

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Today, It's Easier Than Ever To Improve Your Home's 'Curb Appeal'

(NAPSA)—With housing costs going through the roof these days, more and more homeowners are using the equity in their homes to renovate. In fact, millions of dollars are spent annually by homeowners on alterations and improvements to their home.

A new roof is one of the best ways to add to your home's value. Ask any real estate agent: typically 40 percent of the visual ("curb") appeal of a home comes from the roof. This fact surprises most people, but it's true. Unfortunately, homeowners spend so much time and effort agonizing over windows, siding, landscaping and other design elements, that they often forget about the piece that creates the greatest visual impact—the roof.

Now there's a Web site where you can see how shingle colors and designs can affect the appearance of your home. Visit www.gaf.com and click on the "Smart Choice" icon. There you will find the "Roof Selector" program, which provides a wide selection of home styles to begin creating your own roof design. Find a home style that looks similar to yours, and choose a color for the exterior and trim of the house. Then, select from the various shingle designs and colors to get a better sense of the "curb appeal" you can create. It's fun to try different combinations on "your" house.

Once you've narrowed down your decision to a particular style and color, ask your contractor for full-size shingles of the colors you're interested in. If possible, look at the shingles in different lighting conditions (sunshine, overcast, early-morning sun, late-day sun). Place the shingles next to any stone, siding, wood trim or anything with color that will influence the final decision. It's



also a good idea to ask your contractor for an address of a home nearby that has the same color shingles—that way you can see how they actually look up on the roof, keeping in mind that the roof's slope can affect the appearance of the shingles.

Be sure to choose a good contractor. As the largest manufacturer of roofing materials in North America, GAF Materials Corporation has a certification program for roofing contractors. These contractors are factory-certified by GAF and pledge to work on the homeowner's roof as if it were their own. These professionals can present you with a plan in writing, covering everything from pre-installation to the finished job. They use quality GAF materials backed by limited warranties that range from 20 years to lifetime. They also offer a unique warranty that even covers the contractor's workmanship during the critical early years after installation and includes an inspection of your finished roof by GAF's factory inspectors.

For more information on roofing options or learning which contractors in your neighborhood are factory-certified, visit www.gaf.com or call GAF toll free at 1-888-LEAK-SOS. The site also offers a free video detailing how to avoid roofing disasters, that can also be viewed online with a high-speed connection.