

A SEATTLE KITCHEN GETS AN ECO-FRIENDLY MAKEOVER TO MAKE MOTHER NATURE PROUD

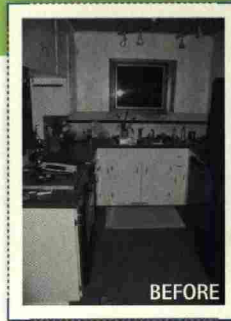
a different GREEN

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN FRANCIS

WHEN MICHAEL HUFFMAN BOUGHT HIS SEATTLE-AREA home, built in 1952, he knew the kitchen was in dire need of help—it was cramped and dated. And yet the thought of remodeling the problematic space didn't intimidate him; as a teenager, working for his family's business, Michael learned how to install industrial cabinets.

That business, The R.M. Huffman Company, is now a dealer of eco-friendly commercial cabinetry. So when it came time to outfit his new kitchen, it was a no-brainer. The company's Forest Stewardship Council-certified, low-VOC-finish maple cabinets fit into Michael's plan for the redo to be "as green as he could afford it to be." In fact, all of the materials he chose—PaperStone counters, Marmoleum flooring, recycled-glass tile backsplashes, energy-efficient appliances—fit that criterion.

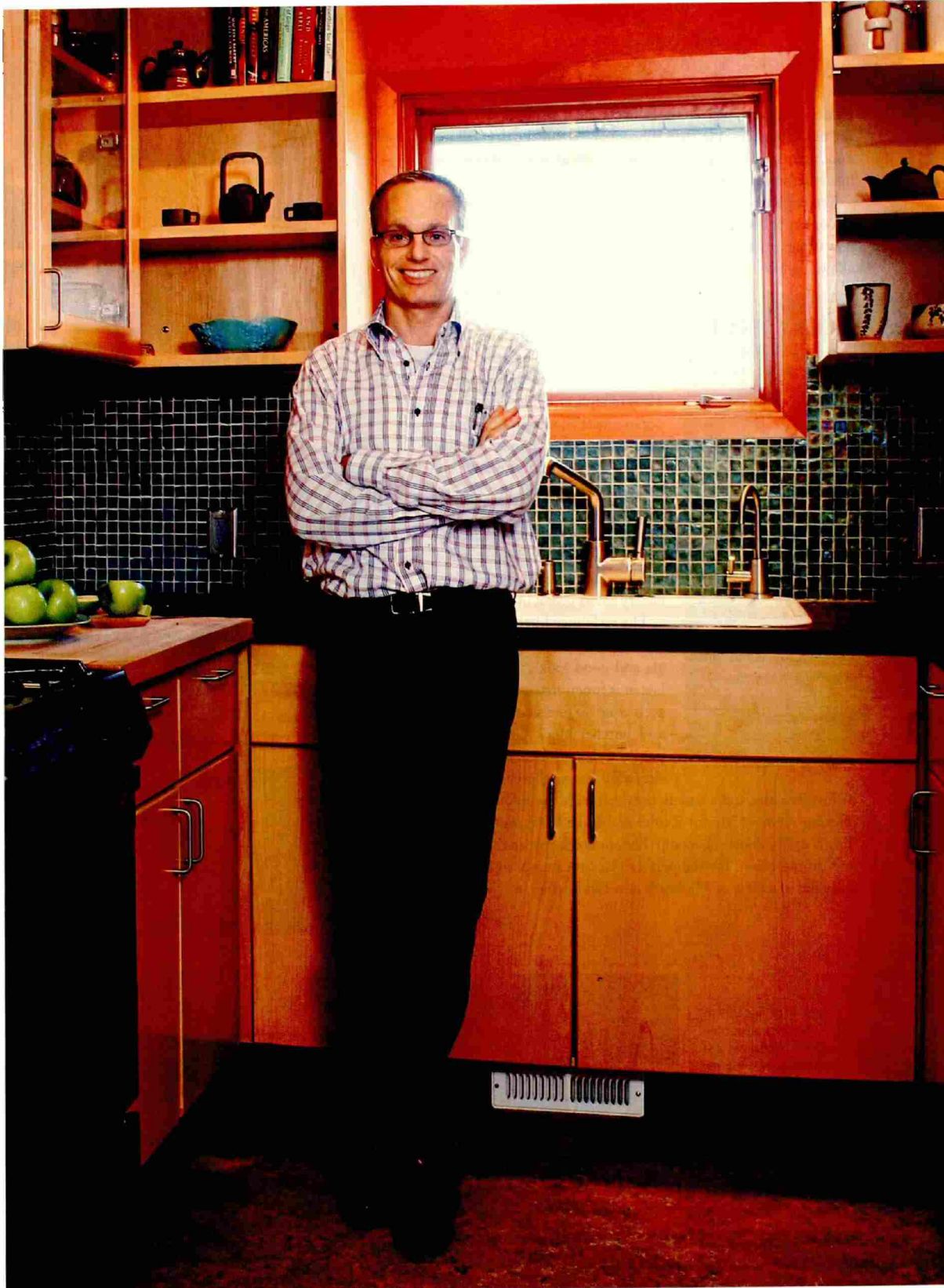
An auditor by profession, Michael took a month off work to tackle most of the grunt labor himself. With the help of his partner,



