

Adding warmth to living space with new ideas

The most important quality in a home is how comfortable it is for your family and guests. No matter if you're decorating your current home or building a new one, there are many major and minor touches that can add warmth to your living spaces:

- **Think Color and Texture:** Give a room a richer, cozier feel simply by selecting an inviting color scheme. Paint should be your first choice when setting the tone, so choose warmer colors like muted browns, rich reds and inviting yellows. Paint the entire room or just emphasize one wall. Add texture by adding visual layers with blankets and throw pillows on sofas and armchairs. Choose ones that lend splashes of color to your furniture.

Also consider texturizing walls with creative finishes or designs to add visual depth. Rich, flowing drapes also can enhance the effect.

- **Home Is Where The Hearth Is:** Nothing says warm like a fireplace or wood stove. You can add a new one or retrofit an old fireplace with an energy-efficient insert. A hearth easily becomes the focal point of a living or family room, especially with seating around it. Regardless of decor or heating needs, today's homeowners have a myriad of choices from such fireplace and stove brands as Lennox, Country Collection, Security and others.



Homeowners even are renovating kitchens -- a favorite gathering spot -- to include open designs with central hearths. Such additions even can save you money by zone heating your home to make it more energy efficient.

- **Create Intimate Seating Areas:** Move sofas and chairs away from walls to create intimate seating spaces. Arrange seating around a sunny window, a fireplace or create a focal point by adding an area rug.

- **Contemporary Can Be Cozy, Too:** When most people think warm ambience, traditional and country furnishings leap to mind. Modern and contemporary can be warm, as well. Uplighting plants can lend drama, while downlighting paintings and family photos can warm a room with many points of light. There are even modern hearth products, such as the aptly-titled "X-Fires," that

look like wall-mounted plasma TV screens and are ventless, requiring little to install. They can be added to major gathering places, as well as bedrooms and baths.

- **Entice The Senses:** Soften a room, add a golden hue and spice the air with scented candles. Cinnamon and vanilla are two of the more comforting scents. Position candles near mirrors to reflect light and warmth.

"Literally warming up your home can add money to your pocket. If you make an energy-efficient improvement during 2009 or 2010, such as adding a 75 percent efficient wood or pellet stove, fireplace or insert, you can receive a 30 percent tax credit, up to \$1,500," said Melissa Barnaby, Retail Product Manager, Lennox Hearth Products. For more information on what enhancements qualify, visit www.lennox.com.

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