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ANNUAL
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Let's Face It

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look without the hassle of a remodel

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**ASK
THE
EXPERT**



McHALES KITCHEN & BATH

*How a simple philosophy helped grow this
third-generation family business* page 11

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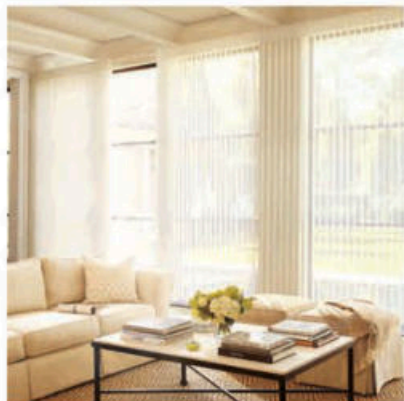
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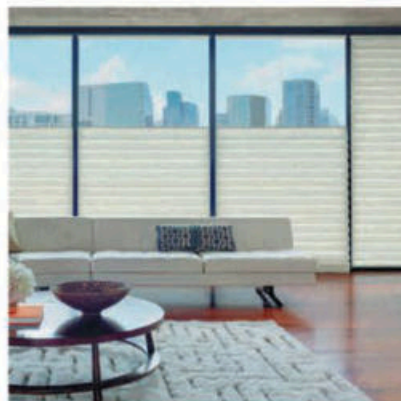
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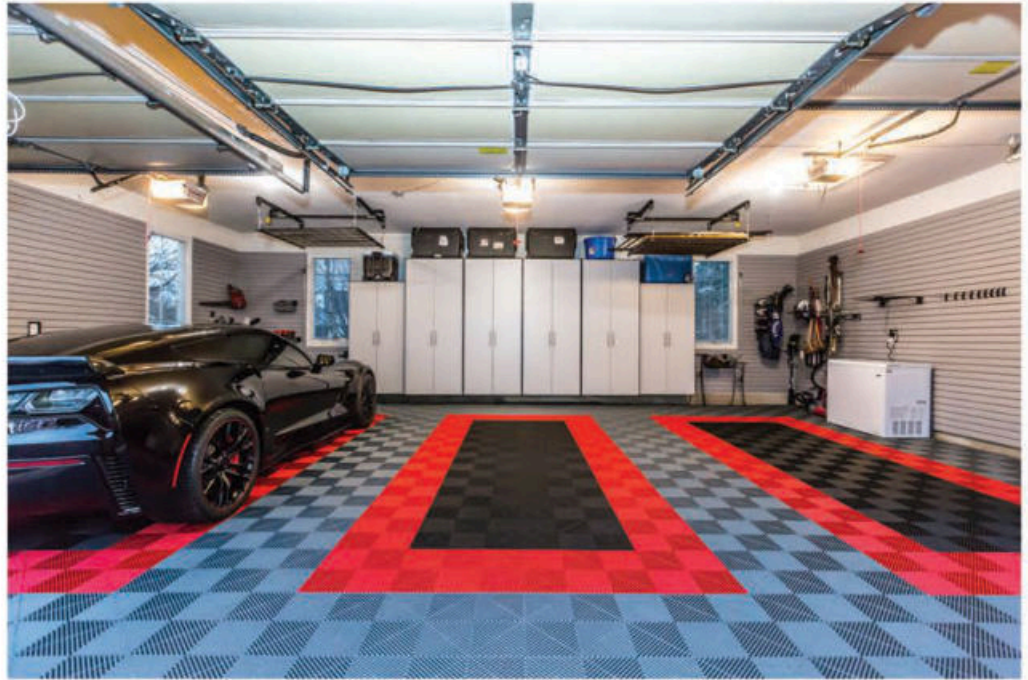
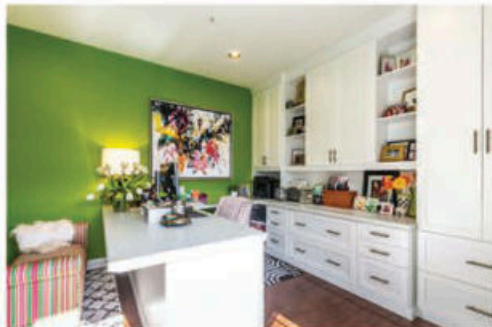
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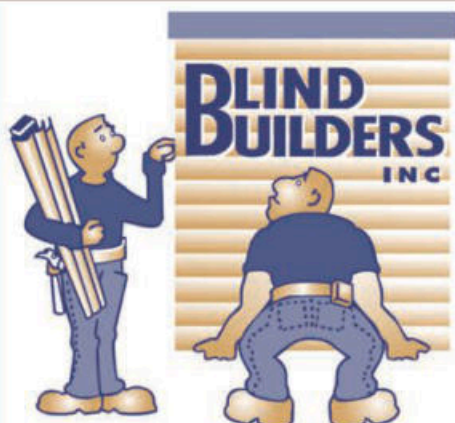
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On the cover:

When considering a kitchen remodel, cabinet refacing is a cleaner and more organized approach that doesn't require the disruption of your entire life. Let's Face It, established in 1984, uses modern technology and decades of design experience to give your kitchen a brand-new look.