BEFORE

ABOVE: Stuck in the 1950s, the kitchen was in need of a makeover.

RIGHT: Homeowner Michael Huffman relaxes in his new eco-friendly kitchen. Recycled 1x1-inch mosaic glass tiles in shades of ocean blues have a shimmer of iridescence, a nice counterpoint to the mellow tone of the maple cabinets, which he installed himself. The butcher block near the prep station was recycled from leftover gym floor material.

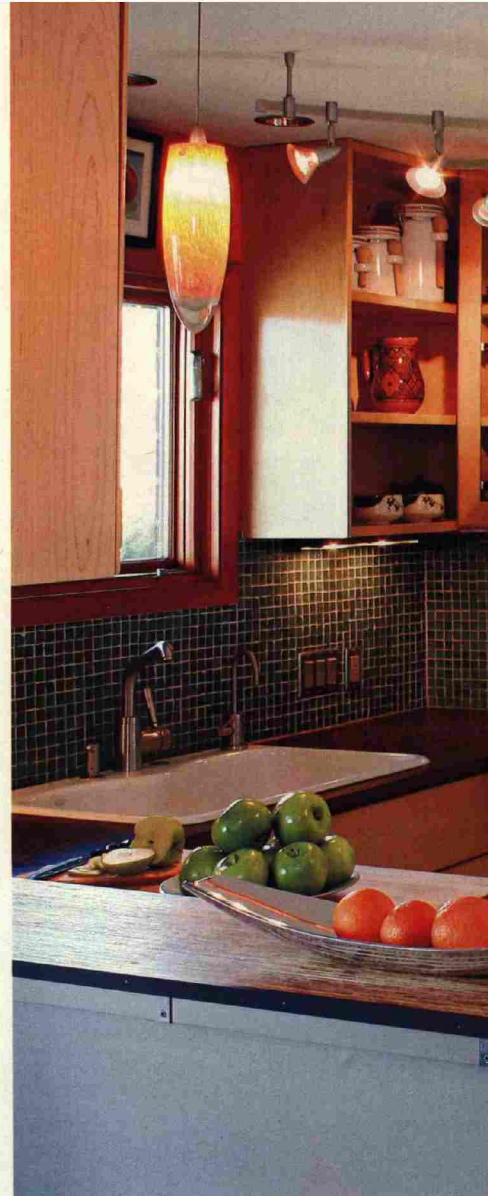


Kyle Smoot, he ripped out the cabinets and flooring, and removed the old appliances. He then subcontracted out the drywall and flooring installation, plumbing and electrical work, and enlisted his father's help to install the cabinets and countertops.

