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AUTUMN / WINTER 2024

WINTERPROOF YOUR HOME

20 THINGS TO DO INSIDE AND OUTSIDE
TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WINTER

STOCK UP ON INSPIRATION

TOP 10 DESIGN & DECOR TRENDS OF 2025

A person is shown from the chest up, holding a light-colored ceramic mug with both hands. They are wearing a dark, textured, knitted sweater. In the background, a fireplace is lit with a warm, orange and yellow fire. In the foreground, there is a white ceramic teapot and a small bowl containing some food, possibly bread or cookies. The overall atmosphere is cozy and warm.

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Winterproof your home!



10 THINGS TO DO OUTSIDE to prepare your home for winter

As the leaves fall and a chill creeps into the air, it's time to turn your attention outdoors and winterize your home. Here are 10 tasks you should tackle:

CLEAN THE GUTTERS

Clogged gutters can lead to water backup, which can damage your roof.

TRIM TREE BRANCHES

Remove any tree branches that are hanging over your home, especially weak ones, as heavy snow can cause them to snap.

SEAL LEAKS AND CRACKS

Inspect your siding, windows and doors for cracks or gaps. Use caulk to seal openings and prevent drafts.

INSPECT THE ROOF

Check your roof for missing shingles, loose flashing and signs of wear and tear.

PROTECT EXPOSED PLUMBING

Frozen pipes can burst and cause major headaches (and expenses). Consider wrapping exposed pipes with insulation for added protection.

DISCONNECT AND STORE HOSES

Once the cold weather arrives, hoses left outside can crack or burst. Disconnect them from spigots, drain the remaining water and store them in a protected location.

WINTERIZE YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM

Most sprinkler systems must be winterized to prevent the pipes from freezing. Locate your shut-off valve and drain the system.

PREPARE YOUR PATIO FURNITURE

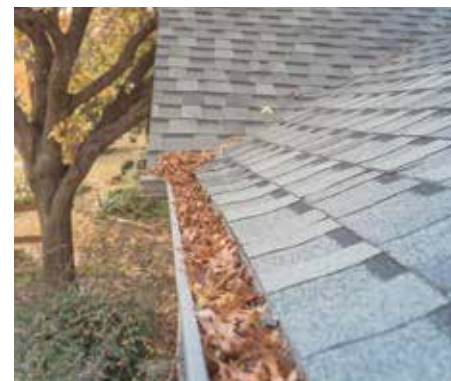
Move outdoor furniture to a protected area like a garage or shed, or cover it with weatherproof material.

CLEAR DEAD LEAVES AND DEBRIS

Rake up leaves around your foundation and flower beds to promote good drainage and prevent unwanted pests.

STOCK UP ON WINTER SUPPLIES

Create a stash of ice melt, snow removal tools and firewood before winter arrives to save you time and frustration when the snow flies.



10 THINGS TO DO INSIDE to prepare your home for winter

Don't wait for the first snowfall to scramble! Here are 10 ways to winterize the interior of your home:

SEAL DRAFTS

Drafty windows and doors are a significant source of heat loss. Use weatherstrip or caulk to seal any gaps and keep warm air inside.

SERVICE YOUR HEATING SYSTEM

Prevent winter breakdowns by investing in a professional tune-up for your furnace or boiler.

REVERSE YOUR CEILING FAN DIRECTION

Many ceiling fans have a switch to change the blade direction. In winter, set your fans to rotate clockwise to push warm air down from the ceiling.

INSPECT AND REPLACE YOUR HVAC SYSTEM'S AIR FILTERS

Clogged air filters restrict airflow and make your heating system work harder. Replace your air filters regularly for optimal efficiency.



WINTERIZE YOUR PANTRY

Create space for winter comfort food with staples like soups, stews and hot cocoa. Stock up on non-perishable items in case of bad weather.

CHECK SAFETY DEVICES

Test all your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and ensure they have fresh batteries.

DEEP CLEAN CARPETS AND RUGS

Before tracking in winter grime, thoroughly clean your carpets and rugs with a steam cleaner or carpet shampooer.



GATHER WINTER SUPPLIES

Stock up on cozy blankets, throws and extra pillows for those chilly nights.

WINTERIZE UNUSED ROOMS

Reduce the heat in rooms that don't often get used in winter to save energy.

PLAN WINTER MAINTENANCE

Schedule any interior maintenance projects you've been putting off, like painting touchups or minor repairs. Winter is a great time to catch up on these tasks while staying warm and cozy indoors.

