


Farmington Enterprise Annual

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Improvements Boost Comfort and Values

"Repair, renovate, remodel—and expand!" In more and more homes, that's the slogan nowadays, as homeowners prepare to embark on home improvement activities that range from modernizing the kitchen and bath to adding a bedroom or a family room, from replanting the lawn and garden to re-roofing and re-siding the house.

Naturally enough, the first goal of all these projects is to enhance family comfort, convenience and pleasure. But increasingly, a bonus benefit is getting attention: the boost in property values that stems from home improvement.

"Should We Move—or Improve?"

For owners of older homes, this increased value may well be the deciding factor when the question is, "Should we move or should we improve?" To families cramped for space or impatient with antiquated facilities, moving often seems the only solution. Yet in many instances they would really prefer to remain in their present homes and neighborhoods. When, by improving comfort, they can also improve the ultimate resale value of the property, investment in improvement becomes an attractive alternative.

Even relatively new homes are candidates for improvement, too. Living in a new home, for a few months or years, often reveals family needs that were not apparent at the time of purchase. Changing trends in home life are another factor. The more elegant family room, for instance, is gaining in importance and often calls for additional space. Growing use of king-size or queen-size beds points up the need for larger bedrooms or more bedrooms.

Attics Follow Roof Contours

In finishing-off attic space, decorative design and plenty of light—both natural and artificial—should be given high priority, according to Charles M. Gray, manager, Insulation Board Institute, Chicago, Ill.

"The very shape of most attic areas is a challenge, not a handicap," Gray notes. "At one time the roof pitch rarely was capitalized on by the designer. It usually was squared off by a ceiling resulting in less usable space and a far from attractive interior."

"Now, the ceiling often follows the roof shape, creating a dramatic, open feeling. The ceiling itself becomes a beautiful if surfaced by a fib-board acoustical insulation board product."

The ceilings usually extend on either side of the room to what builders call knee wall height—at least three and a half feet off the floor. This space is handy for storage and can be covered by doors or folding partitions in attractive colors.

If the attic is exceptionally large, more conventional walls and level ceilings can be installed.

Typical attics often are short on natural daylight because windows are few in number and small. Larger windows or a special glass installation on both ends of the attic can boost natural lighting.

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POPULAR PRICED

Increasing Space Is Immediate Objective

In both newer and older homes, more space is likely to be the immediate improvement objective, to be achieved in one—or both—of two ways: remodeling and modernizing existing space, or expanding space with room additions. A survey conducted for the National Home Improvement Council reveals that, among homeowners intending to solve their space problems with additions, family rooms and bedrooms are first on the "most wanted" list. For those who plan to remodel existing space, kitchens and bathrooms take priority, the same survey shows.

Better storage facilities are stated as specific space needs for kitchens and bathrooms, and new appliances and plumbing fixtures play a significant role in expanding both the space and the convenience of these rooms.

As indoor family rooms grow more elegant, so does the outdoor, or garden, living room. Homeowners surveyed include a high proportion who intend to build a patio, for informal entertaining and to provide a play area for the children.

Vacated 'Pad' Easy to Adapt

When a child goes off to college, his bedroom usually becomes wasted space in the house. But not if it's redesigned to serve as a needed home office and den.

It's not hard to get away from the bedroom look. First, treat the bed as sitting space, removing head and foot board, pushing the bed against a wall, and adding a tailored cover and back bolsters.

Next, redo walls with a prestige solid lumber paneling—like reynard cedar or alder—or a dark, cabinet for study, and a desk, cabinets for study, and a book shelf.

Windows can be given a more tailored look with matchstick blinds, fabric-covered shades, or lowered shutters, and a fresh color scheme can be introduced with the bed cover, a carpet and accessories.

Completed, the room functions year-long, but also welcomes the college child home for vacations.

Improvements Look Ahead To Resale Value

Man-made and other materials still face strong competition from wood, the survey shows. Sixty per cent preferred wood paneling, as opposed to plaster and other types of wall coverings for interior walls, while 86 per cent voted for wood as the favorite material for kitchen cabinets. And local craftsmen can have cause for pride, since the survey indicates that 59 per cent of those questioned choose locally-built wood cabinets over the factory-built variety.

While interiors to be remodeled and additions to be built seem to get the most attention, the present yard interest in home improvement covers virtually every area.

LUSSENDEN'S Little PLUMBER

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Cracked concrete sections near the front door? Replace them. They immediately depress value on first impression.

Because home-buying prospects look out windows at the view, blinds ought to be fresh-looking and ails and frames in attractive condition.

Large patios heighten the impression of luxury living. In most cases, they should add more to house value than they cost.

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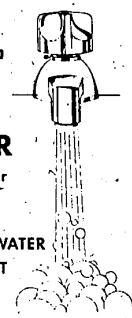


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