information, call Budget Bathtub Liners at 1-800-BATHTUB.

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## Ugliest Bathroom Contest

Sponsored By WJR AM 760 Radio, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Building Industry Association and Mathison Supply of Livonia, Garden City and Canton.

**Win A \$10,000 Dream Bathroom!**



- Air Massager Massage Bathtub by Jason
- Bath Cabinetry by Berth
- Faucets by Harden
- Ultra-Flush Toilet By Gerber
- Tile Tub Surround
- Installation by J&M Home Improvement
- And More!

Employees of WJR Radio, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, BIA and Mathison Supply are not eligible to enter.

Take a photo of your ugly bathroom and bring it into any Mathison Supply store or mail it to WJR, Ugliest Bathroom Contest, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. 800, Detroit, MI 48202. The winner's bathroom will be upgraded with new fixtures, tile, medicine cabinet and accessories with a value of up to \$10,000. And, be sure to visit the WJR and Mathison Supply booths at:

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All entries become the property of WJR and must be received by April 12, 2002. No cash equivalents. Judges' decision is final. No purchase necessary. Winner will be announced May 18, 2002.