

Hints *For* Homeowners

Pave Your Way To A More Beautiful Home

(NAPSA)—When you get down to it, the driveway, front walk, steps, patio and other pathways leading to your home are among the best ways to make a good first impression on guests, prospective buyers and yourself, every time you come home.

As ever more homeowners are discovering, the best material for such things may be concrete pavers, for several reasons.

Concrete pavers:

- Are beautiful. Suppliers stock rustic stone-like pavers and many shapes, colors and sizes. Light colored pavers can offer a cooler surface around patios and pool decks.

- Are strong. Their uniform size and high quality concrete allows them to fit tightly together and form a strong interlocking surface.

- Don't crack like asphalt or poured-in-place concrete. Paver joints allow for a small amount of movement without cracking.

- Are easy to repair. You can remove and reinstate the same pavers with no ugly patches after repairs to the base or underground utilities.

- Resist deterioration from freeze-thaw cycles and de-icing salts better than other surfaces.

Interlocking concrete pavements can even accommodate snow melting systems. These consist of hot water filled tubing or radiant wires placed in the pavement. They turn on automatically when a snowstorm starts, eliminating plowing, ice hazards and the need for de-icing salts.

- Resist oil and antifreeze that leak from cars, making the pavers particularly good for driveways.

- Can accommodate lighting fixtures that fit right into the



Concrete pavers can be a beautiful way to enhance your house.

paver pattern. These systems include wiring and a transformer that plug into a standard 110-volt outdoor receptacle.

The lighting defines patios, walkways and driveways at night, increasing safety and adding a bit of mystique to your home.

- Can define and enlarge space for planting beds.

- Can be installed by a professional or a skilled do-it-yourselfer.

Most concrete paver suppliers can supply printed step-by-step instructions for patios and walkways, as well as help do-it-yourselfers locate the tools and materials required. It's a good idea to hire a contractor for driveways and areas larger than 300 square feet.

Professional contractors can complete a high-quality job quickly and safely because they have the right equipment and materials. In addition, when you use an Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute (ICPI) certified installer, you know they have the knowledge to install pavers properly. A directory of certified installers is available on the ICPI Web site.

ICPI offers a free Consumer Guide. Download the guide, view beautiful paving work and compare materials online at www.icpi.org.