



THE HOUSE CARPENTERS

Pay attention to the ROI of home improvements

By Steven J. Bishopric

If you want to preserve the value of your home in this tough economy, or position it for an eventual sale at the very best price, this is a good time to consider economical home improvements.

Determining the rate of return on any remodel or improvement always has been a wise strategy, but never more so than today when most homeowners are considering how to recoup the lost value of their homes. The House Carpenters has developed an extensive menu of home improvement services that emphasize quality without compromising price – including our **CustomerCare** plans.

We also work closely with clients to help them make the best decisions based on their return on investment (ROI).

Here are some tips to consider:

Kitchens. Relatively inexpensive improvements with a good return include: dual sinks, cooking stations, under-cabinet lighting, marble or granite countertops, ceramic backsplashes, a walk-in pantry or breakfast alcove.

Bathrooms. Bathroom remodels tend to return about 90 cents on the dollar. Among the best strategies: walk-in showers, glass-block windows, vaulted ceilings, ceramic tile floors and ceiling fans.

Family rooms. Consider enlarging space, lowering floors, opening the ceiling or expanding out with bay windows. Building a family room from scratch can return more than 8 of every 10 dollars you spend – while enjoying your home more.

Master suites. Converting a bedroom to a master suite definitely increases sales appeal. A mid-range project will return about 80 percent of your investment, but it also could make all the difference if you plan to sell your home. Note how many real estate ads boast master suites.

Decks. This is a very productive project, returning close to 90 percent of your investment. Today's environmentally sensitive and durable materials also ensure quality.

Windows. They not only return about 85 percent of your initial investment, but they will increase energy efficiency – and can be eligible for federal credits.

Consider as well the value of a patio, new doors, a ceiling fan, even a fireplace. Whatever you plan, though, it is important to calculate what it will mean to the value of your home in comparison with others in your neighborhood. If your home is substantially beyond the price range of neighbors, chances are it will be harder to sell.

Steven J. Bishopric is president of The House Carpenters, a division of Steven J. Bishopric Builders. The House Carpenter's menu of services includes virtually every remodel and improvement project you may require. See our ad on page 31 of Kinlin Grover HOMES for more details.

