

Innovations Save Money, Energy

(NAPSA)—In today's real estate market, more Americans are choosing to stay in their homes and focus on renovations and improvements rather than moving. Home improvement expert Jodi Marks notes that many homeowners are looking for meaningful fixes, such as decorative enhancements and space-saving strategies, that can make a home feel fresh again.

“People are also focused on saving money and energy by looking for building products that offer both current and long-term benefits,” said Marks. “Like many architects and designers, homeowners are turning to plastics to help reduce energy and maintenance costs.”

According to Marks, innovations in plastic building and construction products have made it even easier for homeowners to save money, make their homes more energy efficient and reduce their carbon footprint. Some of these innovations can be made of recycled plastics. All types of plastic bottles and containers, when properly recycled, can go on to lead a “second life” as new products for homeowners, such as decking and furniture. Here's a look at the ways:

- **Windows:** Applying plastic-based caulks and sealants is a quick, easy fix for drafty windows. If replacement windows are needed, vinyl plastic windows provide excellent insulation to help maintain an even temperature in the home. This cuts down on heating and air-conditioning, saving homeowners money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Decking and fencing:** Lumber made with plastics is durable, doesn't require painting or staining, and is easy to maintain. It's also resistant to fading, mold and mildew. Some plastic lumber is even made with recycled plastic grocery bags.

- **Flooring:** Plastic-composite



Innovations in plastics can help you save time, money and energy at home.

laminated flooring is readily installed over almost any existing, hard-floor surface. Each piece simply locks into another, so even a large room can be installed in an afternoon. Because of plastics, composite flooring is durable and both stain and moisture resistant, which means it requires little maintenance and works well in just about any room of the home. Luxury vinyl tile—a tough, durable tile that's already proved itself for many years in commercial settings—is thicker and made entirely of plastics, with a beautiful finished look to rival traditional materials. It also locks into place over existing flooring for a do-it-yourself project.

- **Roofing:** Plastic roofing can look like slate or wood shakes and it's long lasting and tough enough to withstand extreme weather. Manufacturers often offer a 50-year warranty; some even offer a lifetime warranty when the product is installed by a professional. It can also help provide additional insulation protection as part of the roofing system, as well as reflect heat, so it helps reduce heating and cooling costs and energy use.

- **Insulation:** Adding foam and other plastic insulation when renovating or re-siding a home can help homeowners save on heating and cooling bills. For example, plastic house wrap can reduce infiltration of outside air by up to 50 percent.

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