

## ***Siding and glass***

### **Replacing wood and aluminum windows with vinyl is mainstay of local company**

By J.J. Hudson

As the old adage goes, you get what you pay for. Remodeling on the cheap may result in a cheap, low quality remodel. However, that need not always be the case. In the case of American Vinyl Inc., more commonly known Factory Direct Windows, customers get high quality at a low price. The company simply does it all.

"We even offer no payments for 12 months," said co-owner Bob Ericcson. "We're a manufacturer, we're a contractor and we're a retailer. We're pretty unique in that respect" Factory Direct Windows fabricated vinyl windows at its factory in Tacoma, sell from its showroom in Fife and installs new windows throughout the area. By keeping all three functions in-house, they eliminate middlemen mark-ups and commissions. The savings rain down on their customers like sunbeams through a crystal clear window.

All windows are "factory direct," meaning that everything is custom-made at their factory to fit a customer's requirements. Nothing is prefabricated, according to Ericcson.

"We offer a top quality product at affordable prices," said Shirley Verderico, who along with her husband John, share ownership with Ericcson.

The company uses the highest-grade "virgin" vinyl, which is structurally reinforced for added strength. Vinyl is extremely durable and loses considerably less heat than aluminum.

"Vinyl is virtually maintenance free and has a lifetime warranty," said Ericcson. "There is also considerable heat savings."

"Aesthetics, too – it increases the value of the house," Verderico added. Window features include double-strength low-E glass, super (form) spacer bar, four locks, removable tracks, bass rollers and easily removable screens. Ericcson said that double-paned windows could also have argon gas pumped in between the panes. Argon gas is denser than air, offering increased insulation and helps to decreased noise from the outside world.

Factory Direct Windows are specially designed to easily replace drafty, old wooden or aluminum windows and are a snap to clean, thanks to easily removable screens. Ladders will not be required for washing windows.

One can expect to spend \$2000 to \$4000 to remodel an average home with Factory Direct Windows, according to Ericcson. Vinyl siding will cost \$6000 to \$7000 for the average home.

"We offer customers the opportunity to make \$40 to \$70 payments, 12 months after the windows have been installed and cash discounts are also offered," said Ericcson. "We'll be 30 percent to 50 percent less than companies that use commissioned sales guy's quote," said Ericcson. "Probably 45 percent of our business is by referrals."

Windows are the mainstay, though the company does sell and install vinyl siding by CertainTeed and Royal. They also sell and install patio doors.