Consult the professionals in your area to ensure your home is warm and cozy this winter.

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The top 10 home design + decor trends of 2025



In 2025, home design and decor are primed for a dynamic shift. As lifestyles evolve and technology advances, living spaces are bound to reflect these changes. Here are the top 10 anticipated trends shaping homes in the year ahead:

1. SUSTAINABLE LIVING

With growing environmental awareness, sustainable design will take center stage. Expect to see eco-friendly materials like bamboo, reclaimed wood and recycled plastics incorporated into home furnishings and decor.

2. BIOPHILIC DESIGN

As urbanization continues, there's a greater desire to reconnect with nature. Biophilic design, which integrates natural elements into interior spaces, will flourish. Living walls, indoor gardens and large windows offering views of greenery will become commonplace.

3. MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACES

As homes become smaller and more expensive, multifunctional spaces will become essential. Furniture that serves dual purposes, such as sofa beds and expandable dining tables, will allow homeowners to maximize their living areas.

4. TECH-INTEGRATED DESIGN

The rise of smart home technology will revolutionize design concepts. From voice-activated assistants to integrated home automation systems, technology will seamlessly blend into the home's esthetics, enhancing convenience and comfort.

5. BOLD COLORS + PATTERNS

Say goodbye to neutral palettes as bold colors and patterns make a comeback. Vibrant hues like emerald green, mustard yellow and terracotta will inject personality into interiors, while geometric and abstract patterns will add visual interest.

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DESIGN + DECOR CONTINUED

6. VINTAGE REVIVAL
 Nostalgia will play a significant role in design trends, with a resurgence of vintage and retro styles. From mid-century modern furniture to art deco accents, expect nods to the past with a contemporary twist.

7. GLOBAL INFLUENCES
 Cultural diversity will inspire design choices, with homeowners embracing elements from around the world. Think Moroccan-inspired rugs, Japanese Shoji screens and African mudcloth textiles, which will add an eclectic flair to interiors.

8. WELLNESS-ORIENTED DESIGN
 With an increased focus on health and well-being, homes will be designed to promote relaxation and rejuvenation. Spa-like bathrooms, meditation corners and ergonomic furniture will create tranquil retreats within the home.

9. MAXIMALISM
 Minimalism takes a back seat as maximalism gains momentum. Layering textures, mixing patterns and showcasing collections will create visually rich and eclectic spaces celebrating individuality.

10. CUSTOMIZATION AND PERSONALIZATION
 Homeowners will seek unique, customized solutions that reflect their personalities and lifestyles. Personalization will be vital in creating exceptional spaces, from bespoke furniture pieces to one-of-a-kind artwork.

With the help of interior designers, decorators, home decor retailers and furniture makers, you can craft a beautiful home that enhances your quality of life.

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Home improvement

Stock up on inspiration!



DIY backsplash installation: upgrade your kitchen in a weekend

Dreaming of a fresh kitchen look? A backsplash can instantly transform your space without a significant renovation. Here are five simple DIY tips to get you started on a weekend backsplash installation:

1. PLAN YOUR LAYOUT Measure your backsplash area and sketch a layout on paper. Consider tile size, pattern and how you'll handle cuts around outlets and cabinets.

2. PREP THE SURFACE Ensure the wall is clean, dry and smooth. Patch holes and cracks with spackle and sand for a level surface.

3. MARK AND APPLY TILE ADHESIVE Use a level to mark a straight line as your starting point. Apply tile adhesive to a manageable section of the wall. Use a notched trowel to create ridges for optimal adhesion.

4. SET AND SPACE YOUR TILES Starting from your marked line, carefully press each tile into the adhesive, ensuring they're level and evenly spaced. Use tile spacers for consistency.



5. GROUT AND SEAL Apply grout once the adhesive dries completely (at least 12 hours). Use a damp sponge to remove excess grout and buff the tiles clean. Then, apply a sealer for extra protection after the grout cures (usually 24 to 48 hours).

With some planning and tools from your local hardware store, you can achieve a professional-looking backsplash that personalizes your kitchen.

How to update your kitchen on a budget



Is your kitchen looking a little dated? Do you long for a new cooking space, but lack the budget? If so, here are some affordable ways to revitalize this room.

APPLY SOME PAINT A fresh coat of color on the walls is an easy way to refresh a tired looking space. Or, if your cabinets are in good condition, consider giving them a facelift by painting the doors and frames.

USE OPEN SHELVING New cabinets are expensive and may not be necessary. Make your space more modern and inviting by removing one or more of the upper cabinets and replacing them with open shelves.

