

Prominent Eastern Architect Tells Why Homes Should Be Made for Comfort

Designers of development homes must always remember that very human beings will be living in them, Herman H. York, AIA, says.

York, who is one of the most illustrious architects in the residential development building field, explains that he designs homes for real, live families—husbands and wives with children, pets, outdoor barbecues and indoor TV sets, high hopes, wide interests, and tight budgets, whether they're in the seven, seventeen or twenty-seven thousand-dollar-a-year bracket.

"As a result, we constantly look for new and improved building materials to upgrade both quality and cost factors in housing," York points out. "We try to specify materials that hold original costs down and keep maintenance to a minimum, while improving the appearance of the homes we design," York says.

Mineral fiber siding is a good example, according to York, who specifies it for many of the homes he designs.

Aesthetically it's good, he says, because it provides long-lasting color, yet it can be painted if the family wants a new color scheme.

"Color is more and more important in development houses," he explains.

Is Sidewalk Tipsy? Blame Tree Roots

When sidewalk slabs get askew, the cause nearly always is lifting by tree roots. It is possible to reset a slab by raising it with a long pinch bar, bracing it with stones while the root is cut away with a hatchet, and resetting the slab in a thin bed of cement.

When patching sidewalks, try to match the color of the original by adding lampblack to the cement mix.

York says. "Since it gives individuality to houses of somewhat similar design, home-buyers now want stronger, more imaginative colors. If the color is built into the building material as it is in mineral fiber siding, maintenance is reduced considerably. The major job of re-painting the whole house every three or four years is eliminated," York explains.

And mineral fiber siding is both durable and fireproof, York adds.

The architect points out that mineral fiber siding lends itself to remodeling projects, as well as to new construction. "A new wing can be integrated with the rest of the house by siding it with mineral fiber panels of the same color as the original siding," York explains. "Or if the old siding is shabby, new mineral fiber siding applied on both old and new sections of the house will tie the two together giving the whole house a handsome new appearance."

York has received 32 major awards for excellence in residential design. Since the end of World War II, more than 100,000 homes have been built from his plans. He is a trustee of the National Association of Home Builders' Research Institute.

Home Owners' Question Box

Q. I'm finishing the expansion attic of my house and also have to re-roof soon. What sort of roofing should I use to keep the new attic room as cool as possible?

ANSWER: White asphalt shingles will provide maximum insulating value. Since no roofing material is thick enough to offer significant insulating value because of its thickness alone, it's color that counts, and white reflects the most heat away from a house.

Q. The wood claspboard on my house is badly blistered and cracked. I'm told that painting and repairs would be very costly, with doubtful results. Can the house wall be surfaced instead with mineral fiber siding over the claspboard?

ANSWER: Yes, indeed. This prefabricated siding can go directly over the claspboard. Applied with insulating backer board, you not only get additional insulation but also a rustic shadow line. Mineral fiber siding comes in white and a variety of decorator colors, including pastels.

Q. I can't find lower doors to exactly fit the door opening in my new family room. They're either too large or too small. How can I solve this problem?

ANSWER: Louvers come in width variations of only one inch. Buy the next larger size than needed, then plane or saw the edges to fit. The louvers are designed so about an inch can be removed from the width of each door (taking an equal amount from both sides) and as much as 2" from the height by trimming 1/4" from the top and 1/4" from the bottom.

Self-Sealing Shingles Fight Winds

In revising its code aimed at making roofs more resistant to winds, the FHA has issued standards for roofing installation in high-wind, medium-wind and low-wind zones.

The code now requires cementing down the tabs of asphalt shingles on all roofs in high-wind areas, specified as over 90 m.p.h. in areas where winds reach a maximum velocity of 60 to 90 m.p.h., the alternative to cementing is use of shingles weighing 275 pounds per 100 square feet. Low-wind requirements are left to local officials, but cementing is recommended wherever winds over 70 m.p.h. have been experienced. The new standard calls for cementing down the tabs of asphalt shingles on low-slope roofs in all zones.

Roofing contractors favor self-sealing asphalt shingles which have factory-applied cement that softens under the sun's heat, causing the shingle tabs to adhere to the course below.

Award City Prizes



TROPHIES WON at the Livonia Department of Parks and Recreation Arts and Crafts Display at Wonderland Shopping Center are displayed by leaders at various playgrounds. From left to right, Pat Davis, Cleveland, Jeanne Kofahl, Washington, Karen Lucas, Botsford (1st place winner), Anna Mae Epley, Tyler, Joe Washburn, Marshall; and at the far right is David Jones, Deputy Director of Public Works, who represented the Mayor in making the presentations.

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Botsford Wins Livonia Parks Craft Contest

Models of the World's Fair filled the Civic Room at the Wonderland Shopping Center last week. Replicas of the U.N. Building, exhibits of various countries, and many other miniatures featured the display created by the children at Livonia's 24 playgrounds in their version of the "Livonia World's Fair Project."

On Wednesday night, the projects were judged with the following district winners: Cleveland, Washington, Tyler and Marshall Playgrounds. The grand winner was Botsford.

Judges were Carl Duke, former playerleader at Grand and Whitman, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Genova, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Larus O'Brien.

Winning displays are currently displayed at the City Hall.

Roofing Figured By The Square

Among building terms home owners should know is the word "square." A square of roofing material is the amount needed to cover 100 square feet of roof area.

For instance, if shingles weighing 235 pounds per square are used, each 100 square feet of roof will be protected from weather and fire hazards by that weight of covering. Longer lasting protection may be gained from "heavyweight" asphalt shingles—those weighing 290 pounds per square or more—which have a normal life expectancy of 25 years.

Take Steps to Keep Old Staircases Safe

Do shaky stairs give you the shakies? Occasional checkups are needed to keep the staircases in solid condition. The newest post may need reinforcing with additional screws. The handrail brackets tend to loosen and should be braced with heavier screws.

Squeaky steps often can be corrected by working glue between the riser and tread, followed by driving additional finishing nails into the step. If balusters have become movable, check the filler strips and replace those that are too short. A few finishing nails in the square ends of the balusters will keep them rigid.

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