

NAHB REMODELERS OFFER GREEN KITCHEN GUIDE

WASHINGTON, May 14 - No matter what color you plan to paint your kitchen, you can "green it up" with energy efficient and sustainable products. To celebrate May is Remodeling Month, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Remodelers offers this guide of products and appliances and their life spans so you can make smart choices for that next kitchen project.

"With a few simple steps, homeowners can turn a kitchen renovation into a green renovation," said NAHB Remodelers Chair Mike Nagel, CGR, CAPS, a Remodeler from Chicago. "These upgrades can significantly reduce utility bills while looking great for years to come."

Refrigerators - Average life-span: 13 years.

Energy-efficient fridges only save about \$6-\$9 a year over other models you can buy because these appliances are much more efficient than they used to be. However, you can save more than \$100 a year replacing a fridge 10 years and older.

Dishwashers - Average life span: 9 years.

Energy Star®-rated models use 41 percent less energy than other dishwashers, saving up to \$90 over the product's life. However, when replacing older dishwashers, homeowners immediately reduce their energy bills by \$30 a year.

Microwave Ovens - Average life span: 9 years

People know that microwaves can cook much faster than conventional ovens. But, they also can use up to 80 percent less energy. While microwaves are not appropriate for all cooking, using them can save time and money.

Oven/Ranges - Average life span: 13-15 years.

Gas burners use 55 percent of the energy produced compared to 65 percent for electric cook tops. Consider induction cooking, which uses 90 percent of all energy produced. When choosing ovens, convection ovens can save up to 20 percent on energy use compared to non-convection models. Additionally, self-cleaning ovens tend to have more insulation, making them more efficient as well.

Kitchen Cabinets - Average life span: 50 years.

Consider recycled or reclaimed wood when replacing cabinets. Particleboard offers another economically and environmentally friendly alternative - though it can be less durable than solid wood products.

Countertops - Average life span: lifetime of home.

Counters come in all shapes and sizes, but recycled glass and concrete have a great modern look and give these old materials a second chapter. Many of these same products also work as tiles for your kitchen.

Flooring - Average life span: 10 years to lifetime.

Carpeting only lasts up to 10 years and linoleum up to 25 years, while wood floors last a lifetime. Consider using renewable flooring like cork or bamboo. These flooring options offer easy maintenance with a long-lasting natural look for your kitchen.

For more information about remodeling, visit www.nahb.org/remodel.