



## First Aid for the Ailing House by Henri deMarne

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### Author Biography


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From leaky roofs to water-logged basements, Henri de Marne gives expert advice on home improvement and repair. He answers readers' questions in his weekly column, **First Aid for the Ailing House**. De Marne has been helping readers find better, simpler, faster and more cost-efficient ways of making household repairs through his nationally syndicated column since 1982. For 25 years, De Marne was a building, remodeling and restoration contractor, owning and heading two construction and remodeling firms. Since retiring from active construction work, he devotes his time to writing about and consulting on all aspects of home repairs and remodeling. The author of numerous articles on residential building construction for trade publications, de Marne wrote a book, *Entering the Remodeling Field*, for the National Association of Home Builders. He was the senior consulting editor on *The New, Complete, Do-It-Yourself Manual from Reader's Digest* (updated version published 1991). He also wrote a chapter in a *Consumer Reports* book, *Preventive Home Maintenance* (1990), a joint venture between *Consumer Reports* and the American Society of Home Inspectors. De Marne serves as a consultant on energy conservation and building systems to architects, home builders, home owners and state officials. He received a National Energy Award from the U.S. Department of Energy for an innovative energy conservation system in home ventilation. He is a member of the American Society of Home Inspectors and gives seminars on home maintenance and building techniques. De Marne lives in Vermont.

### Most Recent Column

#### Milsek, the miracle polish

Q: About 35 years ago, we had kitchen cabinets installed (all-wood, dark oak). Over the years, they have retained a certain amount of grease and grime. I've tried various degreasers with not much success. The finish is still good. Is there anything that would really be effective in removing the build-up to restore their appearance without ruining the finish? Your help would be greatly appreciated, as I am not in a position to reface or replace them. -- Totowa, N.J.

A: Try Milsek Furniture Polish. Over the years, I have received many letters from users of Milsek who swear by it; some even call it a miracle product. Milsek Furniture Polish is distributed regionally in about 36 states and sold through their mail-order division. Interest in the product spreads through word of mouth -- they apparently do not advertise. Unfortunately, they can no longer ship to Canada, due to post-9/11 Customs restrictions. I have used it myself with great results.

The number of uses for this product is quite astonishing: All furniture including antiques, brass, copper, stainless steel, vinyl, musical instruments, boats (they sell a lot to marine stores for teak wood and fiberglass) and appliances. It also removes adhesives, tar, soap film from tile and shower doors, scuff marks from floors and water marks from furniture.

It contains some lemon oil but no wax and, most importantly, no silicone -- a product that should not be used on wood furniture. At this time of year, Milsek offers a bonus: Milsek with Holiday Oil -- a blend of cinnamon and raspberry oils, a very special holiday treat for the senses.

The best way to find Milsek in your area is to check their Web site: [www.milsek.com](http://www.milsek.com). Click on "How to order Milsek," then on "Where can I buy Milsek?" Milsek will also ship direct. Their mailing address is 5525 W. Pine Lake Road., Petersburg, OH 44454; the phone numbers are (330)-542-2700 or toll-free (800) 216-9517.

Q: I have a Flambeau 2053 fishing tackle box made of plastic and beige in color. The bottom of the trays have become deeply discolored with rust stains from hooks and metal lures over the years. How can I remove these rust stains without damaging the plastic trays? -- Pearl River, N. Y.

A: Try BAM Grime & Lime. You should be able to find it in True Value and Ace hardware stores, supermarkets and some box stores. Choose the trigger spray.

Q: My patio is large and made of poured concrete that had a green tint added at the processing plant. That was long ago; the color has faded and the concrete surface has a dull, drab look to it. What suggestions can you offer to treat or recoat the surface without creating a slippery surface? Many thanks. -- Mountainside, N.J.

A: Have a concrete contractor etch the surface and apply a concrete stain to it.

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Please note that Henri de Marne has an e-mail address where readers can send questions and comments. It is included in the tagline at the bottom of this column. It should read henridemarne(at sign)gmavt.net. Please try not to split this address over more than one line.

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