



SAFETY FIRST should be your prime consideration when storing medicines and harsh cleaning compounds in the bathroom. Avoid storing them under sinks or in unlocked cabinets where children and pets may accidentally get at them. Better yet, avoid using harsh products altogether. For example, use Drain Power, the first drain opener to use pressure to clear clogged drains, instead of using dangerous crystal and liquid drain cleaners that contain harmful fumes or acids.

Avoid bathroom hazards with safety checklist

Home improvement can take many forms, including remodeling and redecorating. But while pretty accessories can add much to your rooms, it's important to consider the safety of your home as well.

Bathrooms, in particular, offer many potentially dangerous pitfalls for you and your family. So, to insure that your bathroom is as safe as it is attractive, compare it against the following safety checklist:

- 1) Date and label all medicines and know their shelf life. Medicines that are used past their expiration date or used improperly can even be harmful!
- 2) Children and pets don't always know what's good for them... be sure all medicines and caustic cleaning compounds are stored in locked cabinets. And, use caution even when discarding old medicines or empty cleaning product containers—keep them out of the reach of your small loved ones to prevent accidental intake.
- 3) Harsh chemical cleaners can be harmful to adults, if accidentally used improperly. Always read instructions before using any cleanser and, whenever possible, avoid hazardous ones.
- 4) To reduce the risk of slips and falls on bare bathroom floors, pick up hairpins and other small objects as soon as they are dropped and, if your floor surface is the type which gets slippery when wet, be sure to mop up spills immediately.
- 5) To prevent falls in the bath, line yours with a rubber mat or with decorative rubber decals. Install a handle or rod on the shower wall for extra protection.
- 6) Never use electrical appliances in or near water or damp surfaces. If your family relies on bathroom appliances which require electricity, plug them into outlets away from the sink or bathtub and unplug them when they're not being used.
- 7) If your bathroom measures up well to this checklist, the chances of bathroom accidents are lessened and that means more peace of mind for you.

Improvements—investments and realities

It's a banner year to fix up the home

A number of pressing realities make 1976 a banner year for home improvements. Families are traveling less, due to the skyrocketing costs of gasoline, motels, hotels and restaurants, and staying home more. And that's where improving the home comes in. Home-style vacations seem more desirable if houses can be remodeled to include such leisure-like amenities as patios, pools, outside cooking and seating areas. As a result, wise homeowners are investing more than ever before in improving their properties with, as expected, attention to increasing their energy-saving potential. With heating costs soaring, better insulation, installation of storm doors and windows and even roofing are high on the homeowner's priority list.

Plans an advantage
It is to be remembered that home improvements properly planned and executed not only can produce substantial savings in heating and cooling costs, but also add value to the existing property. Thus there is a way for homeowners to cope with inflationary trends.

Advice and counsel is available at the local level from experts in planning and financing improvements. According to Edgar V. Hall, executive vice president of the National Home Improvement Council, the investment in home improvements made last year by homeowners amounted to \$23 billion. The Home Improvement Council has several thousand local councils operating in as many cities to assist people in their planning.

Easier money
Since loans for home improvements are easier to get than mortgages, people are staying put, making what they have stretch to suit their needs and many are doing all or at least some of the work themselves.

While money was tight and costly in 1975, there is every indication that it will be only costly in 1976. Savings and Loan Associations have noted a dramatic change in availability of savings for home improvement loan purposes and are anxious to find homeowners to persuade them to make improvements on their homes.

Most people will either take out a separate home improvement loan or add the cost of the improvements to their mortgage.

Watch taxes
It is important to note that not all home improvements result in higher taxes. In many cases, sizeable improvements can be made without changing taxes at all.

Most tax increases result from improvements which add new living space, major additions, structural changes and repairs, or a new garage or patio.

Improvements
In many areas the homeowner can put on a new roof make any repairs to existing masonry, replace lighting and plumbing fixtures if they are not part of a complete modernization, paint the entire inside and outside, install lawn sprinkler systems, put in lawns and no-limit landscaping, make complete plaster repairs and redecorate, add closets, put in new ceilings, weather stripping, install a new driveway, add or replace gutters and downspouts, replace a worn-out furnace with a new heating system and restore or replace porches and steps—all without fear of a tax rise!

The National Home Improvement Council reminds the homeowner that even with a higher assessment and tax rise, home improvements result in increased value for their property and more comfortable living.



