

HOUSING

The Portland Observer

Shedding New Light On Basement Remodeling

Abundant Natural Light Key To Livability

There may be something down there. And if it is at least seven and a half feet tall, it can breathe freely and isn't too wet, you might consider spending more time with it.

"Many homeowners have unfairly written off their basements as too damp or dark for anything other than storage space or a workshop," said Dave Culver, President, Pella Window & Door Of Oregon. "However, in many cases, basements can add valuable living area to the home."

Culver said homeowners can evaluate their basement's remodeling potential by examining a few key points. Minimum floor to ceiling height allowed by building code is 7 and a half feet. Heating and cooling systems should be expandable into the basement areas to reduce musty odors. Space should be available to add primary access through wide steps, preferably with a landing at the top. Also, safety demands a second basement exit, preferably a large and easily opened window.

"Not only are windows vital to basement safety, comfort is a major factor," said Culver.

"The key to the livability of basements is bringing in natural light to help lose the basement feel."

Culver said window options depend on the landscape and drainage needs around the basement



level. In most cases, larger windows can be natural light to help lose the basement level. In most cases, larger windows can be installed after digging deeper window wells. On sloped lots, a sunroom bump-out can spread natural light with a series of connected wall and ceiling units.

"If basements pass a home-

owner's initial assessment, a professional contractor should be brought in to look for possible trouble spots," said Culver. "Together with the contractor, explore all options for bringing in natural light through added or large windows."

For free information about basement window options, call 1-800-847-3552.

Fire Prevention In October

Makes Home A Safer Place Year-Round

October is National Fire Prevention Month, and there is no better time to make home fire prevention a family priority. The experts at HomeBase home improvement warehouse offer 15 simple suggestions for fire safety:

1) Install smoke detectors on every level of your home, especially near sleeping areas.

2) Never install a smoke detector within six inches of where a wall and ceiling meet—this is dead air space with little circulation. Do not mount a detector in front of an air supply or return duct.

3) Check the batteries in your smoke detector every month and change them once a year. A working smoke detector doubles your chances of surviving a fire.

4) One fire extinguisher is not enough to protect a home. Instead, there should be a fire extinguisher near the kitchen, bedrooms, basement and garage.

5) Multi-purpose, dry chemical extinguishers are recommended for fighting household fires of all types.

6) Do not mount a fire extinguisher too close to the place where a fire is likely to occur. For instance, do not place an extinguisher next to the kitchen stove.

7) Fight only minor household fires yourself. In the case of a serious fire, leave the hose immediately and notify the fire department.

8) Never leave your home with a fire burning in the fireplace, or with the stove or oven on.

9) Create and practice a home

escape plan that includes an outside meeting spot for all family members. Practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark, and have an emergency ladder available for quick escape from two-story house.

10) Teach children that fire is a tool—not a toy.

11) Watch for signs that your child is playing with fire: burnt matches, missing lighters or matches, and burn holes in clothing or furniture.

12) Teach children that if their clothing catches on fire, they should immediately drop to the ground and roll around to smother the fire.

13) Plug space heaters directly into the wall, never into an extension cord. Unplug space heaters when not in use.

14) Make your fireplace safer with a screen or glass enclosures to prevent sparks from scattering. A grate will hold logs and keep them from rolling forward.

15) Clear dry plants from around your home to prevent brush fires.

HomeBase, one of the nation's leading chains for home improvement warehouses, is committed to promoting safety in the local community. HomeBase warehouses offer friendly, knowledgeable customer service and carry over 30,000 home improvement and decor items in stock, including a broad selection of fire prevention aids, at guaranteed, everyday low prices.

There are 90 HomeBase warehouses currently in operation in 13 states.

IT JUST KEEPS ON HELP-ING

United Way
of the Columbia-Willamette
228-9131

Students Explore Study/Travel Opportunities

Students who want to study abroad but don't know where in the world to go can learn about some different options at Lincoln High School's 12th annual Study/Travel Fair International Night Thursday (Sept. 30) from 7-9pm at the school, located at 1600 S.W. Salmon St.

The seminar begins with a brief overview of study/travel opportunities followed by three sessions with representatives from the Educational Foundation For Foreign Study, American Heritage Association, American Intercultural Student Exchange and other educational and cultural exchange organizations.

Students and their families also will learn about opportunities for hosting foreign exchange students. This year, some 40 exchange students from countries including Russia, Japan, Germany, Mexico, Senegal and Norway are studying in Portland high schools.

For more information, please contact Suzanne Kassen or Helen Lawrence, Lincoln High School International Studies Center, 280-5609 or Lew Fredrick, director, Dept. of Public Information & Communication, 331-3304.

Unsure If You Can Afford To buy A Home?