To find out more about their process and reputation in the industry, turn to page 25.

Cover image courtesy of Let's Face It



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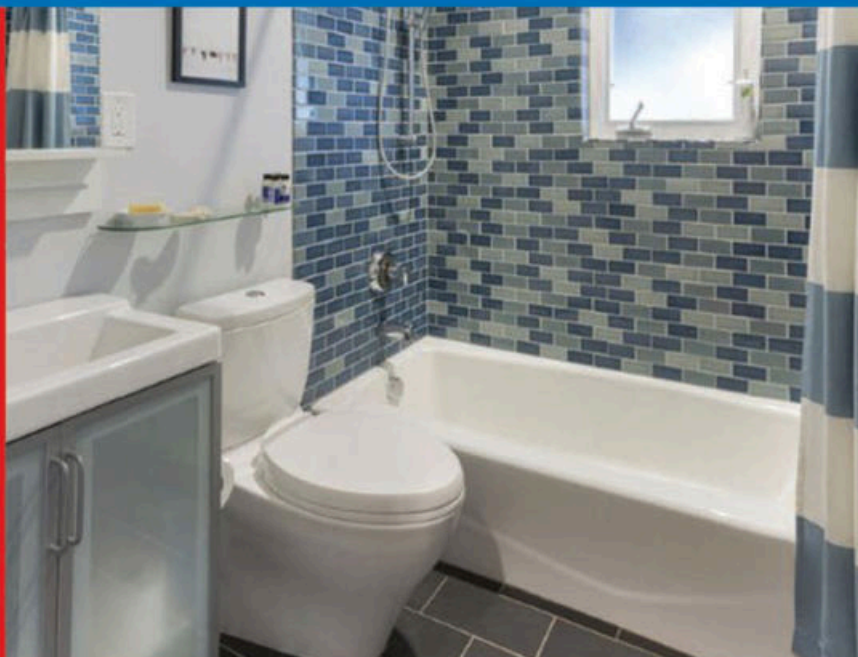
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A photograph of a smiling woman with curly hair sitting on a light-colored couch, using a laptop. She is wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans.

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McHales Kitchen & Bath

by **Liz Hunter**

Back in 1950, John and Anna Mae McHale started a simple plumbing business with one truck and the philosophy: “We do what we say we are going to do!” Trust was so ingrained in John’s philosophy that he would go to job sites for free, complete the work over a hand shake and mail the customer a bill.

Today, McHales is under third-generation owner Tim McHale, with two divisions—one dedicated to kitchen and bath remodeling, another for residential plumbing, heating, cooling, electrical and drain cleaning. In 2019, McHales Inc. hit a milestone and purchased truck number 100. The company handles about 5,000 service calls per year, remodels about 100 kitchens and baths and is approaching 2,000 online reviews. Although the company has evolved from the days of bills in the mail to include paperless invoicing with iPads and GPS tracked vehicles, everything is still being run from the original location on Trenton Road in Levittown and the simple philosophy, “We do what we say we are going to do!” remains.

House & Home spoke with Tim about McHales’ growth and the charitable arm, McHales Cares, to find out why the community has been an essential part of their success.

McHales handles so many components of home remodeling and service. How did it go from simple plumbing to a two-division company?

John McHale Jr., my father, returned from



Tim McHale, head coach, with family



John McHale Sr.

EXPERTISE: KITCHEN & BATH REMODELING

the Vietnam War, where he served in the Navy, and received his Master Plumber license in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He learned the business from the ground up, and recognized that post-World War II homes were in need of updates. In the 1970s, he started to expand into remodeling, and even became one of the first Master Plumbers to own a computer and install Motorola CBs in his trucks in the '80s.

I was the first McHale to graduate from college in the '90s, earning a business degree from California University of PA, as well as my Master Plumbing license. With my background in the trade and business operations, I helped take the company from a mom-and-pop shop to one of the largest service companies in Bucks County. McHales Inc. now provides service in plumbing, electrical, heating, air conditioning and drain cleaning. The kitchen and bath remodeling division has won Contractor of the Year 10 times by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) and we are multiple winners of Best of Bucks and Bucks Happening.

You always say the Bucks County community has been a huge part of your success. Why is that, and how do you show your appreciation?

Over the last 70 years, our customers have made us who we are, and we have continued to grow and serve them. Without them, there is no McHales. To us, it is vital to give back, and we do so through McHales Cares, our community give-back program. Our goal is to find well-deserving charities in our backyard that could use a little help. We will donate \$1,000 each month, so the winning charity can continue to give back to the same community that McHales has been a part over for over 70 years. You can go to McHalesCares.com and vote every day. Whichever charity gets the most votes at the end of the month wins \$1,000. You can also nominate new charities on the site as well.