HOMEOWNERS' THING OF BEAUTY and joy is the new vinyl siding, Driftgrain, which never needs refinishing. The embossed wood grain texture by Johns-Manville is fade resistant, and will not scratch, dent or conduct electrical current.

Custom fit windows, not stopgaps, cut loss of heat—reduce fuel bills

Millions of dollars of expensive-heated air will go through your windows this winter. What makes this even more painful is that millions of American consumers think that they have avoided this money (and heat) loss by using stopgap measures to cut fuel bills.

In the summer, of course, this money-losing process will be repeated as an expensive-cooled air escapes and warm air enters via the same route. Even with recommended insulation, which is very important, you're not going to the heart of your insulating problems unless your windows are doing their part to stop heat loss.

Who says so? Well, for one, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) says that "almost 70 per cent of a typical single-family unit's heating load is associated with windows and doors."

Frank Gorell, president of Season-all Industries, Inc., world's largest manufacturer of aluminum custom-made storm windows and doors and re-

placement windows, pinpoints the problem more precisely: "It is sad to see so much time and effort go into partial solutions like weatherstripping and caulking. All the caulking in the world will not stop heat loss through glass."

"Engineers have proven that one square foot of glass can lose as much heat as ten square feet of wall. And weatherstripping is equally negligible if you do not have first-class windows with multiple panes of glass or storm windows."

"Why? Because engineers know that, with a typical single-glazed, double-hung window, almost three times the energy is lost through the glass as is lost around the sash area."

The only effective remedy for heat loss, says Gorell, is the use of good prime windows which prevent air infiltration or heat loss. If these prime windows are bad, they should be replaced with custom-fit windows (the most economical way to go).

For more effective sav-

ings, storm windows insulate the frame as well as the prime window. Other measures include replacement windows with insulating glass—or thermally-improved windows, which are here today and represent the standards by which tomorrow's windows will be judged.

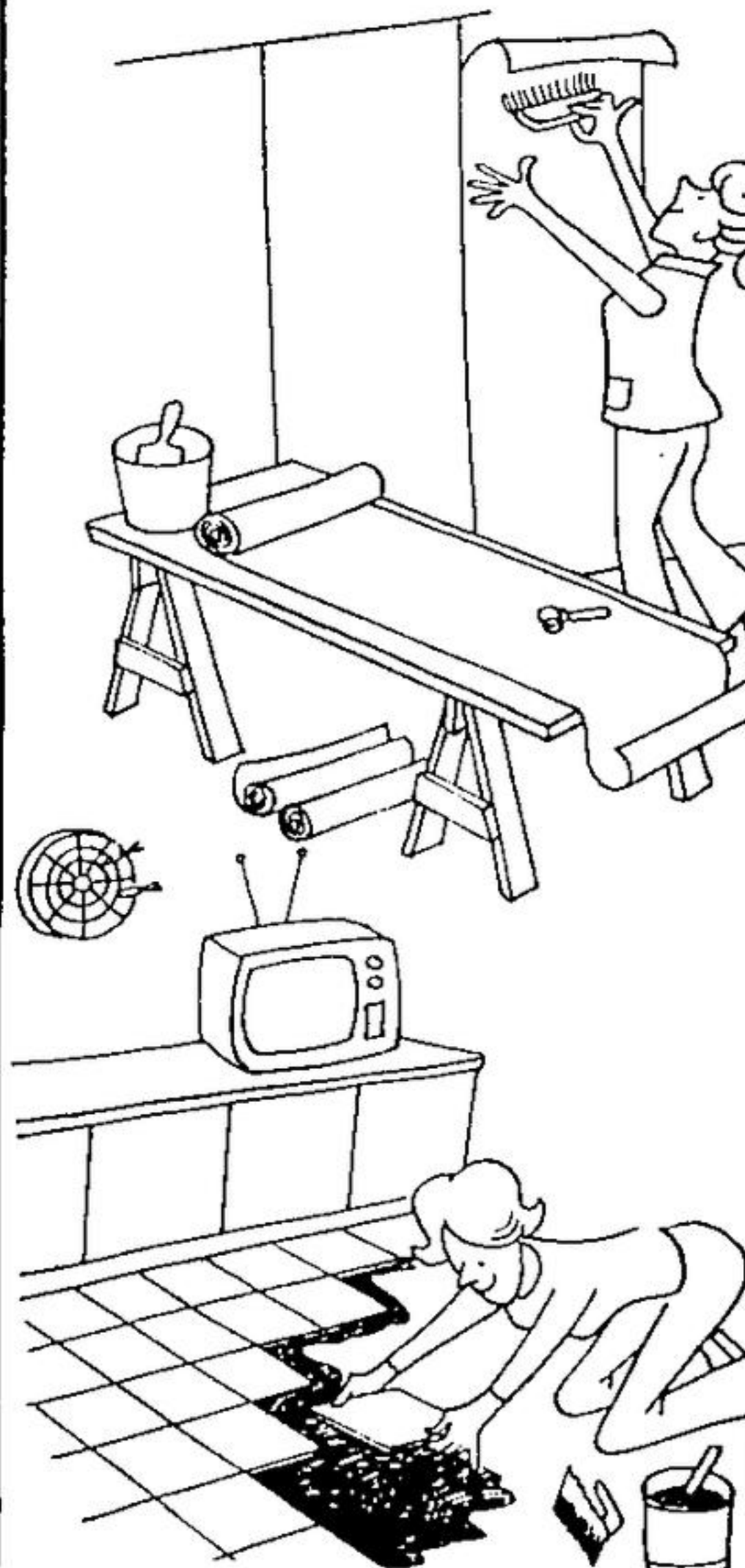
Gorell points out that caulking and weatherstripping may be cheapest—but they are also least effective. "Replacing windows which are worn out with custom-fit types can be a simple job which can be done even by a do-it-yourselfer in less than an hour."