UPGRADE THE COUNTERTOPS Natural stone and quartz countertops aren't exactly budget-friendly, but there are lots of options that mimic the look without the high cost. Think high-end laminate or tile.

UPDATE THE HARDWARE New pulls, handles and knobs can make a big impact. This is a simple and inexpensive upgrade that can be done in less than an hour.

The kitchen is often the heart of a home, so make yours a place you love to be.

Home improvement

Stock up on inspiration!



Outdoor pizza ovens

Does the smell of pizza cooking make your mouth water? You may be interested in an outdoor pizza oven if you enjoy using your barbecue all four seasons. Here's a closer look at this popular cooking appliance.

Available in various sizes, pizza ovens are typically fueled by wood or propane. You can also purchase hybrid models that use both. You can expect to pay anywhere from \$300 to \$5,000 for a portable or stationary pizza oven. They come in sturdy and attractive materials like stainless steel, copper, stone and more.

HOW TO PROTECT IT

Pizza ovens are designed for outdoor use. However, protecting yours from ice, snow and sleet is essential. If you have a portable model, store it in an enclosed space like a shed. If you have a stationary oven or one that's very heavy, cover it with a durable waterproof cover. Additionally, promptly remove fallen snow with a brush or broom.

Design the perfect outdoor lounge area

Oh, how great it feels to relax around a cozy fire. Do you own an outdoor fireplace? Perhaps you're thinking of investing in one? First of all, make sure that your fireplace complies with your local bylaws. All set? Here are several tips for designing the perfect outdoor lounge area.

First, make sure you've dedicated enough space for your guests to relax comfortably. Adirondack chairs, swings, wooden benches, wicker loungers, hammocks — opt for variety! And don't forget to include enough blankets and cushions to create a soft, cozy environment.

Next, place one or more side tables around the seating area so that you and your guests can set down glasses, plates, phones and any other objects you prefer to keep close at hand.

Finally, hang garlands of twinkling lights in your trees, and line the path between your house and your lounge area with decorative lanterns. This way, you'll create a space that's not only warm but also safe to enjoy at night!

A FESTIVE TOUCH

To create lasting memories under a starlit sky, don't forget to buy plenty of skewers for roasting sausages and marshmallows. And why not bring out your bongo drums, harmonica or guitar to sing around the crackling fire?



Build a firepit in your backyard

A firepit can make your backyard a welcoming place for people to gather and allows you to take advantage of your outdoor living space well into the evening. Here are some things to consider if you're thinking about installing one on your property.

WHERE YOU'LL PUT IT

Firepits should be kept at a minimum of ten feet away from anything flammable. Rethink your plans if your yard doesn't allow you to provide this kind of clearance.

THE FUEL YOU'LL USE

Most people think of wood when it comes to firepits, but there are other options available. You can choose to have it run on propane, natural gas or ethanol fuel.

WHAT STYLE YOU WANT

Firepits come in many different styles. You can select a traditional ring of stones, a rustic brick fireplace or a modern piece that doubles as a coffee table.

Before you purchase or build a firepit, be sure to check your municipal bylaws. Some cities have strict rules concerning backyard fires, and you don't want to spend time and money building a firepit only to find out you're not allowed to use it.

FIRE-SAFETY TIPS

Never build a fire outside of your firepit's enclosure

Clear the area of flammable materials before lighting a fire

Keep a fire extinguisher nearby

Don't put garbage or garden waste into the fire

Never leave a fire unattended

Make sure the fire is completely extinguished before going inside

In the case of a wood-burning firepit, allow ashes to cool completely before discarding them

AUXILIARY HEATING

Add warmth to your home



3 safety tips for using a space heater

The cold weather is here once again! Fortunately, there are numerous ways to stay warm. A space heater, which can be easily installed in your office or bedroom, is one of the most popular ways to add extra heat to your home. However, it's essential to know how to use it safely. Here are three safety tips:

the heater and avoid putting it on a carpet. Also, electricity and water are dangerous, so keep your space heater out of wet locations such as kitchens or bathrooms.

PLUG THE HEATER IN PROPERLY

Although space heaters are movable and offer a pleasant heat source, they consume a lot of electricity. Therefore, plug yours directly into a wall socket to avoid overheating an extension cord or power strip, which could cause a dangerous short circuit.

BE PRESENT WHEN THE HEATER IS IN USE

Space heaters should never be left unattended when in use. They're only meant to provide temporary heat — continuous use could damage the appliance and even cause a fire.