What else do you want the Bucks County community to know about McHales?

Since 1950 we have provided our customers with prompt, dependable service at a reasonable cost. We use quality materials installed by skilled, courteous craftsmen. My wife Lorraine and I are now raising the fourth generation in the business, Lily and Jackson. They are already running around the office, asking questions and making their TV debut in some of the cutest commercials you’ve seen in awhile. Through it all, we continue to follow my grandfather’s simple philosophy: “We do what we say we are going to do!” We think John and Anna Mae would be proud. **H&H**

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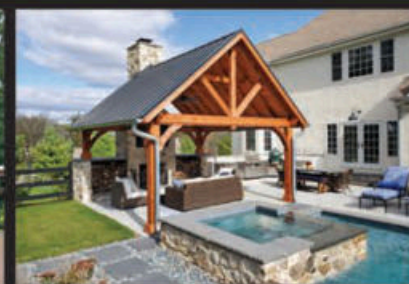


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About-Face

With modern technology and decades of experience, **Let's Face It** gives your kitchen a brand-new look without the hassle of a remodel.

by **Liz Hunter**

After many years of living in the same home, it becomes easier to spot the areas where we'd like to have a fresh look. The furniture could be updated now that the kids aren't climbing all over it, the carpet could be pulled up in favor of hardwood and especially in the kitchen, where we spend so much of our time, the cabinets have seen better days.

However, the prospect of a full kitchen remodel often causes people to delay that update. Between the permitting, the disruption of your family's daily life and the length of time, it's not very convenient—not to mention the cost.

Cabinet refacing is a cleaner and more organized approach to remodeling—an alternative that more homeowners are embracing. Let's Face It, established in 1984, is the oldest cabinet refacing company in Southeastern Pennsylvania and has continually developed modern, state-of-the-art technology and design to reface and enhance an outdated kitchen for 60 percent less than a full remodel, and often in as little as five days. Locally owned and operated by David Cerami, CKBR, Let's Face It (LFI) has worked with thousands of homeowners and is nationally recognized as a pioneer in the cabinet refacing industry.

"Our projects are professionally designed, engineered and installed by our own highly skilled employees," says LFI Senior Designer Vincent Arduino, a 30-year veteran of cabinet refacing.

Clients can choose any style door in an almost unlimited range of materials. Shaker, modern and minimalist or traditional are all options. Stained genuine woods like walnut are gaining in popularity. LFI also offers durable painted products in a wide range of colors with custom colors also being available.

"The industry is heading toward products that are more durable, longer-lasting and easy to clean, especially for homes with children," Arduino continues. For this look, LFI offers the highly popular 3DL finish, which is chip resistant and cleans with soap and water. "3DL finish is considered identical to a painted design and is also offered in a contemporary or primitive wood grain, available in classic Shaker, raised panel traditional and the European modern total-flat panel," he says.

LFI can take the cabinets a step further than others in this industry thanks to its full-service local wood shop. Homeowners can add custom cabinets, unique islands and tall pantries to their kitchen at a reasonable price. "We can do design changes in the room that other companies can't. LFI frequently removes outdated built-in desks and replaces them with base cabinets for additional storage and counter space. Another great option is using that area for a beverage station with a built-in wine fridge. We can create a built-in frame around the refrigerator for a custom look. Other modifications include changing base cabinets with

A consultation with homeowners will include the clients' ideas being heard, as well as the designer presenting options that will bring those ideas to life. "We want to look at the rooms that are adjacent to the kitchen, especially if it's an open concept floor plan, and suggest something complementary so the space will flow," Arduino says.

Using your existing cabinet framework (if structurally sound,) LFI replaces the doors and drawer fronts with designer-quality products. LFI covers the cabinet boxes with matching veneers and panels and the company's environmentally friendly process uses low-odor, non-toxic, EPA-regulated water-based adhesives.

doors to sturdy pot drawers, putting microwaves in islands and installing matching floating shelves," Arduino says.

LFI is not limited to cabinets and many homeowners prefer the simplicity of its one-stop shop offerings. Clients may choose to add a new countertop as well, such as quartz or granite, and both products are now offered with lifetime sealers, in addition to tile and glass backsplashes with high-performance, factory-sealed grouts.

LFI also has licensed mechanical contractors, electricians and plumbers on staff. "Nearly everyone gets our LED under-wall cabinet strip lighting which is longer-lasting and 80 percent less costly to use than incandescent lighting," notes Arduino.

On completion, projects are certified with a lifetime cabinet refacing warranty. "Imagine, today, being able to hire a remodeling professional and at the end of the project you are given a lifetime warranty on both the labor and materials. This is not offered by any other company," Arduino says.

