Home Zone: Bringing the pleasure back to showering

by Maggie_Reed

If you've ever experienced a cold, clingy shower curtain putting a damper on your daily routine, take note.

You get in the shower and the curtain blowing in on you is not only a nuisance, it's just plain irritating.

Well that's where Patrick Raymond, a former advertising executive, and his ShowerBow come in.

Raymond was standing in the shower one day with the curtain creeping in on him and began thinking of a way to find more knee and elbowroom.

SHOWERBOW - Increase the interior space of your shower by 25 percent with ShowerBow and forget about those wet, clingy curtains. CNS Photo courtesy of ShowerBow.

UGLY DOOR CONTEST - Darrell and Marie Dunnewold replaced their ugly door (inset) with a new door they won in a contest. CNS Photo courtesy of Therma-Tru.

His initial prototype was made out of a wire hanger and a standard office stapler as a counterweight. When he tilted the stapler forward, it pushed out the bow formed by the hanger. This crude design evolved into the ShowerBow.

"This simple device works when you need it, and tucks away when you don't," Raymond said. "With ShowerBow, you can trade in the daily wrestling match with the curtain for a more relaxing, spacious shower."

There are a number of explanations as to why the shower curtain does what it does, but whatever the cause, the effect is annoying to millions of people every day.

Basically, the ShowerBow is like an invisible hand that holds the curtain out and creates up to 25 percent more space inside the stall. The 1-pound pivot weight does all the work. Tilt it forward, the curtain goes out. When not needed, the pivot weight tilts back into place, making it invisible from the outside.

The weight can be placed at either end of the rod. The bow itself is flexible, lightweight and slides from side-to-side for easy entry and exit.

It works on most showers, regardless of rod length, tub size or curtain thickness. The ShowerBow simply snaps on and requires no bolts, drilling or tools. The design also keeps the curtain inside the stall, preventing any leaks.

The clear and white finish fits in with any decor.

Also available is a compatible shower caddy. This unit fits neatly under the ShowerBow and provides a bottle tray, toothbrush and razor holders, plus an adjustable mirror and sponge hooks.

The ShowerBow retails for $30 while the caddy is $15.

For more information, visit www.showerbow.net.

- Maggie Reed

TALK ABOUT UGLY

Darrell and Marie Dunnewold of Clymer, N.Y., knew the front entrance of their 30-year-old, two-story home was ugly - a faded and chipped blue door surrounded by equally faded and chipped red shutters - but when the winter wind blowing through the door created a hum, they knew it had to go. The Dunnewolds had moved into their home in September 2005. "One of the first things we wanted to replace was the door," Marie said, "but when we had to keep a towel stuffed under it all winter, that was it."

The Dunnewolds were checking out new doors on the Therma-Tru Web site when they discovered a link to the second annual Ugliest Door in America Contest. "We couldn't afford anything too extravagant, so I said 'let's enter the contest; we can wait a few months to replace the door and maybe we'll win the door we want,'" Marie said.

To the Dunnewolds' shock, they won, and Therma-Tru replaced their 30-year-old door with a mahogany-look fiberglass door with oval glass inset and glass-inset side panels. With installation, the total value was about $7,000.

Therma-Tru is sponsoring its third annual Ugliest Door in America Contest, open to any homeowner 18 years of age or older who has an ugly door - humming not required.

For complete contest rules and more information, log on to www.myuglydoor.com. The deadline for entry is May 1.

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