

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Exterior Style And Definition On A Budget

(NAPSA)—Improving the look of your home doesn't have to mean costs that go through the roof.

While large-ticket renovations may need to wait these days, one value-adding change involves using hardscapes, such as patios, walkways, fire pits and water features, in a home's exterior. Studies by Clemson University and the University of Florida have found that hardscapes can contribute as much as 15 percent to a home's resale value.

For homeowners on a budget, the use of Quikrete Crack Resistant Concrete Mix to create concrete borders can be a relatively simple and affordable hardscaping project. These poured-in-place borders offer definition and functionality. As an example, concrete borders can be curved around lawns, gardens and other landscaping elements while also acting as a mowing strip. This reduces the amount of time needed for exterior maintenance.

What's more, you don't have to be an expert in landscape design and hardscapes to create these visually appealing additions. With just a few simple tools and materials, homeowners can add concrete borders in a weekend for under \$100—depending on the project scale.

Integrating With The Home

According to the American Society of Landscape Architects, borders create uniformity in blending planting beds and paths with a home's exterior landscape and drawing the eye to visual elements. With such a premium placed on curb appeal in today's real estate market, every value-adding project that homeowners tackle in their yard and garden can help the bottom line.



Add durability to concrete by applying an acrylic concrete sealer.

Besides offering value and durability, concrete allows for customization in the form of color additives. During the mixing process, liquid cement colors can be added to the concrete to complement exterior colors. This creates further visual uniformity to enhance a home's exterior.

Additional Hardscaping Ideas

For other ways to add interest to a home's exterior, think about incorporating hardscaping stone, rock and sand aggregates into your lawn and garden design. They're available in a wide range of colors, sizes and textures. For example, the new HardScapes by Quikrete line includes an assortment of landscaping marble chips, lava rocks, pea pebbles, pond pebbles, river pebbles, all-purpose stones and specialty sands.

You can learn more in "Guide to Concrete: Masonry & Stucco Projects," a new book from The Quikrete Companies. The book, the first in a series written in cooperation with Creative Publishing Int., provides dozens of project ideas, along with information about proper applications, techniques and building practices.

For more information, visit www.quikrete.com.