



FEBRUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

BENEFITS OF GREEN REMODELING

Green remodeling is becoming more popular as homeowners consider health issues, skyrocketing energy costs and Earth's natural resources. Best of all, green remodeling increases the value of your home. Some facets of green remodeling are:



Energy conservation. The average home today uses systems for heating, ventilation and air conditioning, and most homes are not built as efficiently as they could be, resulting in high energy consumption. The U.S.

Department of Energy believes if current buildings were green-improved, they would use \$20 billion less in energy per year. Green remodeling puts a strong emphasis on making homes as efficient as possible with modifications such as energy-efficient appliances and programmable thermostats.

Indoor air quality. There are many sources that contribute to the air quality inside a home, including: pollutants brought in from the outside, toxic chemicals existing inside the home, and the activities of the occupants. Major contributors are tobacco smoke; smoke from the burning of wood, coal, kerosene or other such substances; toxic fumes from sealants or chemicals from cleaning products; lead paint; asbestos from insulation; damp carpets or fabrics; and certain pressed-wood furniture products that release chemicals into the air. Green remodeling seeks to remedy these problems with things such as better ventilation systems and using wood, paint, and sealants that are nontoxic.

Reduced material waste and resource conservation. When remodeling a home, there is often a large amount of construction waste. Because 85 - 90% of those materials can be recycled, green

remodeling focuses on reducing this waste during remodeling and reusing materials whenever possible. Some of the methods are using local materials, building with engineered lumber, and using recycling companies to remove waste are all ways this can be achieved during remodeling.

The benefits of green remodeling include:

- △ Reduces operating costs by increasing efficiency
- △ Conserves natural resources
- △ Increases the value of the home
- △ Improves indoor air quality and in turn, overall health
- △ Reduces waste
- △ Increases productivity of occupants
- △ Improves quality of life

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NONTOXIC CLEANERS

Pantry staples have long been the safest way to tackle minor fixes and cleanups around the house. These remedies might help keep our rivers a little cleaner, too.

Hot sauce cleans copper. Rub it on dulled copper, rinse with water, and polish clean with a soft rag.

Olive oil brightens up wood. Use a thin coat to hydrate worn, dried-out wood, as long as it was originally treated with an oil finish. Finish by buffing it in.

White wine removes red wine. The first step in removing red wine stains is dousing the spot with white wine. Just blot with a clean rag to absorb the spill.

Vinegar cleans brushes. Boil a cup of white vinegar and rest hardened bristles in it overnight.

Cornmeal soaks up grease. Cover a fresh grease stain with cornmeal, let it sit a few hours, and sweep it up.

Baking soda removes tape residue. Make a thick paste of baking soda and water. Rub the paste onto bits of tape, then wipe clean.

Bathtub Leaks

The most common cause of bathtub leakage is failure of the caulking around the edge of the tub. If that's the case, here's a tip to keep in mind as you re-caulk. Fill the tub with water first. That's because adding the weight of a person or water in the tub later can break the seal of the caulk.

Of course, there are several other possible sources of a tub leak. The seals around main and overflow drains can eventually go bad. The drains will need to be removed and their gaskets replaced. Water could be leaking from the spout or faucet and traveling back behind the escutcheon plate. That can easily be resealed with caulk. It could be as simple as water spraying out around the shower curtain. One simple solution is a plastic shower guard at the edge of the enclosure.

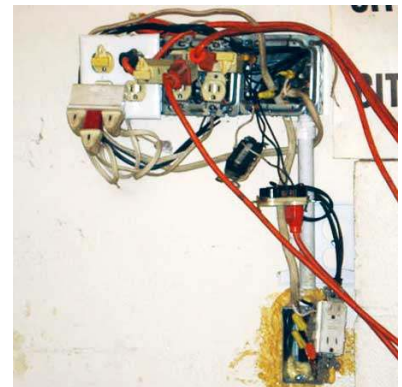
If there's still a mystery leak after checking those possibilities, the cause could be a crack in the tub itself. The bad news is, the only solution is a complete replacement.

BENEFITS OF GREEN REMODELING .. CONT.

Green remodeling can be done in small ways and doesn't necessarily have to encompass the entire home. It's easy to pick and choose elements that fit each particular homeowner:

- ⊞ Non-toxic paints and sealants
- ⊞ Programmable thermostats
- ⊞ Energy efficient appliances
- ⊞ Natural flooring
- ⊞ Local building materials
- ⊞ Natural fiber rugs and fabrics
- ⊞ Recycled material, roof shingles and tiles
- ⊞ Energy efficient lighting
- ⊞ Insulated hot water pipes
- ⊞ Tankless water heaters
- ⊞ Quality insulation
- ⊞ Native plants for landscaping

HOME INSPECTION NIGHTMARES!



Let's see—that extension cord goes to? Hmm...wonder why it's arcing?

courtesy of the ASHI Reporter