LFI maintains a stellar reputation in the industry, with a 97.8 percent Guild Quality performance rating—one of the highest grades in the industry—and has been recognized with several Best of House & Home awards. **H&H**



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Outdoor Oasis

FALL IS HERE TO STAY, and unfortunately so is the pandemic, which means more time spent at home. With the cool, crisp temperatures setting in, it's the perfect time to extend your living space and spend the extra time at home outside with a new outdoor living area that includes features like an outdoor kitchen and fire pit to keep you warm.

The first thing to check off your list when designing a project is choosing hardscaping materials, and Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete is the one to help you make the best decisions. A third-generation, family-owned business with two locations in Lansdale and Souderton, they are the area's largest supplier of pavers, brick, stone products, flagstone and bluestone.

"In this strange year, people have relooked at their home space. Many are looking to give themselves a place to get away without leaving their home. We help people to determine how much they can or cannot do," says Vice President Jarrod Nyce. "They have time on their hands because of COVID-19. Imagination, space and budget are what can determine the project."

Outdoor kitchens made with stone veneer are popular, and from there you can add all the bells and whistles to make it the ideal entertaining space.

"Outdoor kitchens are so much fun and really add to your home," Nyce says. "Imagine entertaining outside without having to go back into your house. From a basic grill kit to a full-blown kitchen with sink, ice maker and refrigerator, there are so many things that can be done in your own backyard."

"Time and time again we are seeing outdoor living spaces getting more like an oasis with waterfalls, sound systems, lighting and even outdoor TVs. Fire pits and fireplaces help to warm up areas with heat and light."

It's not too soon to think about installing a pool, and Nyce says there are many hardscaping options available for the pool deck.

"There are many options for pool areas



Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete supplies all your hardscaping needs to create an amazing outdoor living space.

by **Julie Shannon**

from stamped concrete to pavers for your pool deck," he says. "Also, coping can be a fun area to explore different options, such as precast concrete and natural stone. We've also seen a lot of stacked stone being used for the natural look."

Nyce says patios are very similar to pool decks with many options for style and effect. "This versatility helps people turn a space into something very special," he says.

When it comes to retaining walls, Nyce says they are practical and have more than a few uses.

"Retaining walls sound boring but they're very useful," he says. "You can add areas to any project using a retaining wall to flatten out unusable ground. They can also be used for privacy or simple sitting walls."

Nyce says Cambridge Pavingstones with ArmorTec have proven to provide quality materials year after year.

"They continue to evolve with the times with new products and colors every year," he says. "Their line of retaining walls has also grown and evolved to adding new colors and styles. They have also maintained a steady lineup of tried and true products that have worked for over 15 years."

"We have a large supply of Pennsylvania bluestone and flagstone hearths. Natural stone never goes out of style."

Belgian Blocks, which are large blocks of stone, are used for many purposes. "They are made of granite and are very tough. They are mostly used for curbs or edging around gardens, but they can also be used for walkways

or driveways," Nyce says.

Nyce says a recent trend he's been seeing is outdoor ceramic tiles. "These are just like the tile in your bathroom but a much larger format," he says. "They come in many different colors and styles and are safe for use in outside areas."

Like most companies, COVID-19 has had an impact on Nyce Crete, but when you've been in business for 77 years, you're accustomed to dealing with various challenges and obstacles. Nyce Crete has adapted during this uncertain time and still offers the highest quality of products and top-notch customer service, giving customers the outdoor experience they dreamed of and can enjoy for years to come.

"Our family has been able to change and adapt over the years, and we have always stood behind our products," Nyce says. "We pride ourselves to be a complete resource for any questions that may arise. We also understand our products, keep up with new trends and understand building codes to help people do their project the proper way. We also try our best to be honest, deliver on time and sell quality products that we would use personally. We treat people the way we would like to be treated." **H&H**

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 Remodeling your kitchen and bathrooms for **a more appealing**



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BY
LIZ HUNTER

Kitchens and bathrooms remain at the top of the remodeling list for homeowners, even during the pandemic. People are cooking at home more often, working and learning remotely (often using kitchen space) and the hot real estate market has some making updates to make their house more appealing to buyers.

In fact, the National Kitchen and Bath Association released its latest Market Outlook, and it confirms this trend, showing that the percentage of homeowners actively working on remodeling projects increased significantly, from 19% in this year's first quarter to 36% in the second quarter.

Guy Henri, owner of F+S Kitchen and Bath Design Studio, says when the pandemic came, he was sure the market for home improvements would crash. "Instead, there was a spike in demand—kitchens, baths, renovations. Now that they've been home, they see the missing parts or the outdated things and want to make changes," he says.

"With the reduced travel and vacation plans for most homeowners, they are taking those funds and investing them into their homes," says Linda Fennessy, Kitchen Magic public relations and print manager. "The staycation is becoming more popular, and they are investing the vacation fund into their kitchen and bath remodels."

House & Home spoke with some of the top companies who have invested years in remodeling kitchens and bathrooms to find out what design elements are coming to the fore and what advice they have for anyone about to embark on this adventure.

