Home, Lawn & Garden

Transform your laundry room from washed-up to wow

(NC)— Take a look at these makeover moves to transform that deep dark corner in your basement, courtesy of Sunlight Multi-Action Detergent (www.sunlightlaundry.ca):

Moving on up

Before you renovate that deep dark corner in the basement, consider moving it to another room or closet in your home. Is there space off the kitchen? Somewhere closer to your bedroom, to the kids' lines of "fire" with dirty clothes?

Room with a view

A great view can take the drudgery out of doing laundry and the extra light can brighten your mood. If you can't make the window bigger, you can still dress it up with an eye-catching curtain that complements or contrasts with the walls. For a more tailored look, install California shutters, a mini blind, bamboo roll-up or fabric Roman shade.

Lighten up

Wonder how you missed that stain on your shirt? Tired of squinting to read instructions on your laundry detergent bottle? Then it's time to replace the lighting in your laundry room. Recessed halogen pot lights make a space sparkle. Incandescent lighting minimizes glare.

Fastest Upgrades

Painting walls with a semi-gloss, latex-based paint is the fastest route to a fresh look and this is a room where you can have some fun. Choose a colour you love but don't feel is appropriate elsewhere in the house. Remember the look you loved but the family rejected for the kitchen? Why not use it in your laundry room?

Clutter busters

Space for sorting clothes for the wash, laying out sweaters to dry and folding is essential. Consider building a counter across the top of your washer and dryer or attach a counter on hinges to a separate wall so it can be folded up and stored when not in use.

Floors

Flooring doesn't have to be cold, boring or basic. Allow your creativity to flow. Visit your local home-renovation centre and ask about customized laminated vinyl, vinyl sisals, rubber leather, carpet tiles, marble river stone tiles, cork, bamboo and plastic wood.

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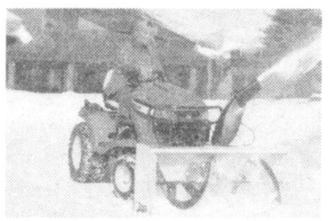

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Fall is the best time to seed your lawn

(NC)—It's a must on every fall to-do list: overseed your lawn. When the temperatures fall to between 15° and 26°, it's time to apply grass seed to thicken your lawn and crowd out weeds. A few minutes spent this fall will yield a thicker, healthier lawn in the spring.

Use a blend of grasses, especially perennial ryegrasses and fescues, which need less care and can resist bugs. Scotts Pure Premium Grass Seed Mixture Sun and Shade fills the bill: it contains quality perennial varieties of Perennial Ryegrass, Kentucky Bluegrass and Creeping Red Fescue. The lawn experts at Scotts Canada say Sun and Shade is the best all purpose mix for growing grass in sunny and shady areas. Specially formulated for quick coverage and a long lasting lawn, it resists drought, insects and fungus.

Begin by pulling weeds from your lawn when the soil is moist. You're sure to get more of the weed roots and disturb less of the soil. Drop some grass seed in the hole to discourage the weed from returning.

Next, to overseed, mow grass closely, then loosen the top 6 mm (1/4 inch) of soil in bare or thin areas. Distribute the seed evenly. For best results, use hand-held or rotary spreader.

Apply a starter fertilizer to increase seeding success and then water thoroughly.

Remember, watering is crucial to seed germination. Keep the top 1 cm (1/2 inch) of soil damp by watering twice daily until all seedlings are up. Continue to water once or twice a day until the lawn is established, usually six to eight weeks.

Your new young grass will survive the winter and become a thick lawn with few weeds next spring.