

# Painting your house

BY BRENDA PROTZ  
Copley News Service

For many homeowners, spring and summer months are times to get those outdoor projects done. One of the biggest is house painting. While many choose to hire the pros to do the job, others tackle the tough task themselves. But there are several things to consider.

Paint and wallpaper specialist Dan Metcalf says to choose a color first. For many, picking a color is what people want help with most.

"Many are choosing to use accent colors on their doors that are totally different from their home's color, like bright red or pink to make it stand out," he said.

Metcalf said about 10 percent of his customers come in with a picture or an idea of something they have seen on television and they want to do something similar.

"Some also bring in pictures of a new roof or new shutters and we help match colors from there," he said.

After the color is chosen, they decide what brand of paint to buy — and most often in acrylic.

Before homeowners are ready to actually begin the painting process, Metcalf said prepping the house is important. He said to first scrape the house of old, loose paint either by hand or with a power washer. The main thing is to be sure all dirt is gone from the house.

"You never want to paint over dirt," Metcalf said. "The paint won't adhere and will generally flake off within a year."

How much paint to use is another factor.

"It just depends on how bad the surface is," he said. "With today's paint colors, you usually need two coats."

Metcalf said for older homes with bad surfaces a primer coat might be necessary. And for those going from a dark color to a light



CNS Photo by Charlie Neuman

For house painting, homeowners must decide whether it's better to hire a pro or do the job themselves.

one, he suggests a coat of primer followed by a couple of coats of paint. Prior to painting, he recommends caulking bad areas around door frames, windows and edges. Paint looks better going over a smooth surface.

With the paint chosen and surface area prepped, some might want to get the job done quickly by renting a paint sprayer. But Metcalf thinks a sprayer is a tool best left to the professionals.

"If you don't have the windows masked off good, or if you aren't trained to use one, the paint can drift and you may end up with it on your car," he said.

Paint and restoration contractor Doug Pierce thinks some homeowners could do smaller jobs but thinks the bigger jobs need to be left to those with more skills.

"I tell people to hire out the help if there is going to be extensive prep work or maybe if the heights would be dangerous," Pierce said, adding that most professionals guarantee their work.

Pierce said a lot of homeowners look to professionals because of time: "By hiring someone, they don't have to chase down the paint or do the prep work," he said.

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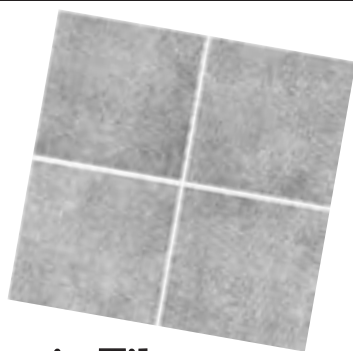
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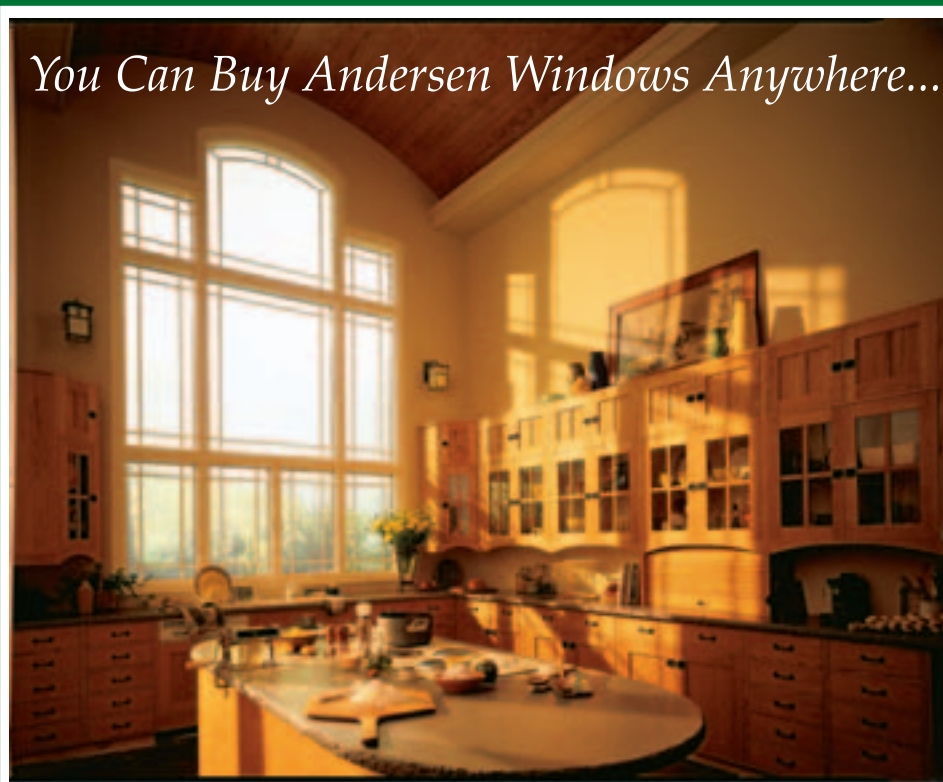
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