Photo courtesy of Holcomb Cabinetry

KITCHENS:

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

In kitchens, the overall desired look remains something simple, clean and soft.

“Homeowners are looking for materials that are easier to clean—simple door styles without a lot of detail, which tend to pick up dust, lint and grease. Shaker door styles remain popular, but flat panel doors are gaining traction.” —*Meg Schultz, The CabinetTree Design Studio*

WHAT'S OUT?

Busy wood grain (oak and cherry) cabinets

Ornate wood hoods with corbels and heavy lintels

Soffits above upper cabinets

Drop-in sinks and built-in soap dispensers

WHAT'S IN?

Quartz countertops

Blue accent cabinets

Clean and simple door styles

Prep islands

Roll-out racks, drawers and shelves

Built-in USB chargers

“Seventy percent of homeowners are choosing some form of white. Grays and light woods follow in second and third places. Our flat-center-panel Shaker styles are the most popular. These door styles are from our Prestige Collection and are all at the lowest price point of all our doors. The material is a maintenance-free laminate, allowing homeowners to clean them with just a wipe for easier care.

“Almost all homeowners are adding efficiencies like prep-islands and smart storage solutions like roll-out spice racks, pot drawers and shelves to create a more efficient cooking experience.

Many of our customers are choosing cabinet refacing, saving almost 50% over new cabinets and reinvesting the savings they incur for these upgrades.” —*Linda Fennessy, Kitchen Magic*



this in suburban homes, but another color popping up is blue. It goes so well with things—you really have to see it to believe it. I think in 2025, gray will look like an outdated color. We’re already starting to see it fade with some vendors, and see more colors come in, even green.

“Another one coming to the forefront is countertops with Microban. People often cut on granite or quartz without damage, but this also protects it from bacteria seeping in. In the last nine

months this has definitely been something people are more interested in.” —*Daryl Holcomb, Holcomb Cabinetry*

“If you are thinking of doing your kitchen, you might think new cabinets will cost too much, but imported cabinetry is affordable and offers a great selection of materials and semi-custom designs, which can help you stay on budget for projects. Fabuwood and Cubitac are two brands, for instance, where you can really have a nice finished look without being extravagant.”

—*Guy Henri, F+S Kitchen and Bath Design Studio*

BATHROOMS:

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

In bathrooms, homeowners want openness, as well as practicality.

“The No. 1 feature we hear from customers is the open and airy feel that all-glass frameless enclosures help create. The bathroom feels bigger and more luxurious. It also helps in viewing the tilework on the shower, in many cases which has been a significant investment by the homeowner.

“We are generally seeing increased popularity with ‘Euro style’ sliders, or sliders with exposed rollers. In a door or closet situation you would see them called a ‘barn door’ style. We are also generally seeing larger shower enclosures, and in many cases incorporating large fixed panels of glass to accommodate the increased size.” —*Ben Weaver, Alderfer Glass*

“If committed to staying in the home long term, people want to make the master bath personal. They lean toward a fresh, transitional contemporary style, removing the confines of a narrow toilet room, but still looking for privacy with a partial wall or obscured glass. Freestanding tubs can also be like a work of art in the space and come in a variety of materials.

“Hall bathrooms are often ignored when discussing bathroom remodels. Hall baths serve a different purpose, usually for children and guests. It should include a tub, especially if there is not another tub in the home, because parents likely aren’t bringing their children into the master to bathe in that tub. Trends aren’t much different than the master bath—clean, neutral whites, grays and navy blue or natural wood for vanities.” —*Dave Cerami, HomeTech Renovations*

“All-glass frameless shower enclosures add a great look and value to your project. We can enhance the look with heavy ¾-inch or ½-inch clear tempered glass to show off accent tiles, or choose from different types of patterned or custom-tinted glass.



WHAT'S OUT?

Built-in Jacuzzi tubs

Small tile

Narrow toilet rooms

WHAT'S IN?

Spa-like master baths

All-glass frameless shower enclosures

Freestanding tubs

Floor-to-ceiling window panels with contemporary glass blocks

Floating vanities



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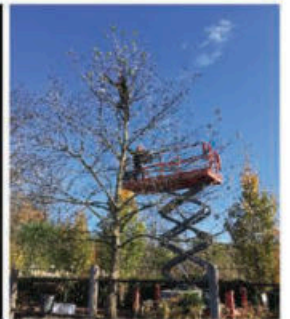
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MORE ADVICE FROM THE PROS

“Don’t get overwhelmed. Look at pictures online of kitchens, bathrooms and areas that you like and would like to incorporate into your home. Pick out specifics from those photos and go from there. If you don’t have a direction that you would like to go with before you start, you will have an overwhelming amount of options in front of you.” —**Wendy Amiano**

“Really consider all the different interior components that are more readily available these days to make your cabinets work harder—drawers with built-in USBs to charge devices but keep them hidden away and off countertops for exam-

ple. Ask the designer to recommend storage options to make the most of the renovation.” —**Meg Schultz**