"There's no need for carpentry or masonry alterations if the window is made to fit the opening. Best of all, it's ready to save real money as soon as it's installed, instead of making you think that it does," he said.

For a booklet on things you should know about replacement windows, write to Fred Schmidt, Season-all Industries, Inc., Indiana, Pa. 15701.

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HOME IMPROVEMENT



Home improvement planning tips to help knowledgeable homeowner

By JACK MARSHALL
(1975 Quality Remodeler of the Year, Brand Names Foundation)

Listed here are 14 points to help you get the most—and easiest satisfaction when embarking on a remodeling project.

1. Put your ideas on paper. Keep a file of ideas from advertisements as well as editorial material.
2. Engage an architect if your remodeling involves any structural alterations. He can provide you with rough sketches or working drawings and also provide on-the-job supervision.
3. Don't rush when selecting a contractor. Take time to check a man's bank references, talk with some of his former customers and personally look at a few of his completed projects. Investigate at least three contractors and invite each to submit a bid.
4. Let each contractor know you're considering other bids and give each

candidate the same specifications. Name exact models, product types.

5. Make certain the contractor you hire carries adequate insurance: workmen's compensation, property damage, personal liability coverage.

6. Ask your contractor if he complies with the Code of Ethics of the National Home Improvement Council.

7. Don't automatically snap up the lowest bid for your remodeling project. Consider the interest and professional attitude an individual contractor shows toward your project.

8. Make absolutely certain your remodeling plans are not at odds with any building codes or zoning regulations.

9. Don't try to handle a job yourself unless you're fairly knowledgeable about building materials. This is especially true with plumbing and electrical work.

10. Don't introduce a lot

of work changes once the remodeling is under way. These can be costly, will slow up time schedule and cause unnecessary friction between you and your contractor or architect.

11. Insist that the contract include exact date work is to begin, a schedule of step-by-step proceedings and an approximate completion date. If delays seem unreasonable and unnecessary, you have right to take action.

12. Don't sign a completion certificate (if work is financed) or make final payment until the contractor gives you a release from liens and you're 100 per cent satisfied.

13. Ask for a contractor's guarantee (usually for one year).

14. Finally, ask for a clean-up provision in your contract so your house will be returned to its original condition after the work is completed—at the contractor's expense.

COME GARDENING with Doc Hartnoll

TIME TO TEND THE LAWN

April showers bring May flowers, so the old saying goes. Even as I write this column the forsythia is starting to show color and crocus, early tulips and the Gardener's New Year are right at hand. Now come the early spring chores of preparing the gardens for another productive year.

First and foremost is the removal of debris from the lawn and border areas. Winter has played havoc in some areas with grasses, leaving snow mold, dollar spot, and brown patch. It makes the home gardener feel that the fall preparation for winter was in vain. Not so, neighbors! Many of the grasses that look dull and even brown, are dormant. After a good feeding of Golden Vigoro, they'll sit up and take notice.

