



CONSUMER CORNER



Discovering Secrets Of Beauty And Longer Life

(NAPSA)—Whether you're re-decorating, remodeling or adding new appliances or furniture to your house, a little homework can help you keep costs under control. After all, every major purchase you make for your home is an investment, and the more you know about a product, the smarter that investment will be.

For example, many consumers don't realize that the finish on a product can greatly affect its value and lifespan. Powder coating, for instance, is used on thousands of products, ranging from faucets to patio furniture, and makes them more durable, scratch-resistant and longer lasting.

The Powder Coating Institute has compiled a buying guide available at www.powdercoating.org. The "Consumer Buying Guide for Home and Garden" includes tips for improving and maintaining your home and photos of products and newly decorated rooms.

Contributions from *Consumer's Digest*, "Hints from Heloise" and the TV show *Hometime*® help to educate and inspire homeowners. Some topics it covers are:

• **Beautiful Bathrooms**—

Changing your shower door is one way to update your bathroom. Many new doors are powder coated and come in a variety of different colors. Changing your faucet is another idea for a custom look. Faucets now come in many finishes including chrome, two-toned metal and 14-karat gold.



Photo courtesy of Alumax Bath Enclosures



Photo courtesy of Homecrest Industries

Choosing stylish—yet durable—powder coated outdoor furniture will leave you with lots of time to enjoy it and your family.

• **Perfect Patios**—With so many styles to choose from, you can customize your lawn furniture to your taste as well as the climate. When choosing metal furniture, look for pieces that have been powder coated. They resist rust, scratches and discoloration and stand up to all types of weather.

• **Monthly Maintenance**—Tasks like checking your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, draining a few gallons of water from your hot water heater and checking your furnace filter help keep your home in good working order.

• **Tricks for Kitchens**—Updating your kitchen doesn't necessarily mean turning your life upside down. Repainting the walls and replacing cabinet knobs and pulls can change the personality of your kitchen. Replacing flooring or countertops can also accomplish this. When purchasing appliances, remember that products with a powder coated finish are

more durable than those with most other finishes.

• **Decorating for Children**—When it comes to children's furniture, durability is key. Powder coated furniture stays looking new and resists chipping and scratching.

For more information or a free copy of the guide, visit the web site www.powdercoating.org.



Photo courtesy of Homecrest Industries