

For Your Clients: Paint, Lighting and Flooring are Foundations for Rejuvenating the Nest

By Debbie Arrington

RISMEDIA, September 3, 2010--(MCT)--Some rooms scream — "Help!"

Others say nothing, and that's a problem, too.

Take the typical bedroom. Michael Payne has seen thousands, just this month.

"The bedroom tends to get forgotten — you spend all your money elsewhere in the house," said Payne, a celebrity interior designer and makeover specialist best known for his "Designing For The Sexes" series on HGTV. "You end up with a totally forgettable room that you don't want your best friend to see."

Helping people find indoor harmony — particularly at affordable prices — is a common challenge for designers. Instead of moving, homeowners are staying put and trying to make the most of their current house.

"This has been the busiest year I've ever had," said Folsom, Calif., interior designer Jennifer FaGalde. "Absolutely, a lot of people are wanting to stay put and put money into their own home instead of moving."

"They're creating a nest within their own space," she added. "People are staying home more now than they did five, 10 years ago. They want a sanctuary where they can relax."

But where to start?

Paint, lighting and flooring are three of the easiest, quickest and least expensive ways to update a room, say the experts.

Arizona Tile's in-house designer Emmitt Isaacks advises people to start makeovers with a very basic question: Who lives in your home?

"A retired couple is very different than a family with young kids. They have different needs and considerations," he said. "Don't forget dogs and cats. Pets influence (design) decisions, too. Then, start thinking about style — modern, traditional, old-school — and color."

FaGalde points to two recent makeovers she completed in Sacramento, Calif. A typical home in the Pocket area needed a radical update for its kitchen and three bathrooms. A Land Park house started with a termite invasion and ended up with a remodeled family/living/dining room.

"The Pocket house was a real challenge," she said. "The bathrooms all had walls separating the toilet area. They had a closed-in feeling, the style of homes 25 years

ago. And the rooms were so dark."

The answer: "We knocked down walls, gutted to zero and started from scratch," she said. "We added new lighting. It made a huge difference."

In the aftermath of fixing termite damage, the Land Park homeowners started with paint and flooring, but then decided to update with new window coverings, crown molding and fireplace tile.

"It really transformed the space," FaGalde said.

Lighting is key, "especially in older homes," she added. "They're too dark. Lighting enhances your space and shows off the investment you put into it. You spend money on paint and flooring, you want to be able to see it."

"Most people have furniture that was given them. They never would have bought it," he said. "It becomes an obligation and very unfair," Payne said. "Instead, people should surround themselves with things they love. And remember: Less is more."

Room makeovers are a staple of home and garden media, spurring TV series and online contests.

Based in Los Angeles, Payne currently is serving as a judge of the Big Bad Bedroom Break-Up contest, sponsored by online home goods outlet CSN Stores. More than 6,200 people entered to win a \$10,000 makeover of their bedroom. (Vote for your pick at CSN Stores' Facebook page.)

QUICK BEDROOM MAKEOVER

Makeover specialist Michael Payne offers these suggestions:

1. Less is more. An uncluttered bedroom makes for a more restful space. Make use of area under the bed for storage.

2. Remember: It's a bedroom. The bed should be the dominant feature. Other furnishings are secondary, but look better if they match in style, wood and stain.

3. Start with the right bedspread or comforter. Use that to pick up colors for paint and carpeting. The result will be more harmonious.

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