POSITION THE HEATER CORRECTLY

Space heaters have powerful heating elements that can cause a fire if placed too close to combustible materials. Leave at least three feet of space around

When it comes to keeping warm, comfort is just as important as safety! If you're looking to buy a space heater, visit your local retailer and talk to a professional to help you make the right choice.



Spotlight: pellet stoves

Pellet stoves are popular with homeowners because they emit few harmful gases and provide long-lasting heat. If you're looking for a supplementary heating system but are unfamiliar with pellet stoves, here's what you need to know.

FUEL SOURCE

Pellets are small, compressed capsules made from the manufacturing residuals of the wood processing industry. They're made up of tiny particles and contain very little moisture. This means they burn evenly, unlike logs. Pellets are also inexpensive and available at most hardware stores.

HOW IT WORKS

Pellet stoves have a hopper, which is a funnel-shaped tank where the pellets are loaded. A thermostat activates the stove, and an auger feeds the pellets continuously into the fire. A set of fans pushes the heat into your home while expelling the combustion gases outside. You don't have to keep an eye on it or make sure it's constantly topped up. Depending on the model, pellet stoves can run independently for 24 to 70 hours.



PROS AND CONS

Pellet stoves are more environmentally friendly and easier to use than wood-burning stoves. However, they can be noisy and maintaining the chimney is more complex and costly. All-in-all, pellet stoves offer excellent energy efficiency and have a low carbon footprint.

If you're wondering whether a pellet stove would suit your home, talk to an HVAC or fireplace specialist in your area to find out more.

5 DIY home insulation tips for this fall and winter



As summer fades and the air gets crisp, keeping your home warm becomes a priority. Here are five DIY tricks to boost your home's insulation and keep the warmth in, saving you money on energy bills:

SEAL THE DRAFTS

Drafty windows and doors are significant culprits for heat loss. Invest in weatherstrip or caulk to seal gaps. Make draft excluders from fabric tubes filled with rice or beans.

THINK CURTAINS

Thick curtains or blinds act as extra insulation. Look for thermal curtains with a lining that traps heat during the cold months.

DON'T FORGET THE FLOOR

Drafty floors can make your house

feel chilly, especially for rooms above crawlspaces. If you have exposed floorboards, consider laying down rugs or insulating mats.

MAXIMIZE FIREPLACE EFFICIENCY

If you have a fireplace, ensure the damper is closed when not in use. Open dampers act like vents, letting warm air escape.

REFLECT THE HEAT BACK IN

During the day, open your curtains to let sunlight in. Sun naturally heats your space. At night, close the curtains to trap the warmth inside.

By following these simple DIY tips, you can make a big difference in keeping your home cozy and warm throughout the autumn and winter.



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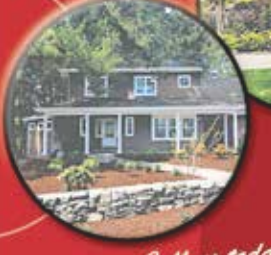



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Cheese + zucchini quiche

This delicious vegetarian quiche is a delight! Try it for yourself.

Servings: 6 to 8

Ingredients

- 2 medium zucchinis (ideally one yellow and one green)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 store-bought pie shell
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 cup grated mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup 35% heavy whipping cream
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 small Italian tomato, thinly sliced
- Rosemary, chopped, for garnish

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. Thinly slice one half of the green zucchini and one half of the yellow zucchini. Dice the other two halves.
3. In an oiled cast-iron skillet (or on the BBQ), sear the zucchini slices for one or two minutes on each side until lightly browned. Set aside.
4. Melt the butter in a skillet. Add the diced zucchini and onion and saute for a few minutes. Drain, set aside and let cool.
5. Place the pie shell in the oven for 15 minutes.
6. In a large bowl, beat the eggs. Add the parsley, garlic, basil, cheese, cream and onion mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Mix well.
7. Using a kitchen brush, spread the mustard over the bottom of the par-baked pie shell.
8. Pour the mixture into the pie shell. Gently spread the zucchini and tomato slices on top. Garnish with rosemary.
9. Bake for 35 minutes.

Roasted pumpkin hummus

If you love hummus, this creamy combination of chickpeas and roasted pumpkin is sure to become a seasonal favorite.

