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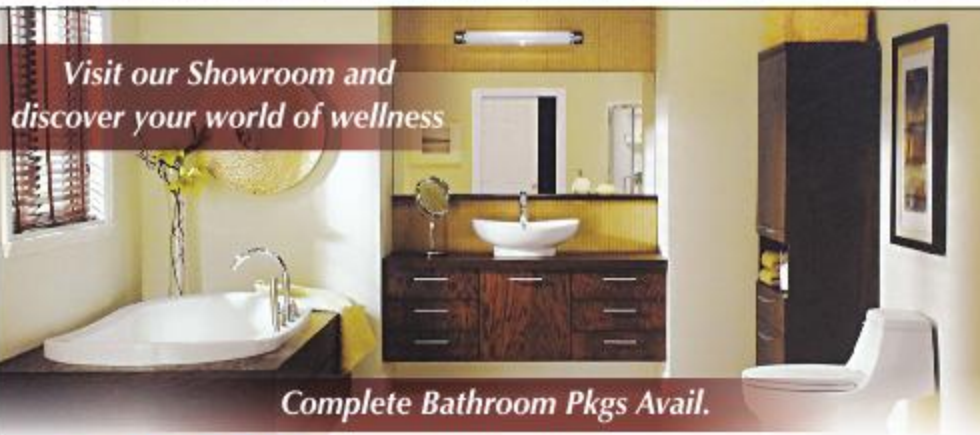
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HOME AND GARDEN

Put new life in your tired deck this summer

Many Canadians look forward to basking underneath the warm sun and enjoying delightful dips in the pool. Is it time to bring life back to your cabana, pool house or deck?

Here, Benjamin Moore's colour and design expert, Sharon Grech, offers tips on the perfect application of stain or paint:

Plan your attack: Painting a wood surface takes time and planning, so pay attention to all of the details. Is the wood old or new? Has it previously been stained? How much time do you have to complete the project? Don't overlook the important step of planning.

Pick the right product: Working with high-quality stain and preparation products will make staining significantly easier. Pick a product that's easy to apply and will enrich and enhance the grain of the wood surface, says Grech. Quality stains will prevent mould and mildew growth, and will hide imperfections in the wood. My favourite stain is Arborcoat, which is better for long-term maintenance and is available in a variety of beautiful colours.

Don't skip the prep work: Examine and evaluate the design features you want to update. Look for things like rotted wood, mil-

dew and old stain, all of which will play a factor in how the new stain will adhere, says Grech. If you do find any of these, be sure to use an appropriate product to return the wood to service, and always replace rotten wood.

Once the surface has been properly examined and stripped if necessary, it's time to wash and sand:

- Ideally, wash the surface with a pressure washer as it will remove most surface grime;
- Alternatively, use a commercial deck cleaning product and scrub with a deck brush, being sure to rinse clean;
- Allow 48 hours to dry;
- Once dry, sand the wood surface to remove any fuzzy grains. Be sure to wipe off the surface.

Choose a colour scheme: A poolside oasis screams colour, so pick shades that are bright and fun. For the overall surface of a cabana or deck, keep the natural look of the wood by using a semi-transparent stain. Add colour by painting the ceiling inside the cabana in a vivid blue like Blue Lagoon 2054-40 and contrast the deck rails with a dark grey stain like Ashland Slate 1608," suggests Grech.

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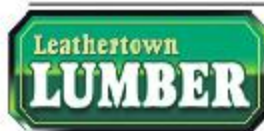


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