



ON THE HOUSE

Ideas for Improving Your Home

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Client Focus

“Extreme Makeover” Works for Homes, Too

It started as a simple project – replacing the windows. Then the project grew...and grew.

And by the time work was completed, this 50-year old house in Chicago’s northern suburbs had a completely new exterior, as well as several improvements inside the house. The result was a home that was more comfortable from an energy standpoint, and that offered greater curb appeal on the outside and more form and functionality on the inside.

“Originally, we just wanted to change our windows,” the client said. “But then we also decided to change the front of the house to give it more curbside appeal. You fix something and upgrade and then you realize something else is kind of old looking,



and you want to upgrade that.”

According to Maurice Forde, owner of Forde Windows and Remodeling, “simple projects such as replacing windows do not often turn into comprehensive projects.” However, he noted, sometimes it makes complete sense to make several improvements at once. “If you just replace windows, you may have issues with siding,” he said. “And if you just do siding, your windows may leak. Doing everything provides you with the opportunity to seal all areas of the house.”

Forde noted that more comprehensive projects also allow clients to

more fully leverage new technologies to conserve energy and prevent leakage. In this project, he said, new siding, roofing and window installation techniques provided greater insulation, reducing energy costs and the risk of leaks. “And, of course, there are some cost savings that can be attained by doing multiple improvements at the same time.”

As mentioned, this project start-

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From Maurice

How Do You Eat an Elephant?

That is a question many people ask when talking to others who are facing a daunting task. You can use it, too.

For example, when a child, feeling overwhelmed, complains about all the schoolwork they have to do, you can ask: "How do you eat an elephant?"

When a coworker complains about his or her seemingly insurmountable "to do" list, ask:

"How do you eat an elephant?"

The answer, of course, is "one bite at a time."

Many people equate improving their home to eating an elephant. There are so many steps. First there is the planning, and all those decisions you need to make.

Then there is the disruption of the job itself. On interior jobs, you have stuff everywhere, and may even lose a room for a while. And, of course, no matter how neat your contractor (and we are as neat as any), there will be a mess.

And that is just a simple job. Think about a complex job, or tackling numerous projects simultaneously. No wonder so many people do their home improvements one at a time. Many baby elephants instead of one big one.

The fact is, though, that there are many benefits to combining projects, as unappetizing as that may sound. Let me list a few of them.

- **Vision.** When you tackle a small job, you may have one vision (i.e., modern). When you tackle the next one, you may have another (i.e., classical). Numerous small jobs with numerous visions will lead to a patchwork effect, and no overall flow. Your house will not have a unified personality. But if you combine projects, you can have one vision carry through.
- **Lower costs.** There are some economies of scale that can be attained by combining multiple projects. Manufacturers and distributors may provide discounts if you buy more materials from them. For example, you may be able to do better if you replace all your windows, as opposed to just half of them. Architects, contractors and interior designers also may provide discounts for bigger jobs.
- **Energy savings.** If you are doing work to the exterior of your house, as discussed in the article on the first page, to make the house most energy-efficient, it makes sense to do all the work at once.
- **It's all done at once.** While different parts of the project are done at different times, it is still one project. Rather than having your life disrupted over a long period of time, you get it all over with once.

Companies like ours are used to working on multi-component projects, and can work with you so that the elephant does not turn into a huge stomach ache. Just ask us. Call us at 847/562-1188, or e-mail us at info@fordedesignbuild.com.

Bon Appétit.

Maurice

"Extreme Makeover"

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ed out as a window replacement project. "The home had leaky, old, wooden windows," Forde said. "We replaced them with Andersen double pane windows that provide greater insulation."

The portico also was changed to add to the curb-side appeal.

The roof was also replaced, along with gutters, soffit and fascia. "The roof was low pitched and leaky," Forde said. "The client was shoveling snow off the roof four or five times a year." To address that, Forde installed an ice shield under the shingles that would both prevent leaking and eliminate the need for the client to have to shovel the roof.

Additionally, James Hardie siding was used to replace the old aluminum siding which had faded badly. "This siding is very popular right now," Forde explained. "It is cement siding that is pre-stained to look like traditional cedar siding, but it is much more durable. The stain is warranted for 25 years."

Changes inside the home included the following:

- Two bathrooms were gutted and renovated
- Carpeting was replaced with hardwood floors
- The fireplace mantle was changed from a plain wooden mantle into one that was inset into a brick wall
- Cabinetry was added to hide the entertainment system

"They did such great work that we kept spending money," the client said jokingly. "They were really creative and open minded. They did not come here and say 'we are going to do this.' We really worked together. The people were really good guys – very professional and easy to talk to. They were also great at troubleshooting, because problems will occur."

The client offers this advice to anyone considering a project such as this. "Take your time choosing your products and listen to the guys who have experience working with them. You may think you want something, but they may have a better idea."

For more information about this project, or others, call us at 847/562-1188, or e-mail us at info@fordedesignbuild.com



Save Energy This Winter

According to the Energy Information Administration, the average home heating cost this winter (Oct. 1 – March 31) will be \$1,137, a 15% increase over last year. But you can keep your energy costs down and still stay warm. Here are some suggestions:



Inspect your heating system. Make sure that it is operating at maximum efficiency.



Seal your ductwork. Leaky ductwork can result in heat loss of up to 40% into your attic and/or crawl space.



Install a programmable thermostat. A programmable thermostat could help you save as much as \$100 a year off your heating bills.



Let the sun shine in. Open shades and drapes during the day to let in the sun's warmth. Close them at night.



Install storm windows, drapes and weather-stripping. These will all seal out drafts and block heat loss.



New Product Corner

Grace Vycor Plus Provides Protection

Water can be a homeowner's worst nightmare. When water enters a wall system, it can lead to rot, mold and mildew. Even the best windows need to be installed with proper flashing to ensure durability and protection from moisture. Flashing adheres to the windows, and provides a barrier between the windows and the rest of the structure. Without this flashing, water can cause major structural damage, and potential health problems from mildew damage.



In a recent project (see first page), Forde complemented new windows by installing Grace Vycor Plus self-adhered flashing. This membrane creates a barrier to water entry, as well as a drainage plan for water to drain out of the wall. The result...no leakage...no threat of structural damage...and no health risks because there will be no mildew.

More information is available at www.graceathome.com.



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Meet the Forde Team

Meet Rogelio Carmona



A company such as ours is only as good as the craftsmen we employ to do the actual work. Ask anybody for a reference for home improvements, and the conversation will naturally flow to workmanship.

At Forde, we have been extremely fortunate to have Rogelio Carmona on our team the past six years. Rogelio is a skilled and experienced carpenter. He specializes in window installations, but also works on other projects.

“The most important thing is to make sure the customers are happy,” Carmona says “That is why it is important that I take my time, and make sure the job is done right.”

Rogelio lives in Chicago, and is married with “two beautiful girls – ages 11 and eight.”