“I am a firm believer that the installation of a shower makes all the difference to a successful product. The value of experienced and highly trained installers cannot be overstated, as there often are no two bathrooms that are completely the same. Glass has very little room for error, so you know that experienced companies and techs have years of practice honing their craft.” —**Ben Weaver**

“Share specifics of your lifestyle to designers and contractors. With all of the technology and products available, if you tells us your grandkids are over all the time and playing with the cabinet doors, or if you cook a lot, or if you’re moving in five years and don’t want to spend a lot, or if you’re never moving—you can never share too much. All of that allows us to create something tailored just to you.” —**Daryl Holcomb H&H**



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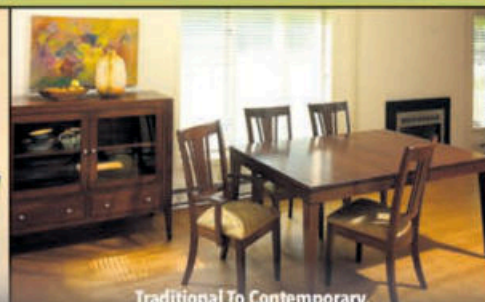
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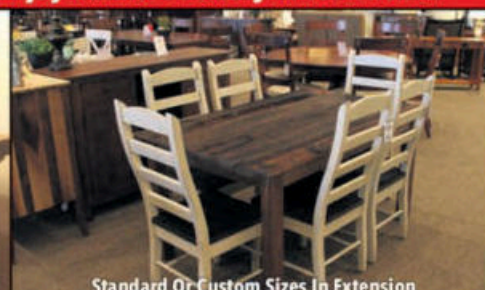
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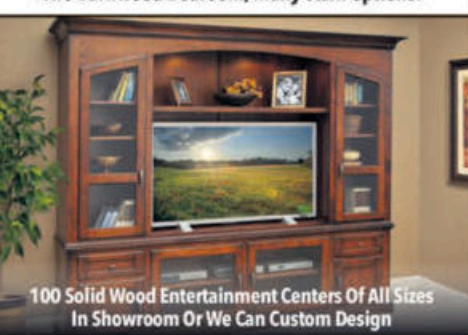
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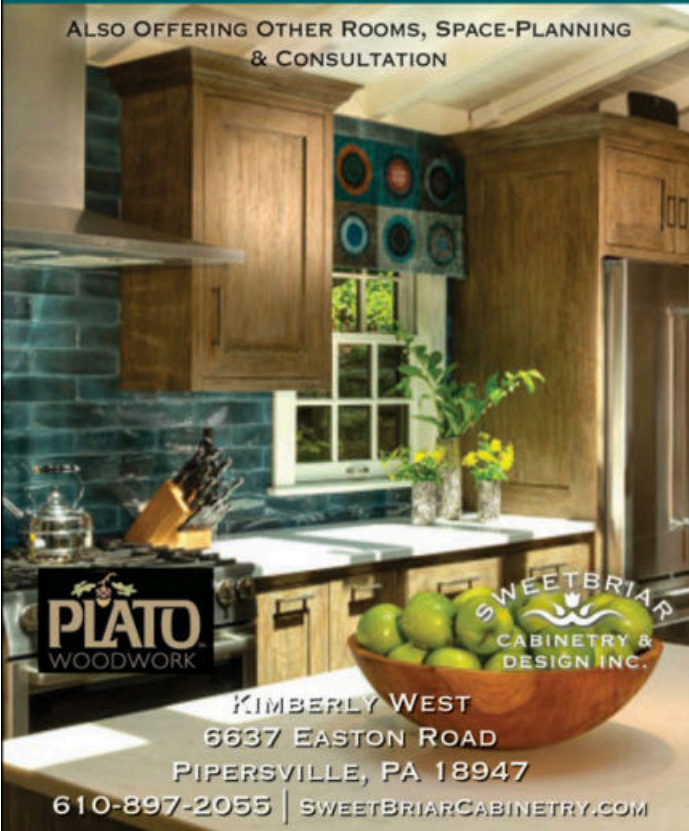
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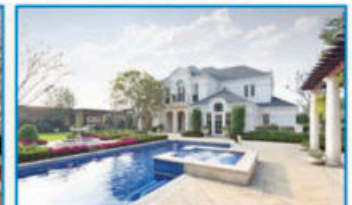
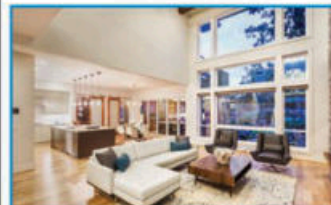
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Fascella Construction takes a team approach to a project. With a designer available to help with layout and design plans, we are well prepared to address every detail of your project. We work closely with the client and as a team to keep a project on schedule and costs to budget.

What advice do you give to homeowners planning a project now?

