

Home Zone: New kit easily converts recessed lighting to pendants

by Linda Pescatore

Cancel the electrician: You won't need a professional to transform your recessed lighting to pendants if you use a new kit from Worth Home Products. The company promises that the process is as easy as changing a light bulb, and requires no tools or electrical skills.

Worth just introduced its patent-pending Portfolio Recessed Light Conversion Kit with a choice of three models: a traditional alabaster bell, an amber cone and an industrial-style "shop light" with a satin nickel finish.

RECESS IS OVER - If you can change a light bulb, you can transform recessed lighting to popular pendants using a new kit from Worth Home Products. CNS Photo courtesy of Worth Home Products.

EUROPEAN ACCENT - Even older, 'lipped' cabinets can be converted to European hinges with a new product from Rockler Companies. Unlike older butt hinges, the new hinges, also called cup hinges, don't show from the outside and can be self-closing. CNS Photo courtesy of Rockler.

The product is the first of its kind; in fact, safety testing group Underwriters Laboratory had to create a new classification for the kit.

The pendant's cord can be adjusted to your desired length, even after installation. The excess cord wraps neatly around a spindle hidden in the canister that once held the recessed light.

The kit includes the decorative shade, socket adapter, lamp holder and a brushed nickel canopy cover that covers the hole. It works with both line- and low-voltage applications. Because it's so easy to install and remove, it's ideal for renters or anyone who doesn't want to make permanent changes.

Look for the Portfolio Recessed Light Conversion Kit, which retails for \$50-\$60 depending on style, in the recessed lighting section at Lowe's. For more information visit www.worthhp.com.

NO MORE BUTTS

Updating old-fashioned cabinetry can make a kitchen look young again, but replacing everything can get expensive. If you'd like to keep costs down by painting or refinishing the doors and changing the knobs, there's still one thing to consider: old, ugly hinges.

Most older cabinet doors swing on "butt hinges" that are visible from the outside, whereas newer installations often use European-style hinges - also sometimes called "cup hinges" - that are concealed when the door is closed and can be self-closing.

European hinges look more complicated than simple butt hinges, but they are, in fact, easier to keep aligned because they are more "forgiving" - that is, they are adjustable three ways so if the door is hanging a bit off, a turn of a screw will bring everything in line, according to hardware maker Rockler Companies Inc., of Minnesota.

European hinges are even easier to install than traditional hinges, according to Rockler, because they don't require mortising. Also, the hinge's adjustability and the fact that it is hidden give you some "wobble room" if the placement isn't dead-on, the company says.

However, if your cabinet doors are "lipped" with a three-eighth-inch rim, as many from the 1940s and '50s were, they would not accept a European hinge. That is why Rockler developed a new model that will fit the older cabinets. Their Salice nickel-plated hinge is designed with three-eighth-inch overlay doors in mind.

The hinges sell for \$20 and come with a base plate and mounting hardware. They are available at select woodworking stores or online at www.rockler.com.

BAR THE SOAP

Imagine never buying bulky detergents or caustic bleaches again, yet still getting your laundry clean, your fabrics fresh-smelling, and your colors bright.

That's the promise of LaundryPure, a compact, wall-mounted appliance that hooks up to your washing machine. LaundryPure infuses incoming water with silver ions, oxygen, peroxides and other gases that bubble into your clothing to lift dirt and odors, according to manufacturer Ecoquest International, of Greeneville, Tenn.

Independent tests showed the silver nanotechnology used by LaundryPure killed more than 99.99 percent of bacteria, the company says. Silver has been used for centuries to keep drinking water pure or, more recently, to fight infection in burn patients, according to professors at the University of Delaware, and an article titled "Synthesis and Antibacterial Properties of Silver Nanoparticles" was recently published in the Journal of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology.

Although the technology sounds cutting edge, the company says it's been used in hotels, hospitals and commercial laundries for more than a decade.

The LaundryPure process eliminates the need for detergent, bleach and even hot water, Ecoquest says, although pretreating is still recommended for stubborn stains. The resulting reduction in energy use and pollution is easier on the environment.

LaundryPure will help people allergic to detergent residue in their clothing and linens. Also, because detergents don't build up in fibers, LaundryPure keeps laundry fluffy and soft, according to Ecoquest.

The suggested price is \$747, and remember the price will be offset by your savings on detergents and hot water costs.

LaundryPure is sold through a nationwide network of independent dealers. To find a dealer or to learn more about the product, call 800-989-2299 or visit www.ecoquestintl.com.

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