

Create a Smarter Home in a Down Economy

(ARA) - A tight economy means most American homeowners are keeping close watch on their budgets, cutting spending on frivolities and extras.

For this reason, many folks have opted to put large-scale projects, such as kitchen and bathroom remodels, on the back burner for the time being. But, they haven't completely stopped updating their homes. Homeowners are still forging ahead with improvements, but they're allocating hard-earned dollars to smaller projects -- ones that not only boost their home's overall appeal, but also provide other added benefits in the long run.

Increasingly more home improvement products deliver more bang for the buck by delivering multiple benefits ... a must in today's increasingly frugal economy. But being budget-conscious doesn't mean you have to sacrifice quality and performance in the home improvement arena. From high-performing wall paints to sophisticated thermostat controls, and everything in between, today's home products work smarter -- not just harder -- with modern budgets in mind.

Interior paint is one home improvement product that has made the significant "smart" advances in recent years. Today's environmentally-minded coatings offer little or no

ozone-damaging (and odor-causing) volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in a wide range of colors and finishes, ideal for any decor. These low-odor paints make easy -- and less smelly -- work of painting.

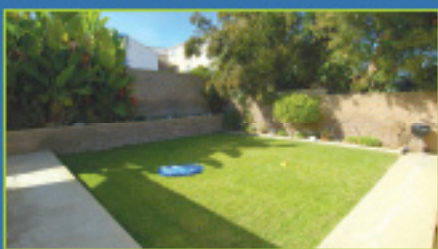
Some paints, such as Dutch Boy's new Refresh paint offer zero VOCs and take things a step further. Thanks to the inclusion of proven Arm & Hammer odor-eliminating technology, Refresh paint helps remove common household airborne odors from kitchens, laundry and family rooms, bathrooms, nurseries and basements. This paint also provides excellent hide, scrubability and durability, keeping walls looking fresh and attractive for years to come.

Heating and cooling controls also offer multiple benefits. The average American household spends \$1,400 a year on energy bills, according to the Alliance to Save Energy. A simple programmable thermostat that controls temperature on both heating and cooling systems keeps a home at the ultimate comfort level and helps maintain the most efficient temperatures all day long, boosting overall energy efficiency while decreasing utility bills.

Lighting systems also have become smarter.

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711 Bayonne Street, El Segundo



- Highly desirable neighborhood
- Open Single Level Floor-plan
- 1,789 sq. ft. of living space
- 5,014 sq. ft. lot
- 4 bedrooms, 2 baths
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City Council

from front page

by chain stores," Levin said.

Councilmember Nick Tell said he was unsure if reducing the meter rates would result in more people patronizing downtown businesses. "I just don't think it's going to be as effective as you think," he said. "But you're living it day in and day out so I'll have to defer to you...to see if it has the impact that you want."

Although nobody knows for sure whether the reduced meter rates will drive more business to downtown establishments, business leaders say they hope downtown's deteriorating business climate will soon stabilize.

Helen Duncan, president of the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, said she has heard of seven downtown stores recently closing. She said one had been in business for 28 years. "I don't know if they would have closed down if there was not a recession," Duncan said. "We have to take care of that small business."

Police Promote, Enforce Wheel Curbing

Lieutenant Andy Harrod and Chief Ron Uyeda of the Manhattan Beach Police Department reported to the Council on enforcement and education efforts concerning curbing vehicles on hilly streets. Harrod told the Council that many people are unaware of the law and that many falsely think their parking brake is enough to prevent a rollaway. He brought in photos of recent instances in which uncurbed cars have rolled downhill, causing property and vehicle damage.

MBPD reported giving out 6,317 tickets last year and 2,202 tickets so far this year for not curbing wheels on hills. Uyeda said that he felt enforcement was necessary because of the danger that uncurbed vehicles pose to the population.

Cohen echoed the opinions of some residents who spoke before the Council, saying she felt warnings should be used in place of citations in some cases. "I think there's a nice way to do it which is to warn the person parking the car," she said. "I think what's in question is that we need people to curb their wheels without costing them an arm and a leg."

In a report submitted to the Council, Harrod and Uyeda wrote about their plan to partner with Community Development to place labels on meters and create other City signage to help educate visitors and residents about the law. Cohen said putting stickers on parking meters would be a good way to help re-educate drivers who forgot or don't know about the curbing laws. "If

it's a safety issue, stickers aren't expensive," she said. "Why aren't we trying to increase safety with cheap stickers?"

Cohen added that she had no problem with citations as long as drivers had some sort of warning, which could come in the form of stickers on meters. "If you have the sticker and you still violate, of course you're supposed to get a ticket," she said.

Councilmember Richard Montgomery said that a few years ago his car was hit by a vehicle that was not properly curbed. "Education to me is the key because I've seen what happens when [curbing] doesn't happen," he said.

Ward said he was concerned with the increased signage of stickers on meters and said that drivers should know the law since it is taught in traffic school. "Ignorance of the law is no excuse," he said. "I've gone through a lot of traffic schools and the one thing I know is I'm supposed to put my tires on the curb."

Roundhouse Café Lease Approved

The Council voted to authorize a five-year lease agreement with Vera Janischova to operate the pier's Roundhouse Café based on a staff recommendation.

City staff wrote that of the three proposals it received, the concept and approach in Janischova's proposal "is one that has been working well and that we believe is particularly well-suited for the location of this food concession."

As part of the agreement, every month she will pay the city either \$600 or eight percent of her gross receipts, depending on which is greater. The money will be deposited into the City's State Pier and Parking Lots Fund.

Commission Appointments

The Council re-appointed Sandra Seville-Jones to the Planning Commission, and appointed Martha Andreani to the seat formerly held by Councilmember Wayne Powell.

Deirdre Murray and Steven Nicholson were re-appointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Council ratified Mira Costa High School's appointment of MCHS Junior Jennifer Rosenthal. Collin Ron Cooper was re-appointed to the Los Angeles County West Vector Control Board and Susannah Rosenthal was re-appointed to the Cultural Arts Commission.

Virginia Gembica was not re-appointed to the Library Commission. Council members instead voted to give her seat to Josh Cooperman in the spirit of what several of them called "new blood."

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