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MISS INDEPENDENT STEPS UP TO THE D-I-Y PLATE
Fourth Annual Lowe's Survey Shows Forward-Thinking Women Becoming
Home Improvement Aficionados

MOORESVILLE, N.C. – Instead of picking up the phone to call the local handyman, today's modern woman has the confidence and know-how to pick up her hammer and tackle the home improvement project herself.

A national survey of female homeowners, commissioned by Lowe's for the fourth consecutive year, reveals women, especially Hispanic women, are taking a larger role in the home improvement arena to prepare themselves for not only homeownership, but also the long-term upkeep and maintenance involved.

In fact, recent Lowe's survey findings indicate that 67 percent of all women and 79 percent of Hispanic women feel prepared to be solely responsible for their home, including maintenance, repairs and improvement. Also, more than half (54 percent) of Hispanic women identify themselves as intermediate do-it-yourselfers, while 49 percent of all women and 44 percent of African American women consider themselves intermediate do-it-yourselfers.

"Proving to be self-reliant, today more women are putting home improvement projects on their to-do list," said Julie Sussman and Stephanie Glakas-Tenet, authors of "Dare to Repair," the best-selling D-I-Y book. "It's the power of confidence which allows women to have the take charge, do-it-yourself attitude."

Young and Young at Heart

The do-it-yourself home improvement trend also is hooking younger generations early on and keeping older generations longer. Nearly half (49 percent) of women tackled their first home improvement or repair project between the ages of 21 and 30. In addition, 38 percent of all women between the ages of 18 and 34 consider home improvement elementary, reporting they tackled their first home repair between the ages of 11 and 20.

Older women, especially Hispanic women, continue to hone their do-it-yourself skills as seniors. In fact, 77 percent of Hispanic women say they would tackle home improvement projects on their own after the age of 55 versus 74 percent of all women and 64 percent of African American women. Lowe's survey also reports more women (40 percent) state that basic home repair skills are more important to pass on to younger generations than basic car repair and basic household skills. Specifically, 47 percent of Hispanic women agreed that basic home repair skills are more important for today's youth.

Women Wear Many Hats - Including the Hard Hat

Below are other key findings from this year's Lowe's survey:

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- While more than three-fourths of all female homeowners (78 percent) own a combination of hand tools and power tools, 74 percent of African American women and 62 percent of Hispanic women own a combination of hand tools and power tools.
- Approximately 70 percent of all women do-it-yourselfers prefer working with at least one other person, such as a friend, significant other or neighbor, on home improvement projects.
- More than half (58 percent) of all women do-it-yourselfers are early risers.
- Fifty-two percent of all women in the Lowe's survey say they would like to receive a home improvement-related gift in place of any other gift for their birthday (21 percent) or the holidays (31 percent).
- The majority of women do-it-yourselfers (90 percent) consider themselves simple self-starters who work in basic jeans and a t-shirt.

This study of female homeowners age 18 and older across the country was conducted August 6-24 by Ipsos Public Affairs, a North American based Division of the Ipsos Group, the world's third largest survey-based public opinion and market research organization. In total, 729 female homeowners were interviewed. Of this group, 200 were African American and 215 were Hispanic. Hispanic interviews were conducted in either Spanish or English, depending on the preference of the respondent. The margin of error for this study is +/- 3.6 percent.

About Lowe's

With fiscal year 2003 sales of \$30.8 billion, Lowe's Companies, Inc. is a FORTUNE® 50 company that serves approximately 10 million customers a week at more than 1,000 home improvement stores in 45 states. In 2004, FORTUNE named Lowe's America's Most Admired Specialty Retailer for a second consecutive year. Based in Mooresville, N.C., the 58-year old company is the second-largest home improvement retailer in the world. For more information, visit Lowe.com.

About Ipsos Public Affairs

Ipsos Public Affairs, headquartered in Washington D.C., is a non-partisan, objective, survey-based research company made up of campaign and political polling veterans as well as seasoned research professionals. The company conducts strategic research initiatives for a diverse number of American and international organizations, based not only on public opinion research but often elite stakeholder, corporate, and media opinion research. It has offices in New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, and Washington, with affiliates around the world. Ipsos Public Affairs conducts national and international public opinion polling on behalf of The Associated Press, the world's oldest and largest news organization, and conducts the young voters poll for Newsweek.com. Ipsos Public Affairs is an Ipsos company, a leading global survey-based market research group.

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