

Providing good kitchen lighting can help to prevent unnecessary home accidents

The kitchen is the center of activity in most homes, a place where family and friends congregate to share companionship, good food and good times. It is also one of the most common rooms for the three million home accidents which occur each year.

Good kitchen lighting can help prevent these accidents and make food preparation faster and easier. Best of all, effective and attractive kitchen lighting is easy to install.

Be sure that your ceiling fixture provides enough light throughout the kitchen. Surface-mounted fixtures are best because they direct light into cabinets and closets and provide an overall balance of light in the room. For the average kitchen, a total of 60-80 watts of fluorescent lighting or 150-200 watts of incandescent lighting is sufficient.

If there is a work area in the center of the room, such as a peninsula or island counter, try to locate the ceiling light

over that area so it also can function as a work light.

Providing light at key kitchen work areas is probably the most important lighting improvement you can make. Each area—sink, range or counter—should have its own specific light.

Range hoods usually have their own lighting built in, but frequently-used counter areas should also have separate under-cabinet lighting to eliminate dark shadows. Soft white fluorescent tubes work well, mounted in strip fixtures with simple wood shields to hide them.

New to the GE Spacemaker® line of kitchen entertainment electronics is an AM/FM stereo radio that has a built-in light for illuminating counter space. Like all GE Spacemaker appliances, it mounts under the kitchen cabinet to free up counter space and help keep the kitchen neat.

The two-position counter light on the

new stereo radio is a special feature that helps promote an organized and safe kitchen environment. The "high" setting is for work lighting and the "low" setting is for use as a night light during those late night trips to the kitchen.

An additional feature is a programmable appliance outlet, which turns on at any pre-set time, other small appliances that don't have built-in electronic programming. Now you can pre-set your coffee maker to "wake up" when you do. Sink lighting should be mounted directly over the work area. A two-tube fluorescent fixture behind a wood shielding cornice works well because its light is free of shadows.

This combination of general and task lighting will ease your kitchen work and minimize the chances for accidental cuts and bumps. Improving your lighting will also enhance the look of your kitchen and give you added flexibility for entertaining.

An expert's paint removal primer: Tips on technique

Your latest trip to the flea market turned up a perfect oak dining room table. But there's one small hitch: The beautiful wood is hidden under an awful coat of avocado green paint.

If your first thought is to by-pass the table, think again. Removing the paint from furniture (or "stripping") can be easier than you think, if you know a few professional secrets.

The moderate temperatures of fall are ideal for paint removal projects. Paint removers work best when the temperature is between 65° and 85°F. Higher or lower temperatures interfere with the action of the chemicals in the remover.

Be certain you work in a well-ventilated area, with a constant supply of fresh air. Formby recommends working outdoors if possible. Be certain to wear heavy rubber gloves, purchased at the hardware store. (Rubber gloves made for dishwashing aren't meant for this job.)

Don't use a "painting" stroke to apply a paint remover. You'll fan the gases

that do the work into the air, cutting down on the effectiveness of the product. Instead, apply paint remover by dragging a filled paintbrush across the wood about four inches. Stop, refill the brush, and make another four inch stroke. Once you've applied a layer of paint remover, don't touch it until all the bubbling action stops.

If you're working on a piece that's heavily carved or has hard-to-reach areas, you may want to try an aerosol paint remover. Brush-on paint removers are best for most horizontal surfaces.

Formby adds that choosing the right product helps make the job easier. "Look for a heavy-bodied paint remover," he says.

The can should be very heavy when you pick it up. Shake the can. It should sound like molasses, not like water in the can. Thick paint removers are easier to control, and you use less product in the end.



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Many thanks to Mark Rowe, President of the Esquesing Historical Society, who wrote this article.

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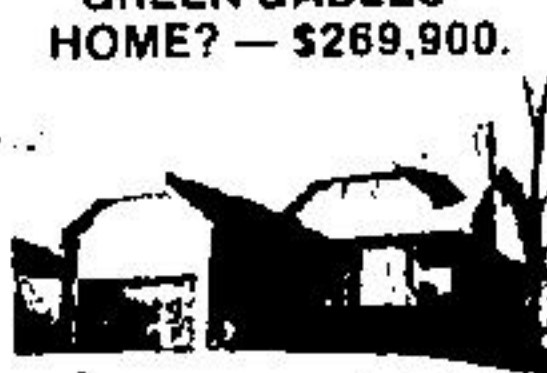
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