HOME PLANNING

BUILDING FLAWS — LANDSCAPING HINTS
CLOTHES CLOSETS — PLASTER CRACKS — INSULATION

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Wise Planning Can Reduce Building Flaws

The best way to know any house is to live in it. Naturally, you are fully aware of the things which annoy you about the home you now occupy. The editors of the "Architectural Forum" decided recently that they could discover many of the common faults of the average house, if they found out what people don't like, and so they asked nearly 1,200 householders to spill their woes.

The results are interesting and very important to the prospective home planner or buyer, because they summarize many years of house occupancy by many diverse families. Strange as it may seem, lack of general repair is the most common complaint. This seems to prove that it is an excellent idea to keep your home in good repair. Other objections are listed below:

	Total	Men	Women
Number of Answers	1,120	835	285
No Objections	43.2	50.6	46.2
Rooms too small	7.6	6.8	7.1
Rooms too large	1.4	1.3	1.4
Rooms too small	2.7	2.3	2.4
Poor arrangement	3.7	3.6	3.7
Needs general repairs	16.8	14	13.6
Needs painting	3.7	3.8	4.1
Needs plastering	4.3	5.1	4.9
Needs remodeling	1.6	.8	1.1
Not modern	3.1	1.9	2.8
No electric	1.6	1.1	.7
Too hard to heat	1.1	1.1	1.1
General duties of location	1.3	1.1	1.3
Other	3.3	1.4	2.1

The construction of a house is perhaps the largest single purchase the average family ever makes . . . the purchase is usually made only once, with the result that there is little chance to profit from home-building experience of your own. The moral of all this is that you need consult the accumulated experience of others while planning your home. Find out the most frequent annoyances about the homes of your friends and then avail yourself of the counsel of some reliable fellow, like your building material dealer, who has seen a great many families build and knows what they have discovered from their experience in the fascinating game you are about to start.

It is interesting to note that a few more than one-half of all the people consulted found some objection in their home. It is possible that the other half were consulted at a time when they were in better than average humor.

Note, too, the interesting fact that a large share of the home livers thought their house was too small . . . which indicates that it is a good idea to so build that you can add rooms to your home, if necessary.

(Prepared By National Lumber Manufacturers Association)

Insulation Can Be Aid To Comfort

The importance of proper insulation has only been appreciated within the past 20 or 25 years, building experts say.

As a result of the growing appreciation of dwelling insulation, materials have been developed which not only are highly efficient from the standpoint of heat resistance but may readily be adapted to conventional methods of residential construction.

Homes should be insulated in such a way as to produce comfort and economy of operation, according to the Federal Housing Administration.

In summer the uninsulated home is often warmer than outdoors. In winter the uninsulated home is drafty and expensive to heat; it has cold exterior walls, rooms too cold in severe weather which necessitates closing them off, and cold-air drafts in stair wells, and upstairs quarters are difficult to heat.

By introducing insulation into the construction of roofs or uppermost ceilings, the enclosing walls, and floors with, no heated basements below, a prospective home builder is insuring against heat loss. FHA officials say that the well-insulated house requires less heat, reflecting a saving not only in the original cost of heating equipment but also in the annual fuel cost.

Fires Rank High in Home Accidents

In the classification of home accidents, burns come second to falls. There are eight major causes of home fires: rubbish, defective chimneys, combustible roofs, defective heating apparatus, matches and careless smoking, storing of gasoline and other inflammable liquids, electrical defects, and hot ashes.

Many home owners have taken advantage of the Federal Housing Administration's Modernization Credit Plan to protect themselves from fires by installing numerous safeguards. They have built fire-resistant ceilings in their basements. In their garages they have installed fire-resistant walls next to the house. In the walls next to basements and attics they have put adequate fire stops. They have installed sufficient wiring outlets to meet the ever increasing need and to avoid the unsightly and dangerous practice of stringing wires across and around floors.

NO OVERREACHING

The care which the Federal Housing Administration exercises in selecting mortgages for insurance protects families from "overreaching" as a home beyond their means and assists home builders to make wise and safe investments.

The longer the chimney flue, the better the draft in the fireplace. Therefore, don't be afraid to extend the chimney a good distance above the roof.

The Years Turned Back

A decade or more has been cut from the apparent age of this home by well-planned modernization. The front porch was removed, shutters were added, and the front exterior was generally remodeled. Paint has played an important part here, while poorly located shrubbery has been moved to places of better advantage.