Do research so you can set a realistic budget. Make design decisions early so materials can be purchased promptly as we are seeing an increase on costs. Sign your contractor quickly to get on the schedule as many other homeowners are also looking to get work done early next year.



Chris Fascella, owner
Upper Black Eddy, Pa.
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SWEATER WEATHER

This coming winter is bringing more uncertainty to end the year. The Almanac predicts wet, wintry mixes in December and January, and the potential for a blizzard in February. Is your home ready? We asked professionals about how homeowners can best prepare for the weather with repairs, replacements and innovative products.

Protecting your home from the season ahead.

By Liz Hunter

Q:

What would you say should be the top concern for homeowners on their exterior and why?

The No. 1 concern homeowners should have with winter approaching should be your roof. The roof is the main point of entry for exterior elements such as rain, sleet and snow. If the roof is not addressed properly, many issues may occur. Insulation and sheetrock can become wet, which in turn could cause a mold restoration issue. These issues could carry throughout the entire home making for more costly repairs. ➔



Q. Before having a new roof installed, what should homeowners be aware of?

When purchasing a new roof, they need to be aware of several items that can extend the life of their roof and increase the value of their home. Ice and water shield, counter flashing and pipe flange replacement, along with synthetic underlayment, should all be considered when purchasing a new roof. All of these options will increase the longevity of your roof and keep the interior of your home protected from exterior elements.

**Giovanni Esposito, owner
Imperial Home Remodeling
Blackwood, N.J.
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Q. Why would it be a good idea to consider new siding on my home now?

Homeowners should consider new siding as winter approaches because siding is often forgotten about as an essential part of home protection. Siding is more than just material on the house, it is a system that involves underlayments, flashings and j-channel that tie into the roofline, soffit and gutters, as well as windows.

Now is a great time to install siding because our crews are less busy than in the spring and can oftentimes lead to additional savings.

Has vinyl siding changed from a decade ago?

Vinyl siding has improved over the last several years with better insulation options, more vibrant and longer-lasting colors and better aesthetics for homeowners.

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What steps can a homeowner take to survey their home for potential damage?

Walk around your house and do a ground-level inspection of your roof and siding for

leak prevention. Flat roofs with a single-ply membrane offer the greatest potential for leaks.

Clean your gutters. Regular cleaning prevents garden-bed washout and ice damming during colder months. For some homeowners, this task can be DIY, but professional services are recommended depending on gutter height. Should you choose to tackle the job yourself, prioritize safety. Make sure your ladder is sturdy, stable and on level ground, and that its height exceeds that of the gutter. When in doubt, call a professional to schedule an appointment.

Seal air leaks by caulking windows and other openings. Add insulation where needed. Consider replacing the front door. Doors offer the highest retention for investment, and will keep your home warmer inside.

Why are local companies the better choice for contracting this type of work?

Be wary of fly-by-night solicitations from out-of-area contractors. The job at hand may be the first and last time you'll see them. Workmanship warranties may be compromised if the

contractor is based on the other side of the country. A local company will have greater immediacy and responsibility should there be a problem or installation concern.

Chad Kazaba, service and warranty director
G. Fedale Roofing & Siding
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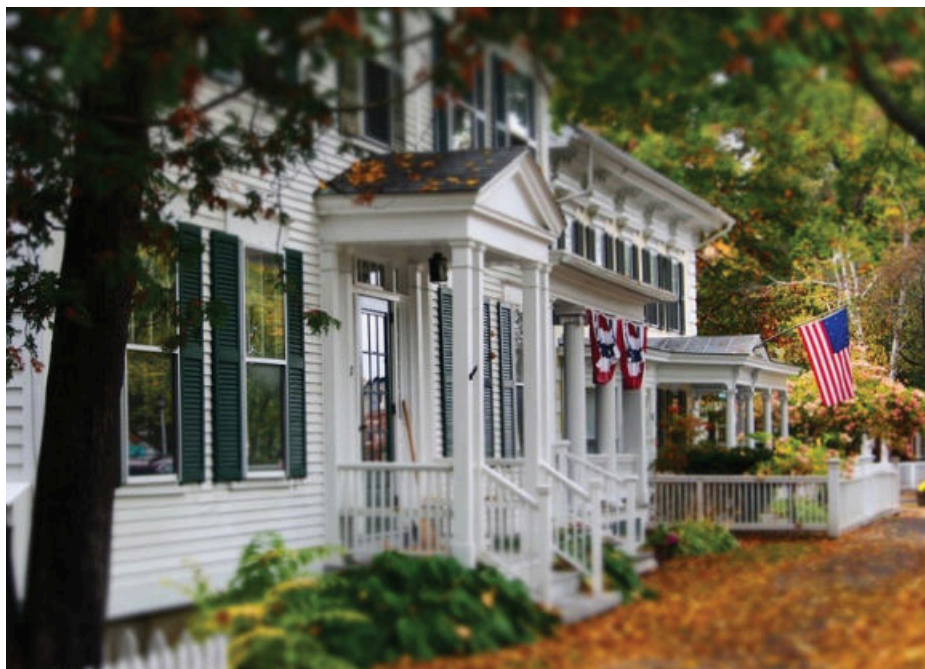


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Q: Do homeowners often overlook the impact of a garage door when it comes to winterizing?

