onsumers want energy efficient appliances

have written many articles and spoken many times about the shopping habits of Americans when it comes to major home appliances. It was only a year ago when you read about the project cost of a new washing machine reaching \$800 plus. It's beginning to happen, and with the new technology will come even higher

prices.
The \$289 washer will soon become a thing of the past, and those who will benefit from this happening are the service technicians who repair them. At least for a while, many homeowners will opt to have their appliances fixed rather than shopping for a current, expensive model.

Paving the lowest possible price.

Paying the lowest possible price has always been the norm for the majority of consumers, but there's a story from Appliance Magazine

APPLIANCE DOCTOR



JOE GAGNON

ligence company. ngence company.

In its study Attitudes and
Behaviors of Residential Consumers about Energy Efficiency,
Primen asked 500 households
about factors affecting home
appliance purchases and knowl-

edge of energy issues. Consumers in four U.S. geographic regions and California were asked to rank the impact of purchasing decisions on the following factors - fuel choice (natural gas/electricity), price, energy efficiency, brand name, product fontures, availability and appearance.

The key finding indicates energy efficiency has replaced price as the top appliance purchasing consideration in the U.S. A majority of U.S. households now plan to make an extra effort to buy energy-efficient appliances in the futureaccording to the study.

Three-fourths of consumers

Three-fourths of consumers said energy efficiency was a very important factor in purchasing appliances during the past year. About 84 percent said they antici-pate that energy efficiency will be a very important consideration in

The survey also showed that consumer attitudes have been shaped by campaigns aimed at raising awareness of energy effi-ciency such as the U.S. Energy Star labeling program.

Star labeling program.
Nearly 55 percent of consumers report they have seen efficiency-related advertising. Roughly one-quarter of the respondents said they would be willing to pay more (15 to 25 percent above the standard price for higher efficiency appliances.

appliances.

It is the opinion of this lonely voice that this new trend toward energy officiency will equate to the original shopping habit of price being most important. I hope to see one day the trend move to the most important area

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quality.

Ask any service technician what they think about the components and structure of modern appliances and the life span they command today and you are liable to get a response on how they should be made and how it used to be.

Here are some things to consider when shopping for home appli-

■ Call independent service companies that repair appliances and ask what they think is the

■ Simple is best. The less gadgeta you have, the less there is break down.

Joe Gagnon can be heard Sat-urday and Sunday on 760 WJR. He is a member and past presi-dent of the Society of Consumer

Got a question for the Appliance Doctor? Call him at (313) 873-9789, or write to him in care of Keely Kaleski Wygonik, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48160.



Cozy surroundings

Cozy surroundings
Joe and Jennifer Rutherford,
of Plymouth, agreed. Homeownors want cozy surroundings.
The Rutherfords own Upon a
Wall, a custom home-wallmural business where they
design wall paintings. The married artists paint designs such
as whinsical animal scones for
children's rooms and ocean
Caribbean views for living
rooms. It's all about beauty and
luxury with a twist of comfort.
Another hot area at the show
was Concrete Garden, a Waterord based company that creates concrete statues. Visitors
admired statues, stones and

admired statues, stones and figurines that honor pets. A big-seller was stepping stones engraved with sentimental

serier was steeping stones engraved with sentimental words to remember deceased animals such as "A loving companion," and "My loyal friend." "I'll feel good looking at it, Lenora Smith of Southfield said as she tried to chose a pet memorial stone to lay near a framed photo of her cat who died last year. "I live in an apartment, so I'll keep het stone indoors for now." Kitchen improvement was another big topic. This year expect to see accents with grapes especially wooden grape inlays on cupboards and chair backs. Ceramic tiles are also highlighted with grapes.

Home Improvement Shows

At the Palace of Aubum Hills, 1/7 at Lepeer, Road (M-24) – 5-10 p.m. Filday, Feb. 5, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 10. Admission \$7 adults, \$6 seniors. No charge for children 12 and under.

Mat Macemb Community

and under.

If At Macamb Community
College, on Hayes just south
of 12 Mile Road in Warren
2-10 p.m. Friday, Feb. 15, 10
a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday,
Feb. 16, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 17 Admission
\$5 adults, \$4 seniors. No
charge for children 12 and
under.

For information about either show visit www.builders.org

For those who missed this year's Home Expo show in Novi, there's another show this weekend at the Palace of Auburn Hills. Some of the same people who participated in the Novi show will attend including The Appliance Doctor Joe Gagnon, The Garden Show's Dean Kruuskopf, and WXTT's Ask the Handyman Glenn Haege. You can also enter the Ugliest Bathroom Contest sponsored by Mathisen Supply, WJR Radio and The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.





Sponsored By WJR AM 760 Radio, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Building Industry Association and Mathison Supply of Livonia, Garden City and Canton. Take a photo of your ugly bath-room 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 510,000. And, be sure to vielt the WJR and

/in A §10.000 n Bathroom!



- Air Masseur Massage Bathtub by Jason
 Bath Cabinotry by Bortch
 Faucets by Harden
 Ultra-Flush Tollet By Gerber
- e Tub Sur
- ∏ 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

FEBRUARY 8-10, 2002

Mathison Supply booths a

THE PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS

SHOW

PALACE HOME **IMPROVEMENT**

All entries become the property of WJR and must be received by WIR and must be received by MIROVENIAN decision is final. No purchase necessary. Winner will be announcessary vinner May 16, 2002.

Crittenton Hospital Medical Center presents CHRISTIANE NORTHRUP, M.D. "The Wisdom of Menopause"



[he bottom line is this: The menopausal transition no longer means you've entereď life's final chapter. Rather, it is a passageway to a new beginning, a second spring.

- Christiane Northrup, M.D.

WOMEN'S WELLNESS CONFERENCE

7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14

Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion, Oakland University Tickets are \$25. Seating is limited, so please call 248-652-5269 to purchase your tickets today.

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