

Hints for Handypersons

Freshen Up Your Home For The Holidays

(NAPSA)—Visiting friends and family is said to be the single biggest reason for travel during the holidays. It accounts for 43 percent of all long-distance trips made during this time, according to a U.S. Department of Transportation travel survey. It is also the inspiration for a lot of home remodeling.

Fortunately, experts say there's no need to get stressed out about making the house fit for a king. With a few little touches here and there, you can impress even your most critical visitors.

"Getting ready for the holidays shouldn't be an added stress or burden," said Dave White, home improvement expert at The Home Depot. Here are some tips:

- Take an organized approach. First, determine what needs to be done, write down your priorities and start with the areas your guests will use most. Usually, these include the entrance, kitchen, powder rooms and guest rooms.

- Deck the halls and guest rooms. Freshening up a guest room with a new coat of paint is the quickest and most inexpensive way to update a room.

- Declutter the clutter. Put away fragile knickknacks that may break easily, especially if you're expecting children to be running through the house. Organize and make room in closets and pantries for extra food, guests' suitcases and coats.

- Consider painting the front door a bold color such as red or black that will complement your holiday decorations. A new door knocker is a nice touch, and a



Consider painting the front door a bold color for that lasting first impression. A new door knocker and porch lights can help your entrance sparkle.

quick cleaning of the windows and porch lights will help your entrance sparkle.

- Cleaning or replacing a fireplace screen can make a room instantly seem more inviting.

- Keep Jack Frost out this winter by sealing all windows and doors to keep heat inside.

- Let there be light. Add accent lighting such as dimmers, track lighting or even a lamp to change a room's ambience. Different light-bulbs can also make a room brighter and sharper or warmer and cozier depending on the type.

- Check bathrooms to make sure toilets are functioning properly and are prepared for the extra use. Also, a quick change of the hardware—towel rack, toilet paper holder, knobs—can be an inexpensive way to give the bathroom an updated look.

For more tips on preparing for the holidays, visit the Web site at www.homedepot.com.