

# Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

## Fireside Homes

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## Higher Energy Costs Need Not Dim Your Holiday Cheer

Fun yet practical energy-efficiency tips from the Alliance to Save Energy can help reduce holiday stress and home winter energy costs.



- Don't let "Ole Man Winter" keep you from lounging around in that slinky new holiday nightgown and robe set. A well insulated house will keep you cozy—and lower your heating costs by as much as 30 percent—even while you are lightly clad.
- Be festive yet smart with holiday lighting. Consider using energy-saving, solid-state LED (Light Emitting Diode) holiday lights and strands that use about 99 percent less energy than larger, traditional incandescent holiday bulbs—and last up to 100,000 hours.
- Lonely lights. Untended lights can cause fires, so for safety's sake, always unplug your interior holiday lights before going to bed or leaving the house.



- Make a New Year's resolution that's good for your pocketbook and the environment. Get started on those energy-efficient home improvements you've been putting off for too long.

Additional year-round, energy-efficiency tips and numerous resources can be found on the Alliance's consumer web site, [www.ase.org/consumers](http://www.ase.org/consumers).

## Color Trends 2008: Individual Flavors Influence Paint Color Trends

Fashion runways have long been the inspirational source for home furnishings and decorating color choices. Debbie Zimmer, paint and color expert with The Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute, shares 2008 trendy paint palettes.

"Consumers' increasing color confidence and personal style makes any color fashionable for 2008", Zimmer says. "From glass-like blues, botanical greens, dramatic black and white and whisper soft pink, color directions will drive towards individual self-expression, glamorous living experiences or an increasing awareness of important environmental causes."



## Go Green

Green may just become the newest "neutral" color. Used as a subtle backdrop to reflect an enhanced eco-consciousness, green will be representative of the growing environmental movement. Mid-tone hues of fern, palm, pine and sage will be used on their own or coupled with clear blue or aqua to create a living space that conjures up a sense of outdoor-friendly living.

While suitable for all areas of the home, these combinations are an especially good choice for bathrooms, kitchens and family living spaces.

## Sophisticated Elegance

Gaining popularity in 2008, black and white paint hues will enhance opulent living spaces filled with accessories, lighting, mirrors and rich fabrics. Zimmer suggests, "For an unexpected color punch, add cause related hues such as dramatic red or maintain the room's classic undertones with subtle pink or taupe." Dramatic and sophisticated, black and white is becoming the backdrop of choice for glamorous spaces.



Master bedroom suites and living rooms are two of the spaces that can benefit from sophisticated elegance.

## Crewel Colors

Many consumers continue to strive for simplicity in their technology-driven overloaded lifestyles and seek a return to a gentler way of life. The crewel color palette reflects consumers' returning interest in crafts, home cooking and family focused activities. Like a rich and color filled needlepoint pattern, these hues add a soulful and personalized feel to any space. Rich cranberry reds, warm browns, along with pumpkin orange help to create a nurturing and caring environment. Mix in deep-toned blue and the tapestry is complete.

Crewel colors remain an excellent choice for kitchen or dining areas.

*The Paint Quality Institute<sup>SM</sup> was formed by Rohm and Haas Company in 1989 to educate people on the advantages of using quality interior and exterior paints and coatings. Please be sure to visit the Paint Quality Institute at [www.paintquality.com](http://www.paintquality.com).*



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## Need a last minute gift?

Check out these ideas for easy and quick holiday gifts that you can buy or make at the very last minute.

- Beautiful and unique ornaments can be found at most local superstores or discount marts and make great gifts for neighbors and teachers. Wrap one or a few in a festive box or bag and you’re set.
- Gift baskets or bags are easy to assemble once you’ve picked a theme. Pick up a couple of spatulas, hot pads and designer condiments and you’ve got a gourmet kitchen basket. Or try a basketful of home scents—candles, home sprays, homemade bath salts.
- Games make a great gift for a whole family. Visit your local superstore and check out the game section for some old games as well as a few new ones.

- Homemade candy or cookies packaged nicely on a seasonal plate are appreciated even once the goody is gone.

Enjoy the season!



## Northern Nights Bath Salt Recipe

By Pioneer Thinking

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup kosher salt
- 1 cup baking soda
- 3 drops pine balsam essential oil
- 2 drops cinnamon essential oil
- 2 drops cassis essential oil
- 2 tablespoons of liquid glycerin (skin moisturizer) (optional)

### Directions:

Mix ingredients together blending well. Break up any clumps.

Note: Liquid glycerin, used as a skin moisturizer, is a by-product of soap making. Glycerin can be found at health food stores, some drug stores, or major department stores depending on where you live. Its also readily available on the internet as well.

## PEPPERMINT BRITTLE

### Ingredients

- 2 pounds white chocolate
- 30 small peppermint candy canes

Line a large jellyroll pan with heavy-duty foil.

### Directions

Place white chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in microwave on medium setting for 5 to 6 minutes. Stir occasionally, until chocolate is melted and smooth.

Place candy canes in a plastic bag, or between two pieces of waxed paper. Using a mallet or rolling pin, break the candy canes into chunks. Stir peppermint into melted white chocolate. Spread evenly in pan, and chill until set, about 1 hour. Break into pieces by slamming pan on counter.

