

Hints *For* Homeowners

Home Projects: When To Save, When To Splurge

(NAPSA)—Experts say there are smart ways for do-it-yourselfers to build up their home's value and beauty. While many people have a dream list of home improvements, it's important to decide what changes will bring the most value to your home.

For 15 years, JoAnne Liebler has been showing do-it-yourselfers how to fix, design and improve their homes through television shows such as TLC's "Home Savvy," and PBS's "Hometime." Here, she offers some simple tips on where to save and where to splurge on various home improvements.

Flooring

SPLURGE: Invest in hardwood floors to make them uniquely yours. No longer are homeowners limited to plain oak planks. Today, they can customize their floor color and create elaborate patterns and borders. According to the American Hardwood Information Center, hardwood flooring can add as much as \$10,000 to a home's resale value.

SAVE: Maybe you're getting ready to move or you've just realized how abused your floors look. There are ways do-it-yourselfers can revitalize the look of their floors. Try using a product such as Orange Glo Hardwood Floor Refinisher. In a day's time and for about \$10 a bottle, you can renew your hardwood floors—saving yourself a lot of headaches and possibly thousands of dollars.

Furniture

SPLURGE: Give yourself a budget to find one piece from which you can build the rest of the room—whether it's an antique hutch or a modern chair. Having the right piece as the focal point will create a foundation for your design.

SAVE: Instead of buying a com-



According to home improvement expert JoAnne Liebler, the right project can boost the value of your home.

plete new dining set or bedroom suite, consider buying unfinished furniture and staining it for a custom look. Or mix and match with an interesting dining table and different chairs found at a local flea market. Pieces from different eras add visual interest to any room.

Kitchen

SPLURGE: Granite countertops are expensive, but few things beat their beauty and durability—they're a timeless and elegant choice for any home. Plus, they're extremely heat- and scratch-resistant and easy to clean. It's worth opening up the pocketbook for this practical countertop choice.

SAVE: If your kitchen needs an update, start with the most dominant feature: the cabinets. Wood cabinets can benefit from a good old-fashioned cleaning. Otherwise, a fresh coat of paint and updated hardware can give you a whole new look in a weekend, and won't break the bank.

For more information on save vs. splurge tips, visit www.woodfloorcare.com.