

Hints *For* Homeowners

To Give Your House Panache...Paint It

(NAPSA)—Nothing transforms the exterior look of a house more effectively than a new coat of paint. It's a worthwhile investment of time and money that can pay back big returns in home value while protecting your house from costly repairs.

And with the warm weather months ahead, now is the perfect time to tackle an exterior painting project.

"Most houses get their color, and much of their character from paint," said Carl Minchew, director of color technology for Benjamin Moore, the 125-year-old paint manufacturer. "Depending on your color choices, it can convince that a small house looks larger, a squat house has height, a plain house possesses panache. But beyond simple aesthetics," he continued, "the right exterior paint can actually protect the structure of your home. It can help prevent the damage caused by moisture and block ultraviolet radiation that weakens the finish on materials such as vinyl and aluminum and that destroys wood fibers."

According to Minchew, how long a new paint job will last depends principally on four factors: the quality and type of the paint or stain; the quality of the preparation; the quality of the application; and, of course, how punishing Mother Nature might be.

He also advised that new technology has yielded a new generation of exterior paint, such as the eco-friendly low-VOC formulation Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior. Compared to other paints, this new breed performs better while withstanding the test of time.

For instance, one coat of Aura goes on like two coats of traditional paint. It dries faster and delivers a smooth and durable fin-



The right color can make a small house look larger and a squat house look taller.

ish that lasts year after year, even in the most rigorous outdoor environments. This, of course, translates to time and cost savings, often eliminating the need for a primer or a second coat. It also means the paint helps to fill in minor cracks, crevices and other substrate imperfections, which adds to the smooth finish you can both see and feel. "Obviously, structural issues, such as cracked or rotting siding must be dealt with before painting begins," counseled Minchew. "A thorough inspection of the exterior of the house for damage must be made and any necessary repairs completed—that's a given."

Drying relatively faster than other paints, Aura enables seamless touch-ups and recoats that can begin within just a few hours of application. And, because it can be applied in temperatures as low as 40° F, the typical season for exterior painting is now extended beyond what has been the norm.

"For most of us, our houses are our single largest investment, and for many of us, it's where our savings are," said Minchew. "So a coat of the highest quality paint is a modest sum for protecting this important asset."