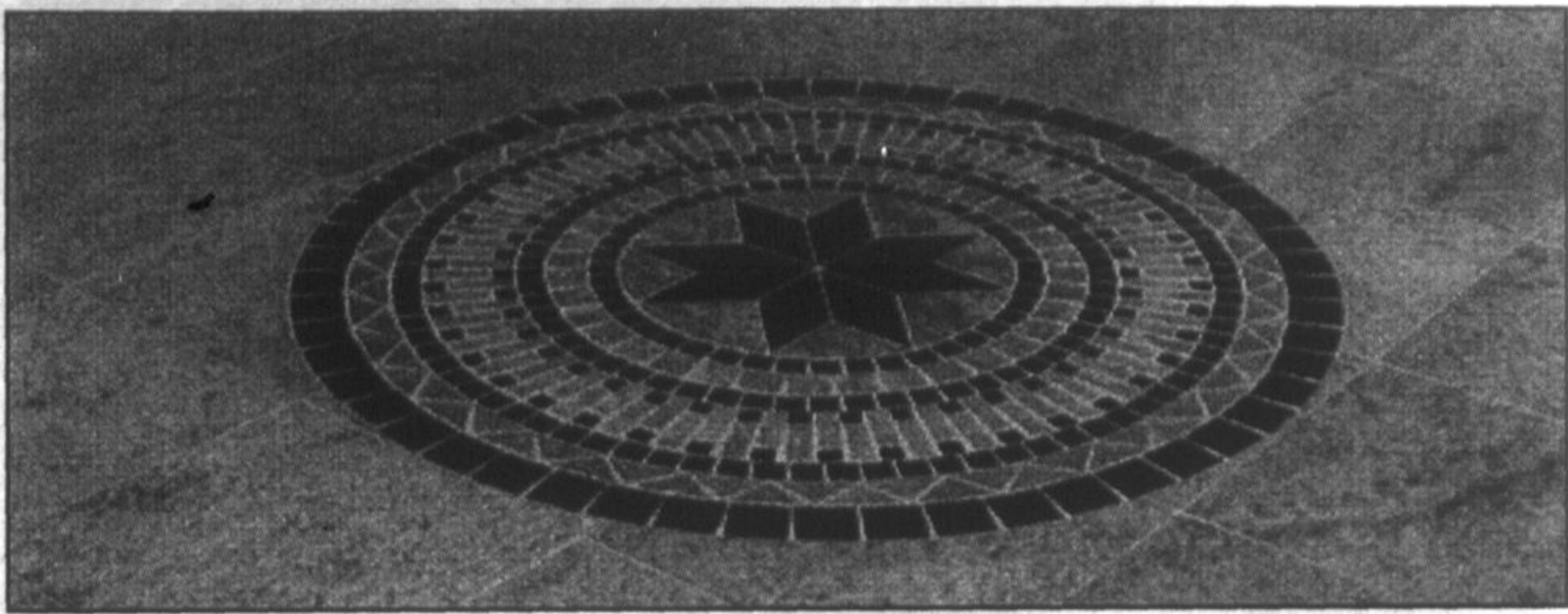
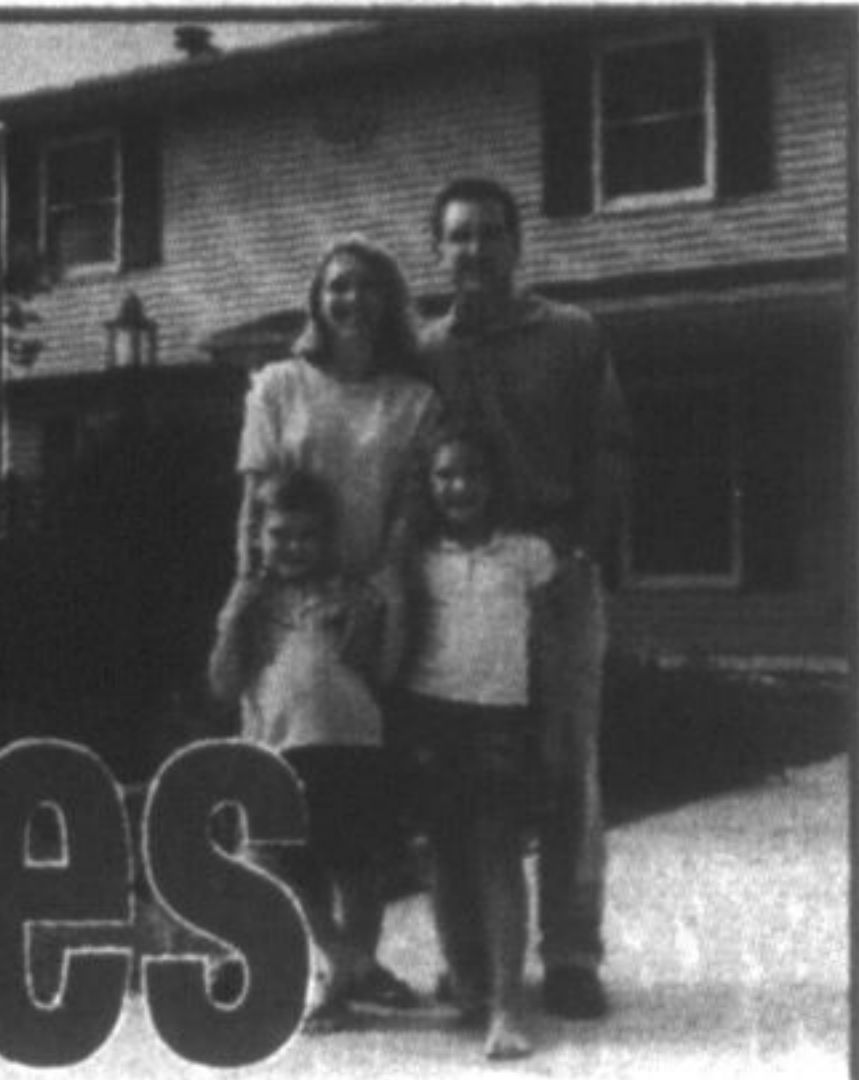


