

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Five Easy Steps To A New Countertop

(NAPSA)—Choosing a countertop doesn't have to be a daunting task.

To begin, you may want to visit a dealer to look at all the options available to you. There may be several types of materials that can give you the look you want at various prices and with different maintenance requirements. Some products, such as granite, tile and ceramic, are more expensive and require more maintenance than others. Products such as laminate come in hundreds of colors and patterns with many edge choices and may be more affordable and easier to maintain.

After you've determined the material and pattern you like, try following these tips from Wilsonart Laminate, a leading manufacturer of decorative surfaces:

### **Step 1: Pick out samples.**

Pick out about a dozen take-home samples to get an idea of color and pattern. Don't forget that there is a variety of edge treatments and backsplash options that dealers will have samples of as well. Look at remodeling magazines as well as Web sites such as [www.countertop.com](http://www.countertop.com) for ideas.

**Step 2: Narrow down your options.** Tape a sample at eye level on a wall cabinet to get a better idea of how the new countertop will look and contrast with the existing cabinets. If your new countertop is part of a larger kitchen remodel, make sure you have samples of the new cabinets and flooring or paint you're considering.

**Step 3: Obtain larger samples to make a final selection.** Narrow down the samples to a few colors, obtain larger samples and make a final selection. Sometimes there is a phone number or Web site address on the back of the smaller samples that you can use



**Choosing a countertop pattern and color that coordinate or contrast with your kitchen floor and cabinets helps pull the room together and adds style.**

to order bigger samples. The larger size may help you make a decision.

**Step 4: Order your countertop.** Find an installer to measure the area your countertop will take up and place your order. Your installer should then be able to schedule an installation date. To find an installer, contact the company whose materials you are using or your dealer. Remember, kitchen cabinets need to be installed before final measurements are made for the countertop and before the material is ordered.

**Step 5: Get your countertop installed.** Cutouts for sinks and stoves are usually made on-site during the installation, so if you're changing one of these fixtures, make sure the new one is in your kitchen so the installer can saw out the right size hole for it. Assuming everything is in order, installing your countertop should be the quickest part of the process if you choose laminate. It should take about a day.

To learn more, call (800) 433-