

CONTINUED FROM D1

Coolman

a maintenance-free lifestyle including complete landscape care and snow removal starting at \$194,900 for a 2-bedroom ranch home.

Cook Builders can also assist you in evaluating all of the best possible locations for your new home based on your personal needs. They can provide the expertise necessary to ensure that your home plan not only meets all your needs, but complements the surroundings.

"Whether you are looking to create an original design or tailor-make adjustments to an existing plan, as a true custom home builder, we go the extra mile to meet all the unique needs of every individual client," Cook says. "I always enjoy sitting down with people to find out exactly what they want in a home. It's fun talking with so many different people and going over their plans."

Steadfast in their commitment to build homes that are beautiful, solid and efficient, Cook Builders routinely includes custom design and 3D rendering for their homeowners.

"Our ultimate goal has always been to provide a home that is equally as beautiful as it is comfortable," he says. "Many people don't realize that you can incorporate green building principles into a home by making the right choices with-

out significantly driving up the cost of construction. With our energy-conscious building practices, which consistently earn the highest possible ratings from ENERGY STAR®, homeowners enjoy measurable savings in their gas and electric consumption."

A true leader in the local building industry, Rich Cook, who is the recent past president of the Building Industries Association of Northwest Indiana (BIA), became one of the area's first Certified Green Professionals through the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). As a result, Cook Builders offers the very latest in green building technologies and energy efficiency.

Along with precise design and quality, energy-efficient construction, Cook Builders provides expert guidance and advice on selecting just the right finishes, color schemes, products and personal touches to ensure that you're creating a home that complements your individual lifestyle while maintaining a careful eye on your budget.

"Recently, we've seen a long line of positive indicators that the confidence level is coming back. Six months ago people generally didn't want to even think about building a new home," he says. "Now, they want to sit down and talk. Some have gone so far as to put their house on the market, and, surprise, surprise, it sold. All of the sudden, they need to get busy building."

Fixit: Garage can become office for little cost

BY KAREN YOUSO

Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Q. My son moved home from college and wants to establish our detached, unheated, uninsulated garage as his work space. We are on a tight budget and very short on space, so the garage might be a good option. What can be done to set up the garage as a safe, comfortable work environment on a budget?

A. I'm going to assume he's looking for office space, that he won't be sharing this space with a vehicle and that this is temporary. In other words, you don't want to permanently change the garage into a "guest space."

In that case, use during the warmer months isn't too complicated. Once the garage has been cleaned out, open the door (and window if there is one) for ventilation. Use a fan. Remember that items such as lawn and garden chemicals, lawn mowers, and paint and staining materials can contaminate air. You'll want to remove or secure these items to minimize any problems.

In colder months, you'll have a heating issue. You can use a portable heater. Do not use a fuel-burning one such as a kerosene heater. Realize that it will be expensive to try to heat an uninsulated space. Consider those space heaters (infrared-style heaters) that warm objects around the heater and not the whole space.

Taking the conversion this far likely won't cost much and local officials probably wouldn't care.

But taking this a step further — framing the walls and ceiling, adding insulation and wallboard and improving the lighting and electricity to handle computers, etc. — would make the garage a much more pleasant place to work. It would also cost more money. If you have someone in your circle of friends, family and neighbors who might be willing to help with the labor, then you'd just need to pay for the materials, and maybe feeding the help!

You'll want to run any construction plans past your local building official to make sure you stay legal. You likely will need a permit.



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EAST CHICAGO A place to call Home. Cooking area and living room. Cable, all utilities paid. \$125 per week. 773-979-9402 or 219-293-0347.

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CHESTERTON Spacious 2 bedroom 1.5 bath, large kitchen, 1330 sq. ft. No pets. \$725/mo. 219-928-8533

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Gary Indiana's Best Values Take a look... GreenBriar Apartments 1 bedrooms Starting at \$468-\$518 mo Apply at: 8901 E. 5th Ave. Suite B, Gary, IN Mon.-Fri. 9am-5pm

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HAMMOND South 1 Bedroom Apartments \$560 & \$570 per month, heat/water included. Appliances, carpeting, vertical blinds, laundry room, intercom entry, extra storage, convenient location at 6930-36 Hohman Ave corner of Hohman Ave and Lawndale Street 219-845-4544 708-335-4537

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HAMMOND SOUTH: 1 Bedroom Apt. Quiet Residential Location, Washer/Dryer On site, No Pets \$575/mo. 847-277-9710

HAMMOND SOUTH: 7550 Old Columbia, Near I-80/94. Fresh and clean 3 bedroom, appliances, laundry, tenant pays electric, \$750 month + deposit. Section 8 Okay. Call 219-922-1161

Hammond's Newest Apartments 1 - 2 Bedroom 219-845-0520

HAMMOND- Clean 3-room apartment \$100 weekly + dep. 1 or 2 people only 219-937-8376 Leave message.

HAMMOND: 1/2 bedroom, living/dining room, laundry facilities, \$550/\$700mo. plus security deposit, 1 yr. lease+ credit check. 312-640-1792

HAMMOND: GREAT SPECIALS! Outstanding Apartments, Studios, 1 & 2 bedrooms Heat & Water included/Come See Your New Home! 219-845-6070

HAMMOND: TC Apartments. One bedroom \$475/mo. \$475/dep. Studio \$440/mo \$440/dep. Includes water /sewer/trash, Refrigerator, Range/Oven, On-Site Laundry, 3345 169th Ave. 219-939-4000

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HEBRON 2 bedroom, 1 bath, clean, updated, laundry facility on site, senior discount. \$595/sec. 219-313-7292

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Hessville: 2 bedroom, carpet, appliances, utility room with washer dryer and storage. \$745 a month Sun Realty 219 836-5900

HESSVILLE: 1 & 2 Bedroom starting at \$595. Heat, Water, and Gas Included. 219-306-1785

HESSVILLE: 1 Bedroom upstairs apartment, Section 8 Welcome, \$450/mo., water included, 1 months deposit. Call Mon-Fri, 8-5pm. 219-844-6570

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HESSVILLE: 164th & Ohio, 3 Bedrooms \$850 + \$850 cash deposit, no pets (219) 689-2761

HESSVILLE: 2 Bedroom, Water and Appliances Included, Wood/Tile Floors, Central Air, Large Deck, No Pets. Right off Cline Ave. \$595/Month+Deposit. 219-989-9670

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