Owned by an HOLC mortgagor, this home increased in value to the extent of $3,385 after the reconditioning, which cost only $2,265. Improvements of this kind may be financed under the Modernization Credit Plan of the Federal Housing Administration. Actual funds for the work are obtained from private lending institutions qualified by the FHA.

Landscaping Service

CHAPTER XVI

Evergreens

Q. What are the most important things to do to plant and grow Evergreens successfully?

A. If the ball of earth is hard upon the arrival of the Evergreen, soak it in a pail of water to loosen the dirt. Dig the hole to the proper depth. Place the Ever-reen in the hole, making sure that it will be at the same depth that it was grown in the Nursery. The top of the ball of earth should be no more than 1 to 2 inches below the surface of the ground. If it is 5 or 6 inches below the surface, then the evergreen will die.

Then cut the binding and remove the burlap slowly and carefully, taking care to avoid disturbing the earth around the roots.

Fine earth should then be filled in around the ball and tamped to make it solid but without bruising the roots. When the hole is half filled, pour in water until the soil is mushy. After the water has soaked away, fill in with more soil and soak again. The next day the remainder of the hole is filled in with loose soil—do not tamp.

Q. Should Evergreens be watered before Winter sets in?

A. Yes—Evergreens should be watered thoroughly before Winter sets in. If an evergreen freezes up when the ground is dry it will be subject to Winter injury. Soaking evergreens in late Fall is your best insurance against Winter injury.

Q. How can I force Evergreens to grow that are declining each season and becoming unsightly?

A. I believe that you would find it wise to drill or bore 2-inch holes 18 inches deep, 3 feet apart under the tip of the branches of the trees. Put into each hole 1½ pounds of Better Homes Bureau Fertilizer and then refill the hole with earth. This gets the plant food down deep into the soil where it will be available to the roots. Furthermore, the roots of the trees will get it rather than the roots of grass or any of the plants that may be growing on that area.

In addition, if there is any question as to whether the soil is moist enough, apply extra moisture. Allow a full stream from the hose to run around each Evergreen until the ground is soaked thoroughly. Heavy watering of Evergreens is very important.

Q. What are the causes for failure of Evergreens to grow and what remedy do you recommend?

A. 1. Drying out in Winter due to drying winds. The roots being frozen, the leaves do not get enough moisture to supply that which is lost.
2. Summer drought.
3. Deep planting.
4. Application of fresh manure.
5. Injury done by dogs to lower branches.

Winter Protection

A burlap shelter should be erected around the Evergreens that are exposed to severe Winter winds, or warm Winter suns. Drive 3 to 4 stakes into the ground at the outer edge of the branches, and attach the burlap to these stakes. The height of the burlap and stakes will be governed by the height of the Evergreen.

Summer Drouth

It is better to soak Evergreens thoroughly once a week, than to water frequently and lightly.

Q. How can red spider in Evergreens be controlled?

A. Red Spider in evergreens can be controlled by forceful spraying of the trees with a full stream of cold water from a hose. Be sure to wash off the under side of the leaves. Dusting with sulphur is also effective in controlling this pest. The easiest and quickest way to apply sulphur is with a flour sifter.

Our landscape consultant is always at your service to answer any questions you may have. There is no charge for this service. Write Catholic Courier Landscape Consultant or Phone Stone 1136.

One demonstration is worth a dozen lectures.

Property Repair Protects Values

The repair and preservation of existing property is as important in protecting real estate investments as title search, building plans, a sound system of financing, or other safeguards which originally surround such an investment, according to leaders in the home-building and home-financing fields.

Commenting on the work being carried out under the Modernization Credit Plan of the Federal Housing Administration, a bank official recently declared that in rehabilitating properties permitted to lapse into disrepair during lean years, it makes homes more livable, protects the original investment, and increases returns upon invested capital.

Performance of this financial service by banks fulfills a diversified purpose. Pay rolls are created, building materials are sold, money is placed in circulation, communities take on a more attractive appearance and the investment of new and additional capital is invited.

Thoughts For Your Wardrobes

THE CAMP. If you really plan to camp in the woods, you can get a good idea of the clothes you should take from any sporting goods store. "Pack light" is a good motto, for you may have to carry your luggage in a canoe or over your shoulder at certain stages of your journey. Riding breeches, army shirts, berets, and sturdy boots are the type of things you will need.

