

Hints For The Home



Affordable Solutions To Make Your Home Safer, More Energy Efficient

(NAPSA)—Homeowners are always looking for ways to make their residences more environmentally friendly, energy efficient and safer—and such improvements don't need to cost a fortune. Simple electrical upgrades reduce energy consumption and can offer huge safety benefits.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, lighting accounts for almost 15 percent of a household's electricity usage. That output can drop significantly if homeowners install dimmers and energy-efficient lighting controls.

Dimmers easily reduce the energy output from lamps and overhead lights. They also control a room's ambience—creating a cheery setting for parties, a romantic mood for dinner or the perfect light for reading.

Dimmers offer exceptional control of a light's output, but they can't stop people from leaving lights on. Occupancy and vacancy sensors can turn lights on and off automatically when someone enters or exits a room. Occupancy sensors turn the lights on automatically, while vacancy sensors require manual activation.

Another excellent solution, a timer, presets the length of time to keep a light or fan on. These devices are popular in bathrooms and for programming a light to stay on while homeowners are away.

Making a home "green" might be a red-hot topic, but most homeowners are more concerned about keeping families safe. One of the most innovative solutions is a tamper-resistant electrical outlet, or receptacle.

A tamper-resistant outlet has a built-in shutter system preventing children from sticking objects like



Installing light dimmers helps to reduce energy output and can also help you control a room's ambience.

keys and paper clips into the socket, but plugs can be inserted and removed as usual.

Tamper-resistant outlets offer automatic, permanent protection against electrical injuries—better than plastic outlet caps, which can be removed or forgotten. The newest National Electrical Code® (NEC) requires them in new homes.

Another exceptional safety device, a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), prevents serious injury from electric shock by detecting a fault current and cutting off power to the outlet. These devices are required by code in kitchens, bathrooms and areas near water and are also available in tamper-resistant versions.

Some GFCIs and electrical outlets even feature built-in LED night-lights for bathrooms and hallways. LEDs last over 20 years and eliminate bulb changes. These night-light combination devices help residents find their way in the dark.

Simple electrical improvements make a big difference in home safety and energy use. Learn more at www.betterelectrical.com.