



At Home on Cape Cod

Herbie's Tips & Trends from the
Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Cape Cod

Remodeling Savvy: Innovations in Paint

Significant innovations in paint over the past 20 years have led to fascinating interior and exterior applications. Today home owners can use paint to generate solar power, light up a hallway, waterproof a basement and even draw on the walls with no fear.

If you're thinking about painting your home, knowing what's new in paint technology may be helpful in deciding how to move forward with your next project. Here are just a few new and innovative products to keep in mind while you plan:

Keep it Green with Low- or No-VOC Paint

Today's biggest trend is the increased availability of low- or no-VOC (volatile organic compounds) paint choices. Just about every major paint manufacturer has at least one line now. These paints protect consumers from a number of health issues associated with VOCs, and contribute to improved indoor environmental quality, which is one key goal of the green building and remodeling movement.

Paint that Stays Durable and Clean

Driven by consumer demand, manufacturers of interior and exterior paints have developed paints that are easy to apply, durable and cinch to clean. One uses ceramic technology – an infusion of ceramic microspheres into a high-quality acrylic resin – to create a paint extremely resistant to stains and scuffs, and washes well without damage to quality or appearance over time.

User-Friendly Containers

Although they have not gained significant popularity due to the cost of production, plastic paint containers that feature twist-off lids, side handles, and easy-pour spouts give consumers a more convenient and less messy way to get the job done. These containers are usually pretty lightweight and easier to store than typical steel paint cans.

Waterproof Paint

In the future, waterproofing your basement may be as simple as a few strokes of paint. These products are still in their infancy and many are



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unavailable to consumers. Products that are available now can create a waterproof barrier on most concrete and masonry surfaces, but most are only water-resistant, not entirely waterproof. These paints can be used in bathrooms, water tanks and birdbaths to manage moisture retention and mold and mildew buildup. One day, fully waterproof paint may be the best and least expensive solution to a common problem that many home owners face: flooding.

Heat-Sensitive and Solar Power Paints

Paint that detects and reacts to changes in temperature has been around for a while, but interest in its varied applications is growing. This paint may be used in color-changing interior wall designs, where one or more elements of the motif appear or disappear according to the temperature in the room, or applied on kitchen or bathroom surfaces as a temperature gauge. The paint is also being tested to determine whether it can be used to improve energy efficiency as well -- absorbing heat during winter and deflecting sunlight in warm weather. Other companies are researching

new technology that harnesses nanoparticles that absorb light, which may one day enable consumers to very cheaply generate solar energy for their homes.

Paint that Lights Up a Room - Literally

Researchers recently developed and patented a new type of paint that will one day enable home owners to paint lights onto walls and other parts of the home. This new electroluminescent coating technology turns commonly used metal, plastic and wood surfaces into lamps when the paint is energized with an electrical current. One future use of the product could come in handy for those interested in universal design: a painted white hand rail that illuminates at night, lighting your way in the dark.

Whiteboard Paint

Whiteboard paint entered the scene a little over 10 years ago, but is still relatively new to consumers. Several manufacturers now produce a unique wall coating that turns any flat surface into an erasable whiteboard. It's an inexpensive way to draw out the artist in the whole family,



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and a great feature to include in children's
playrooms, offices and kitchens.

Paint has come a long way over the years. It can
be used to simply spruce up your home with a
touch of color or you can take it to the next
level, using it to create savvy, green and cost-
effective design elements throughout your
home. The choice is up to you.

For more tips on painting or home maintenance
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