Clothes for the auto camp are outlined under the section on motoring.

Train Travel

Travel by train requires only day-time clothes, usually of the dark afternoon variety. Long sleeves must be worn on the train; a good way to meet this problem is to wear a jacket dress so that the jacket can be removed if the trip is very hot.

On a warm day, travel in a sheer dark polka dot dress with jacket, a dark mesh, or a brown or navy cotton eyelet. Cooler weather will see the tailored and knitted suit in evidence. If you travel in a suit, take an extra blouse with you to change into just before your arrival at your destination.

Comfortable shoes, dark gloves, and a small hat to match your traveling dress or suit are essential. Undoubtedly you will carry a topcoat—this also should be of neutral or dark shade. The best colors for train travel are navy, dark brown with tan accessories, black, beige and gray.

For the overnight train trip, pack in a small handbag a pair of pajamas or nightgown, dark tailored negligee, mules or slippers. Cleansing cream, plenty of tissues, astringent and a protective powder base will keep the soot out of your pores and should go into every train traveler's suitcase. It is a good plan to carry your cosmetics, soap, and tooth brush in a small separate bag which can be carried to the washroom.

Buy U. S. Defense Saving Bonds.

PLASTER CRACKS — Causes of Defects Defined

Cracks in plaster ceilings of new homes may be traced to one or several faults, according to Federal Housing Administration officials.

Cracked ceiling plaster is often the result of using second floor joists of insufficient depth to have the required stiffness or the omission of floor joist bridging.

When too small joists invariably sag under the weight of furniture and people and cause cracking of the plaster and unsatisfactory floors. Bridging of wood or mental placed between the joists at intervals of about eight feet assists in the prevention of ceiling plaster cracks, by distributing to several joists any exceptionally heavy concentrated loads or sudden jolts that may be applied directly above one or two of them.

Proper bracing of the structural frame to resist vibrations and doubling of floor beams under partitions and around floor openings are important precautions against ceiling cracks. The use of unseasoned lumber, which shrinks in the process of drying out, may also contribute to cracking of plaster. Metal lath strips used in the angles between ceilings and walls reduces the tendency for cracks to develop at that point.

Another important cause of plaster cracks, which is probably more often noticed in the walls than in the ceiling, is settlement due to inadequate footings. Improper application of plaster backing, such as wallboard or laths, is sometimes responsible.

Closet Space Is A Necessity In Any Home

Closets and storage nooks are simply "places to put things," as housekeepers often remark.

Federal Housing Administration officials say that storage space not only is an absolute necessity in the home but it also must be well planned and adequate in size.

Family possessions and family housekeeping habits vary, and it is therefore difficult to establish fixed standards for closets. The FHA, however, requires that in the construction of a new home there should be a minimum of one closet for each bedroom, a coat closet, a linen closet, and a closet for cleaning and other equipment.

Basement or Attic

In houses of traditional design, storage space is generally provided either in a basement or an attic. In many modern houses, even those which are not of so-called modern design, both attic and basement have been eliminated. This is justifiable if adequate space for storage is provided in other parts of the house.

As a rule, the shallow closet is considered to be the most economical and can be most conveniently arranged, provided the opening is nearly as long as the closet itself. When the closet is long, two doors usually prove more convenient than one wide door.

An ordinary bedroom closet need not be more than about 24 inches deep, since coat hangers are only 18 inches across. About six inches should be allowed below garments for cleaning purposes after the hanging rods have been installed. A shelf placed above the rod adds to closet convenience.

Hooks in a closet should not be placed within five inches of the door, should not be placed on doors less than 30 inches wide, and when used by small children should be placed within their easy reach.

Inventory First Step

Proper closet planning requires, first, an inventory of the family's possessions which will need storage space. The average family must usually store in addition to clothing and linens, such things as trunks, luggage, toys, possibly a variety of sports equipment, odd pieces of furniture and seasonal decorations, extra china, seasonal clothing, utensils and tools, and many other small and large items.

If closet space is not intelligently planned, there will one day be a sad realization that alterations must be made. Such afterthought may prove expensive.

A plain, smooth-troweled concrete porch floor will cost considerably less than one laid in brick, tile or stone. Such a floor is easier to clean than one made up of many small parts of masonry units.

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