

After their children moved out, Maureen thought there was a better house out there for them and looked at other places.

It didn't take her long to decide they were already living in the best house for them.

"I decided to make this work," Maureen said, and she launched a decoration and rearrangement of the house.

She had redecorated through the years, but not like this.

"I redid every room in the house and it was fun," Maureen said.

It was also a big job, Maureen took her time, shopping for just the right fabric, paint colors, wallpaper and window coverings.

Maureen loves the charming English cottage feeling of the house, with its cross and button trim, ceiling beams and patterned oak floors. But, she knew that the dark wood trim could make the house feel heavy, so she decorated to make it feel fresh and cheery.

She chose a creamy yellow wallpaper for theoyer and Martha Stewart colors — hollyhock and aspen — for the other rooms.

She used window treatments that let in plenty of light and highlight the Craftsman detailing at the windows.

Maureen's favorite change is her office which she made in the former finished-attic TV room. With the help of a kitchen designer, she created an area for her work and family needs.



Maureen Schuering reads a book in the cozy back parlor of the family home. The fireplace has green ceramic tile and simple oak mantle.

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Above: The Schuering's dining room feels like a charming country cottage. Right: The Craftsman detailing in the entry is carried out throughout the house.



Your old toilet uses a gravity flushing method. When you flush it, the water flowing down from the tank, not through the bowl, creates a suction to draw liquids and solids out of the bowl and down the drain. This worked great with five gallons, but is not always effective with only 1.6 gallons.

Although most reasonably priced toilets still use the gravity method, and some flush satisfactorily, there are other more effective flush methods. These often do not cost much more to buy and look like regular toilets.

Pressure-assisted toilets use the normal water pressure to flush better. There is a small tank within the standard tank.

When this fills with water, it compresses the air inside. When flushed, the water flow is more forceful. They flush fast, but are slightly noisier than a standard toilet.

Another somewhat similar, traditional-looking toilet design uses a vacuum assist. When flushed, the water rushes out of the tank and creates a vacuum. This lower-pressure area is connected with passages inside the toilet to the water flow path. It increases the sucking action in the bowl.

If you are looking for major water savings or are planning to use a toilet in a cabin with limited water availability, there are several effective designs.

There are electric incinerating toilets that literally burn up the wastes. These don't create odors and only a small amount of sanitized ash is left.

Another design is a composting toilet that uses zero to a pint of water. Through a natural composting process, wastes become soil and fertilizer.

Some models resemble an ordinary toilet and several toilets can be connected to one composting receptacle. With venting, there are no odors.

Write for Update Bulletin 631, a buyer's guide of 13 water-saving toilet manufacturers. Please include \$3 and a business-size SASE. Send to James Dulle, Quincy Herald-Whig, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.