Keeping to the existing 10x15-foot footprint, Michael widened a doorway to the dining room. Almost double the original size, it now brings guests into conversational distance of the kitchen and allows light to filter in from the dining room window.

To further open up the room, Michael combined glass-front upper cabinets and open shelving units. But it was the colors that really brightened the once-drab space. As a way of replicating the beauty of an ocean sunset and incorporating two of his favorite colors, Michael painted the walls burnt orange and chose backsplash tiles in a cool sea green. The flooring echoes those shades with subtle swirls of blues and oranges. Although the kitchen is small—150 square feet—these cheery colors give it impact.

The reclaimed kitchen, however, offers more than just green materials and good looks. Its U-shaped layout is functional as well. It has a prep zone on one side with a stove and butcher-block countertop; a prep and cleanup area on the opposite wall where the cabinets and dishwasher are; and a sink in between with a window above it, offering views of Mount Rainer and Lake Washington in the distance. The finishing touch? The counter between the kitchen and dining room. It's the perfect place for guests to hang out and take in a view of Michael's new eco kitchen. ■



ECO-FRIENDLY CHOICES

- Installed double-paned wood windows, a high-efficiency furnace and instant hot-water faucet
- Used no-VOC (volatile organic compound) paint
- Replaced old flooring with Marmoleum, a no-VOC, durable green product made from natural ingredients
- Used cabinets made of wood from forests adhering to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) practices
- Chose countertops of PaperStone, a nontoxic, composite material made from recycled paper, cashew nut shell oils and water-based resins
- Selected backsplash tile made from 90 percent recycled glass
- Installed an energy-efficient refrigerator and dishwasher

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RIGHT: The layout was functional, but the decor, appliances and cabinetry were outdated and did nothing for Mother Nature.



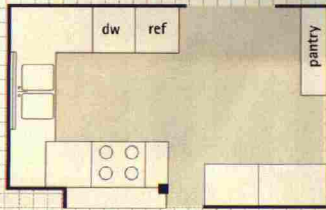
WHAT WAS DONE

- ▶ Revamped the kitchen using eco-friendly products when possible
- ▶ Kept the footprint of the kitchen, but enlarged an opening to the dining room to increase air and light flow
- ▶ Installed ceiling-halogen track lighting and under-cabinet-halogen task lights
- ▶ Selected a palette of vibrant colors

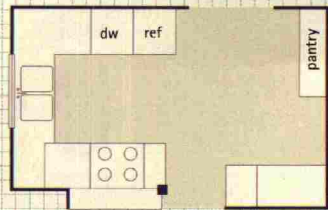


ABOVE: The enlarged opening to the dining room is just one of the changes that gives the kitchen a whole new look and feel. Efficiently planned—one side is for prep, the other for cleanup—the U-shaped kitchen is well lit by halogen track lights and undercabinet task lighting with individual switches. Walls painted deep orange work well with the tiles and natural-wood cabinets. French doors lead to an outdoor deck and bring in plenty of light.

FLOOR PLANS: STEVEN STANIEWICZ



BEFORE
 The U-shaped layout was efficient and only needed some minor tweaking; appliances were well sited.



AFTER
 The footprint remained the same, but an opening to the dining room was enlarged, improving traffic flow, and air and light circulation.

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Designer, Robert Huffman. **Kitchen plumbing**, Raymark Plumbing. **Electric, tile and floor**, Fryer-Knowles. **Counter**, PaperStone; **flooring**, Marmoleum; and **backsplash**, Oceanside Glasstile; all Ecohaus. **Pass-through counter**, Kirei. **Lighting**, YLighting. **Dishwasher and refrigerator**, Miele. **Baseboard molding**, Just Green. **Hot-water faucet**, Ira Wood & Sons.