

# A little work can make home more valuable

By **SALLY PETTY**  
Staff Writer

Cleanliness may be next to godliness — but it can also make your home more valuable.

You don't have to spend a lot of time or money to make your home worth more, just a little elbow grease.

A older house that's sparkling clean is much more impressive than a new modern house full of clutter, said Anna Lou Chapman, owner of RE/MAX Real Estate Brokers in Washington.

"I think appraisers give more value if a house is clean," she said.

"I always say, keep it nice and clean, and that goes a long way," agreed Leon Wagler of A&R Home Center.

Besides cleanliness, the number one thing potential home buyers in the area look for is new vinyl tilt-in windows, said Chap-

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*---Anna Lou Chapman, local real estate agent*

man, without hesitation.

"People are more conscious about the energy level," she said. "Old windows, the air just blows through."

Adequate insulation and a high-efficiency furnace can also add energy-saving value to a home, said Wagler. A&R has been installing quite a few of these furnaces in the area.

If you want to spend a little money on cosmetics, you can increase your home's value with new faucets and appliances or a fresh coat of paint, Wagler recommended.

Those looking for bigger projects should tackle the kitchen and bathroom. These projects tend to cost more, "but it's pretty well proven what you put into it, you'll

get back out of it," said A&R owner Shelly Wagler. Adding or remodeling a bathroom is one of the most popular projects she sees in the area.

But don't forget about the outside of your house.

Quality landscaping gives visitors a good first impression of your home, according to Rober-

ta Wichman, Lisa Porter and Peg Petty of Wichman's Landscape.

Now is the time to seed and fertilize lawns and start preparing landscape beds for planting by cutting back old perennials, removing weeds and replacing expiring plants, they said. Then, you will be ready to make a good impression in the spring.

"One of the most popular landscape ideas we use is mounding beds and flowing from one to the other, tying the whole landscape theme together," wrote the three

ladies. "We also like to use lots of large sandstones."

Water features and ornamental grasses are some of the most striking and most popular features in a landscape.

One of the most worthwhile landscaping features is irrigation, they claim, and it's not as expensive as some people might think.

For unique touches, they recommend pondless waterfalls, large landscape stones, stone pathways, lighting and ornamental statues.



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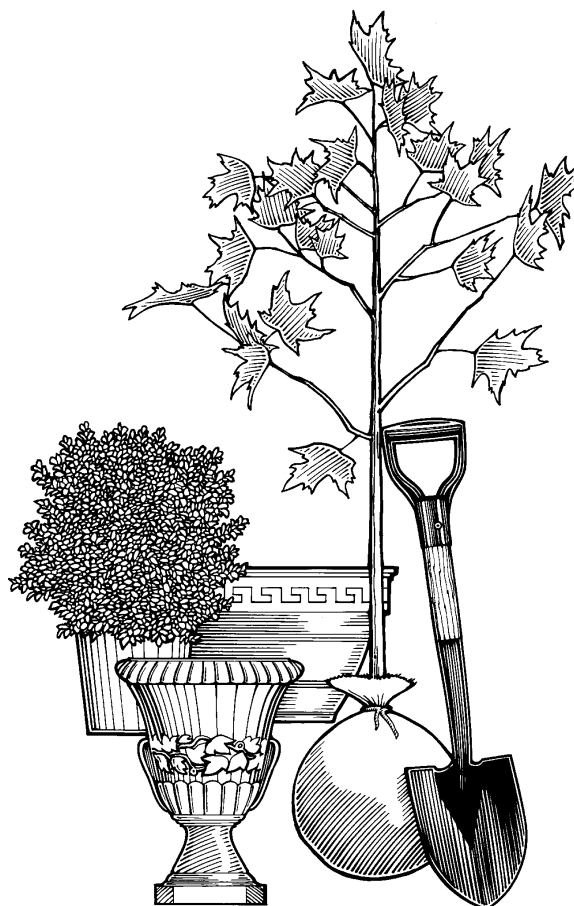
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