Then you will want to attend a free seminar concerning home buying and home ownership. The seminars will provide an overview of the home buying process, explain mortgage financing in general terms and assist with a household budgeting plan. Specific mortgage programs, designed to assist low to moderate income households will also be discussed.

This class is designed for lower income home buyers, who are buying their first house in the City of Portland, with a maximum house price of \$65,000.

Some specific questions that will be addressed include the following:

- What would my monthly payment be? How much down payment would I need to have?
- What if I have bad credit, or no credit at all?
- What about inspections, assessments, building codes, home maintenance?

The seminars will be conducted every month and attendance at the seminars will be required in order to qualify for certain loan programs.

Space is limited—reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis. Please call the Portland Housing Center at 282-7744 to receive your pre-registration form.

All-Day Saturday Class
October 2nd, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
St. John's Community Center
8427 N. Central
Community Center Auditorium
(Bring your own lunch)

The Portland Housing Center is a private, non-profit organization, and is funded by the City of Portland, local financial institutions, and foundations.



Brochure Available For October Conference

Martin Luther King, III will be among the speakers at the fifth annual Housing & Human Investment Conference, Rebuilding Hope: Developing Community Partnerships to End Poverty, to be held October 18-20, 1993 at the Lloyd Center Red Lion. Mr. King is the son of Martin Luther King, Jr., the father of the civil rights movement.

Other confirmed speakers for the event include Elizabeth Furse, U.S. representative for Oregon's First Congressional District; Beverly Stein, Multnomah County Chair; Vera Katz, Mayor, City of Portland; Gretchen Kafoury, Portland City Commissioner; Rey Ramsey, Director, Oregon Housing & Community Services Department; Bill Conerly, Senior Vice President, First Interstate Bank; Christine Vladimiroff, President and Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest; and Nancy

Amidei, Associate Director, Center for Policy and Practice Research, University of Washington School of Social Work.

The "human investment" concept stresses the importance of recognizing that housing and services go hand-in-hand; it emphasizes the need for capacity at the community level to better utilize scarce resources. Throughout the three days of activities, sessions will focus on ways to identify and facilitate community partnerships to address the needs of lower income Oregonians. The Conference promises to be an exciting look at ways to invest in people ranging from homeless services, weatherization and energy assistance to financing for housing development.

Workshops and trainings focusing on human investment issues will include a Homeless Study Tour to some of Multnomah County's shelters, transi-

tional housing, and case-management programs on Monday morning. The tour will provide participants with insight on the issues and challenges of working with homeless people in Portland.

The Honorable Henry Cisneros, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, has been invited to serve as keynote speaker for lunch on Wednesday.

Copies of the Conference brochure are now available. The registration fee for all three days including meals is \$135.00; an early registration fee of \$121.50 is being offered to those whose registration forms are postmarked by October 8. A single day rate of \$65 is also available. For more information or to obtain a copy of the brochure, please contact Mid-Columbia Community Action Council in The Dalles at (503) 298-5131.

Free Weatherization And Energy Conservation Workshops

For many households, fall and winter months mean a drafty home and shocking utility bills.

This year, with energy price increases slated for Northwest consumers, heating a home affordably will be harder than ever. To help people prepare, the Community Energy Project is offering free workshops on simple home weatherization and energy conservation.

The workshop emphasizes do-it-yourself ideas that anyone can use. Participants will learn how to install effective weatherization and conservation materials using only basic tools such as scissors and screwdrivers. Other topics include what the major home energy uses are, how to adjust water heater thermostats, when to get a furnace tune-up, and where to find further information and assistance with home energy

conservation.

Low-income households can qualify for a free kit of materials worth approximately \$120. The kit includes reusable plastic storm windows, door weatherstripping, pipe insulation, and a fluorescent light. To qualify, a family of four must have an annual income less than \$20,350. A single person must have an annual income of less than \$14,250. Enrollment is limited to City of Portland residents. For low-income senior citizens (age 55 or older) or people with disabilities, Community Energy Project volunteers are available to assist with the installation of materials as needed.

From October through January, a total of 35 workshops will be held in neighborhoods in North, Northeast, and Southeast Portland (complete schedule is attached). People interested in attending should register by calling the

Community Energy Project at 284-6827.

Community Energy Project, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization which has been operating in Portland since 1979. Principal funding for the workshops is provided by the City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development.

Home weatherization and energy conservation workshop: Tired of the cold and high utility bills? Attend a free workshop to learn how you can stay warm and save money this winter. Low-income households can qualify for a free kit of materials worth \$120. Owners and renters can participate. To register, call the Community Energy Project at 284-6827. Wheelchair accessible. Sign interpretation upon request.

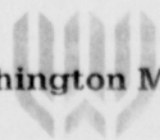
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