Start to finish: 50 minutes (10 minutes active) | Servings: 6

Ingredients

- 1 small pumpkin (about 18 ounces), peeled, seeded and diced
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 garlic bulb
- 1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed (save some of the liquid)
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup Italian parsley, finely chopped



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. In a large bowl, combine the pumpkin, 2 tablespoons of olive oil and the ground coriander. Toss until the pumpkin pieces are well coated. Spread evenly on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Cut off the pointed end of the garlic bulb to expose the tops of the cloves. Place the bulb on the baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes.
2. Remove the pumpkin and garlic from the oven and let cool for about 15 minutes. Hold the garlic bulb at the base, turn it upside down and squeeze out the roasted cloves. Place the garlic, pumpkin, 3 tablespoons of olive oil, chickpeas, tahini, maple syrup, lemon juice and salt in a blender. Blend until the mixture is a uniform puree. Add seasoning and adjust the consistency with the chickpea liquid as needed.
3. Scoop the hummus into a serving bowl. Drizzle on the remaining olive oil and sprinkle it with paprika, sesame seeds and parsley. Serve warm with pita chips.



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HEARTWARMING RECIPES

Peppers stuffed with sausage meat

Looking for your next go-to comfort food recipe? Bursting with delicious flavors, this one is sure to please!



Servings: 4 (two pepper halves per person)

Ingredients

- 4 bell peppers in various colors, halved lengthwise (with stems, if possible)
- 16 ounces sausage meat, your choice
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 cup cooked rice
- 1 teaspoon Cajun spices (or other spicy seasoning)
- 1 cup store-bought tomato sauce
- 1 tomato, chopped
- 1 cup shredded strong cheese, such as medium cheddar or Monterey Jack
- 1 cup grated cheese that melts well, such as mozzarella or Gruyere
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Remove the membranes and seeds from the peppers and preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. In a skillet, saute the sausage meat, onion and garlic in oil until the meat is cooked through.
3. Remove from the heat and drain the fat. Add the rice, spices, sauce, chopped tomato and spiced cheese. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Stuff the 8 bell pepper halves with the rice mixture. Place the peppers in an ovenproof dish and cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 30 minutes.
5. Remove from the oven, remove the foil and spread the melting cheese over the peppers.
6. Return to the oven for 10 minutes, or until the cheese has melted. Broil for a toastier appearance.

Beef meatball soup



The intoxicating smell of this heart-warming meal will have you hooked.
Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 16 ounces ground beef
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup breadcrumbs (Italian or regular)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 medium carrots, coarsely diced
- 2 medium potatoes, coarsely diced
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 34 ounces beef broth
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Chopped parsley, for garnish

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the beef, garlic, Italian seasoning, egg, cheese, breadcrumbs and a little salt and pepper. Shape into balls slightly smaller than golf balls. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large frying pan and brown the meatballs on all sides. The aim is to color them, not cook them thoroughly. Set the meatballs aside with all the cooking liquid in the pan.
2. Heat the remaining oil in a large pot and saute the onion, carrots and potatoes for a few minutes. Add the tomato paste and beef stock. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Add the meatballs and cooking liquid to the pot and simmer for 10 more minutes (the vegetables should be tender).
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste and garnish with parsley.



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GREEN IDEAS

ENJOY FALL:

Try these 5 eco-friendly activities!

The arrival of fall promises to delight your eyes and taste buds! Need inspiration for your next outing? Here are five activities to help you make the most of autumn without harming Mother Nature:

GO ON A BIKE RIDE

Explore bike paths along wooded areas or ride on forest trails with your family, partner or friends. Breathing in the fresh air while getting your body moving is a great way to enjoy autumn in an eco-friendly way!



PICK YOUR OWN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Many farms offer U-pick produce. Depending on where you live, you could visit an orchard to pick apples (some places also have pear and plum trees) or harvest pumpkins, squash or artichokes.

GO ON A PICNIC

Buy gourmet products from local businesses with strong ecological and ethical values. Enjoy your haul in the mountains, by the water or in a park. Be sure to bring reusable dishes and utensils and leave no trace!

HAVE A PHOTOSHOOT

With its red and orange leaves and warm light, fall provides a perfect backdrop for stunning photographs. For best results, collaborate with a professional photographer in your area.

Whether strolling through a farmers market, discovering a picturesque small town by foot, kayaking or feeling the wind in your hair while horseback riding, there's no shortage of eco-responsible ways to enjoy the pleasures of fall!

Zero-waste home renovations: planning tips



Zero-waste home renovations aim to reduce waste, conserve resources and create healthier living environments. Here are a few tips for successfully planning your very own zero-waste renovation:

Educate yourself on sustainable building practices. Stay informed about emerging eco-friendly technologies. For example, advancements in solar panel efficiency and biodegradable materials are continuously evolving.

