

Designer driveways are new status symbol

Homeowners across the country are taking curb appeal to the next level; millions of dollars each year are spent on exterior spaces and "designer" driveways have become the latest home accessory. Whether completing the final touches surrounding a sprawling McMansion or upgrading a cracked slab of concrete on your first home, this type of landscape architecture is an amenity that not only enhances a homeowners enjoyment of their outdoor space but their property's overall appeal.

As home sales continue to flatten nationwide, an increasing number of homeowners are looking to remodel and renovate rather than purchase new homes. The amount homeowners spend on home improvements has been climbing in the United States since 1996, according to U.S. census figures. The popular home-repair referral service, Angie's List, just concluded its annual poll which indicates on average home owners responding to the survey say they plan to spend 2.9 percent of their home's value, roughly \$11,250 on repairs and renovations this year up 13 percent from 2007.

According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, [1] the nation's leading center for information and research on housing in the United States which analyzes the dynamic relationships between housing markets and economic, demographic and social trends:

About a third of owner-occupied homes are at least 45 years old and an additional third is between 25-45 years old meaning that a large majority of homes are in increasing need of updating and repair.

By 2015, members of generation x will represent the largest share of homeowner improvement spending of any generation, with 27 percent of all spending.

Meanwhile, trailing baby boomers will hold strong at 23.6 percent of spending and lead baby boomers will contribute 21.3 percent of spending.

As home sales decline, home improvement is moving beyond the indoors and expanding outwards. Landscaping and yard work are two of the most popular home improvement projects. Modern yards, patios, terraces and decks have become places to retreat, relax, play and entertain. As such, homeowners are now seeking to add square footage to usable living areas through the creation of "outdoor rooms" which serve as an extension of their

personal style.

Today, driveways serve as an extension of the home and have surpassed garages as the display case for vehicles since the average house often lacks a basement or an attic. Homeowners are forced to find room for their recreational equipment, seasonal decorations and hobbies in the garage leaving little or no room for the family car or RV.

Homeowners have limited options to solve this problem. Commercial storage sites can be expensive, inconvenient and not cost effective. Homeowners see a better investment in patterned driveways that give their home character and reflect their lifestyle much like the interiors of their homes.

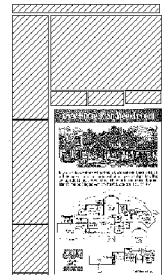
Systems Paving, Inc, America's leading installer of durable, interlocking paving stones has witnessed growth in every market of their 13 locations throughout Calif., Ore., Wash., Colo., Tex., NY and Ga. The company's recent expansion into Washington D.C. and Novato, California demonstrates the increase in volume as does their plans to open up additional locations across the U.S. The reason for their success is that they focus on established homeowners. Many, including baby boomers, still subscribe to the adage that the home is the most important investment that a person will make in his lifetime. Therefore, they improve their homes and plan on staying for the long hall. Riding out the real estate market is not a concern.

Homeowners Choose Pavers That Give Their Driveway Character and Reflect Their Lifestyle

Innovative ways to use pavers:

Interlocking Paver Stones Make Great Basketball Courts – Concrete can crack, asphalt draws heat and both require yearly line-painting and maintenance. A paver stone court allows court lines and boundaries to be permanently built in using different patterns and colors that will last for years to come.

Interlocking Paver Stones Are the Ideal Solution for RV Storage - Interlocking pavers are manufactured to meet the demanding standard of the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM). Able to withstand at least 8,000 pavers are four times stronger than concrete, and 10-20 times stronger than asphalt. With proper care, interlocking pavers are oil-spill, stain and weather-resistant, won't shift even under extreme conditions, and form a perfectly



level RV storage surface.

Man's Best Friend Deserves A Paved Dog Run – Providing your pet with sufficient exercise and allowing it outdoor space shouldn't be an eyesore. Pavers are an attractive alternative surface that are stain-resistant and can be easily hosed down, removing messes, odors and germs. Homeowners are extending their interlocking paver stone patio/driveway to the side of their yard where dirt and weeds used to be.

Why Pavers? In contrast to rigid surfaces such as asphalt, concrete, brick and natural stone, which crack and deteriorate, paving stones are practically maintenance-free and are guaranteed for life. The product is stain- and crack-resistant, non-skid, and four to five times stronger than concrete. Pavers even maintain their integrity in shifting soil and extreme weather, and outperform any other available choice taking into account value for money, aesthetics and long-term performance.

Why Now? Paving stones first originated in Europe and were used to pave ancient Rome, and subsequently throughout the rebuilding of cities

post-WWII. Now used in virtually every other country in the world, the U.S. lags about 20 years behind in their adoption of the technique, instead simply accepting other less durable, less attractive materials as the status-quo.

ABOUT SYSTEMS PAVING

Systems Paving is America's leading installer of durable, interlocking paving stones. Established in 1992, the company has 13 locations throughout Calif., Ore., Wash., Colo., Tex., Washington D.C., NY and Ga. There are also two franchise locations in Mass. and Va. Having installed customized paving solutions in more than 25,000 locations, the company is nationally-recognized for revolutionizing the outdoor lifestyle industry by becoming the preferred choice for property owners' hardscape projects. For more information, visit www.systemspaving.com.

Courtesy: Home Improvement News and Information Center



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