



## **What's In Your Basement? For Some Homeowners, It's Cash**

(ARA) What comes to mind when you hear the word “basement?” Old furniture. Last year’s tax returns. Outgrown toys. For most people, it’s not “big bucks,” but maybe it should be.

Many homeowners are finding that, with both energy and housing prices skyrocketing, finishing the basement is a smart way to lower heating and cooling costs and increase the value and useable space of a home.

According to a study by the University of Minnesota Center for Sustainable Building Research, a finished basement can reduce whole-home heating and cooling costs by up to 25 percent. And Remodeling Magazine’s 2005 Cost vs. Value report puts the average percentage of cost recouped for a basement remodel at 90 percent in the first year, topping popular projects such as a bathroom addition or a major kitchen remodel.

Basement finishing is one of the most popular remodeling projects. More than one million are finished each year in the continental United States (according to a report from the Tampa-based Home Improvement Research Institute) and it’s come full circle in recent years. Once considered to be a long and messy process, some companies now offer finishing systems specifically designed for basement environments. In about two weeks, they can turn what was once unusable into additional living space – an extra bedroom, media room, office, play room or home gym – with minimal disruption and none of the dust and noise associated with traditional drywall construction.

“Aside from the speed and tidiness of the project, our system offers moisture- and mold-resistant walls that won’t warp or rot; Class A fire resistance for peace of mind; and removable walls for access to plumbing, wiring and foundation,” says Andy Spriggs, business manager, Owens Corning™ Basement Finishing System. “Homeowners want to feel they’re making a solid investment in their home...a good financial decision and one that will convert a dark, uninviting space into a quiet, comfortable retreat from the hustle and bustle of the upstairs world,” said Spriggs. “A private office, an extra bedroom, a game room...our customers’ creativity has been endless.”

For more information on Owens Corning™ Basement Finishing System, call (800) Basement or visit [1-800-basement.com](http://1-800-basement.com) (or [basementfinishingsystem.com](http://basementfinishingsystem.com)).

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SIDEBAR:

**Top Five Things To Remember when Finishing a Basement:**

1. The average basement remodel involves carpentry, electrical, drywall, plumbing and flooring work. The job should be left to a professional remodeler if a homeowner isn't highly skilled.
2. If a homeowner decides to hire a professional remodeler, it is imperative to ask for referrals and proof of insurance. If an uninsured worker is hurt in the home, a homeowner may have to rely on personal homeowners' insurance to pay for the associated costs. The key is to get everything in writing.
3. The Environmental Protection Agency has reported that molds have the potential to cause health problems, meaning that homeowners need to understand their basement environment and ways to control the moisture that causes mold.
4. How a homeowner will use the finished basement is key when deciding what materials to use. Insulation can provide warmth, while some wall systems can provide impact and noise absorption. Deciding what activities will take place in a refinished basement will help homeowners choose the correct basement finishing materials.
5. Homeowners should ask for and receive a written warranty that covers the products used to finish their basements.