Reuse whenever possible. Depending on the project, consider opting for salvaged or reclaimed materials to divert waste from landfills and add character and uniqueness to your home.

Incorporate energy-efficient appliances and fixtures. Choose products with high energy-efficiency ratings and incorporate water-saving features such as ENERGY STAR® appliances and low-flow faucets and toilets.

Implement proper waste management. Focus on recycling, composting and donating reusable materials to divert waste from landfills. Plan ahead to ensure that construction debris is sorted and disposed of responsibly.

Collaborate with eco-conscious contractors and designers. Find a sustainable-focused building professional and communicate your zero-waste goals. Work together to identify innovative solutions that minimize waste generation to turn your home into a model of environmental responsibility.



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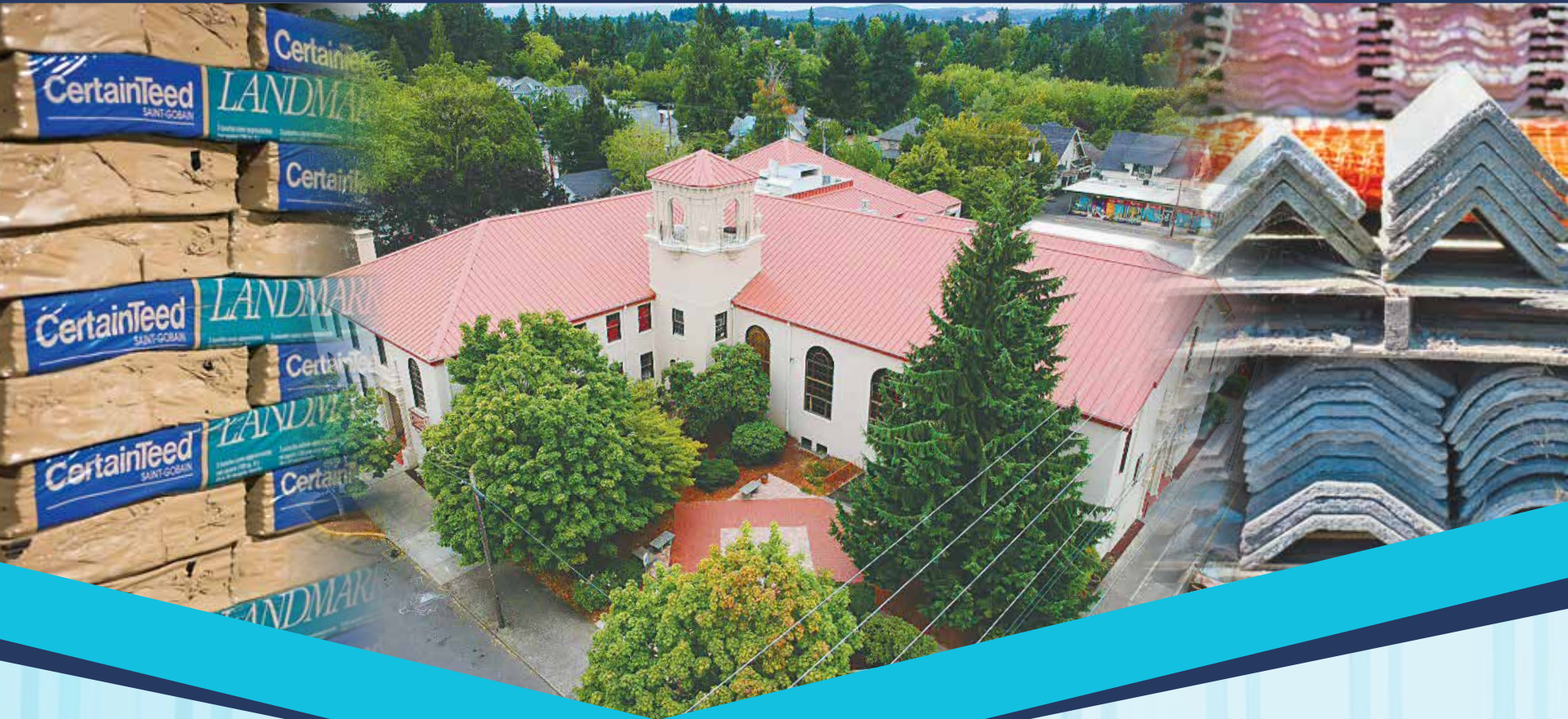
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