Now is a good time to get out the "spring-toothed" rake and gently sweep the lawn area. It's best to remove winter debris, like twigs, papers, even tin cans that have accumulated on the lawn. Though fall is or has been considered the ideal time to sow lawn seed, it can be done successfully this month.

Don't just scatter the seeds on top of the existing grass. Make furrows with a hard-toothed rake. This won't injure the lawn, but will make a bed for the new seed to get started in. It usually takes from 21 to 28 days for good lawn seed, such as Merion or Kentucky Blue to germinate and become established. If sown in April, it should be well established before June. It should be sown in such a manner that the seed can be imbedded in the soil, lightly covered, and kept moist.

It's not difficult to raise a good stand of turf if it is given a good start early in the season. Fertilize, get the growing grass off to a good start and warm spring rains will prove beneficial for all growth.

Make sure you follow the directions on the Vigoro fertilizer bag. The best methods of fertilizer applications have been well researched in the Vigoro laboratory.

All is not turf management for the month of April. Several chores may be done so you are ready when weather permits. For example, how's that lawn mower operating? Blades sharp and ready for another season's work? Garden tools should be cleaned and free of rust. Use a little fine sand-paper to remove any rust and apply a light coating of oil.

Pruning shears must be sharp or they will tear the clean cuts you want to make on hedges, roses, flowering shrubs. When frost danger is past, sharp, keen pruning shears zip through my rose beds, pruning them back to three nice fat buds for those I want to exhibit and to the sixth eye for those I want for free flowering beauty in the garden. This applies to hybrid tea rose bushes. Floribunda roses get the light treatment. I leave about 15 inches of cane for them to produce their clusters of bloom. My climbers seldom if ever get a severe pruning treatment. All I do to them is remove the tips that have been damaged by frost.

As the buds start swelling and are ready to burst, all my roses get their first feeding with Vigoro Rose Food to supplement any food that was there in the last fall. I like to get on an insecticide early in the growing year. I've found that a spraying with a dormant lime sulphur spray that I use on the fruit trees removes overwintering insects and fungi.

It isn't too early to plan your food garden. Many of my readers who followed my suggestions last year (and this includes vegetable growers from coast to coast) told me they had great results following my vegetable garden chart recommendations. If you are just starting a vegetable garden this year, drop me a note and I'll see that you have a copy in time for this year's planting. Have a good month of planning and planting. Send any gardening questions you may have to me at the Garden Information Centre, 165 University Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3B8. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Windows and doors are the worst fuel drainers

Windows and doors are the biggest fuel drainers in the average home. And since 70 million living units use 20 per cent of all the energy consumed in the U.S., the homeowner holds a great deal of responsibility—which he can use to save or lose money, not to mention the conservation of the nation's energy supply.

According to the National Home Improvement Council, the University of Illinois has calculated that ten 15 square foot windows will leak about 100 more gallons worth of fuel oil per season if they are only single glazed. With a typical three by

five foot single glazed, double-hung window, almost three times the energy would be lost through the window as is lost around the sash area.

Storm doors help, too, because heat loss through or around the door is about the same.

One square foot of glass can lose as much heat as ten square feet of wall.

For these reasons, few installations in the home pay off for themselves as quickly as do storm doors and windows and replacement windows.

Current estimates are that in four to five years, the homeowner will recover the cost of his installation.

Ground fault—circuits protect family at home

Protect your family at home against possible fatal electrical shocks with new ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI's). These new electronic devices offer an additional level of protection... protection for people not provided by conventional fuses and circuit breakers, which are designed to protect house wiring only.

A current flow as small as 11 milliamperes can freeze you to a power source, and a current as low as 380 milliamperes, or one-third of one ampere, can be fatal. Conventional household fuses and circuit breakers, however,

trip at current levels in excess of their normal ampere ratings.

Most electrical shocks from ground faults are caused by careless use of electricity or by breakdown of insulation on electrical appliances in wet or damp areas.

GFCI circuit breakers made by General Electric are used in new home construction, particularly in the bathroom and for outdoor receptacle circuits as now required by the National Electrical Code. GE GFCI receptacles are ideal for retrofitting ground fault protection in existing older homes.

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