When temperatures start to bend and the air gets colder, it's always important to check the weather seal around the opening and at the bottom of a garage door. The bottom seal should be pliable, not hard. Also check the door for lubrication so it's easy to open and close.

Are new garage doors built more efficiently to reduce these issues?

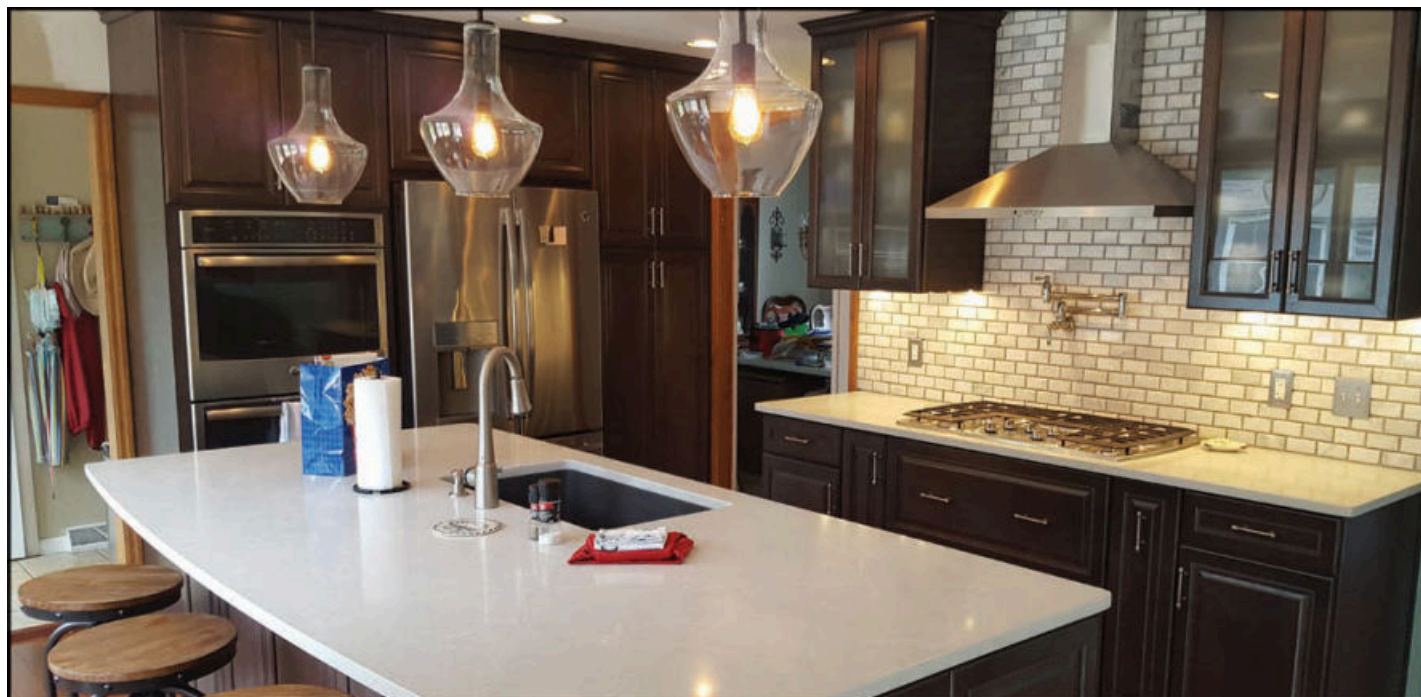
We have doors with varying degrees of energy efficiency, some with polystyrene insulation, which can range from a 6.9 R-value to 9 R-value. Clopay garage doors have a proprietary polyurethane insulation that increases the energy efficiency to 12.9 R-value.

There are various looks of garage doors—carriage style, raised panel, faux finishes that look like real wood but are insulated steel, and all colors and window styles, which are also insulated.



**Scott Smolar, owner
Smolar Garage Doors
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Image courtesy of Smolar Garage Doors

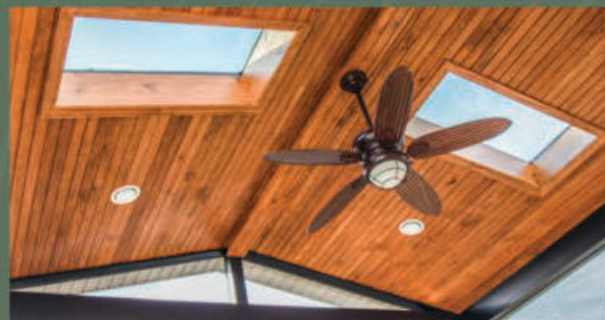


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