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Home Sweet Home



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The Types of Pricing Methods a Contractor Can Use

When you hire a contractor to renovate your house, you must sign a contract that sets the price for the project. The contractor can propose different pricing methods. Being very specific about the terms of the contract and the payment methods is the best way to prevent misunderstandings.

The contractor can propose a fixed-price contract, which includes the cost of the construction materials, equipment, manpower and fees, with a provision for unanticipated requirements, general fees and the contractor's fee. The submission can also include allocations for items that you have not yet selected; the contract is readjusted once you finalize your choice.

If you own an older house, additional work may become necessary, and the contractor can suggest a cost-plus contract, where you pay the actual cost for manpower, materials, and equipment, plus a percentage for general fees and the contractors' fee. In this case, you should set a limit to prevent the charges from getting out of hand. Because renovation projects can reveal hidden problems, your budget must include some leeway for unexpected surprises.

The contractor can also propose a design-build contract. With this option the contractor designs and executes the entire project. You can then choose between a fixed-price and a cost-plus contract, which ideally includes a predetermined limit.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

There are many reasons Canadians decide to replace their existing windows. Fogged-up glass, rotting and cracked frames, drafty and inoperable sashes are just some of the issues that top the list. Despite rising energy costs, and environmental awareness, architectural details and style are stronger motives for some. Thank-fully with today's energy efficient windows consumers shouldn't have to choose style over performance.

Replacement windows and doors are now available in a wider variety of materials and finishes than ever before. Fiberglass and composite materials are the relative newcomers, but vinyl and wood products still dominate the market.

Choosing the right product is still only one of many choices the consumer must make. Many home improvement companies favor an "insert" style of installation, where the new window is fastened directly into the old window frame. This is a quicker and less expensive option because very little carpentry is involved. The preferred installation involves removing the entire window to the rough opening, and replacing everything including the interior mouldings. Older homes with large

mouldings or brick and block construction may be better with the insert method.

A reputable company should be able to inform the homeowner of their options and provide solutions that perform well and add to the home's architecture. A good window is only as good as it's installation, so always check references and if possible visit completed projects.

FIELDSTONE WINDOWS LTD. takes pride in their quality products, professional consultation, and expert installation. Prices are competitive, and quotes are always free of charge.

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