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## Firm's home-wrap system offers one way to seal the deal on a foreclosure

12:00 AM CDT on Friday, June 5, 2009

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If you watch enough late-night cable TV, eventually they'll get around to advertisements for those gizmos to shrink-wrap sweaters and vegetables and such.

At 3 in the morning it somehow seems like a worthwhile endeavor to bag up a bushel of carrots or put a stack of woollens into a package the size of a phone book.

Talk about a compulsive organizer's dream. Even the cats wouldn't be safe if I had one of those gadgets – especially when they are shedding.

Now a Nevada company is taking things a step further – with a cunning plan to shrink-wrap the entire house.

Before you get worked up at the thought of dry-cleaning bags and suffocation, let me explain that these are vacant houses.

Reno-based Fast Wrap Inc., which bills itself as "the leader in shrink wrap protection," wants to seal up empty, foreclosed houses in its high-tech plastic sheeting.

No. Really.

"These homes, most often owned by the bank, are left to rot in the sun, rain, wind and snow, which results in banks losing over 40 percent of the home value before they've even fully taken possession," said company spokeswoman Abbi Whitaker. "Fast Wrap believes they've come up with a solution by wrapping these foreclosed homes with shrink wrap and protecting them from both the harsh weather elements and squatters."

But what about raccoons? Won't they chew through anything?

No mention of that in marketing materials Fast Wrap is sending out to sell franchises for its new home wrap system.

Instead of big Ziploc bags or Saran Wrap, the company plans to cover distressed houses in 40-foot-wide rolls of "flame retardant, anti-corrosion and antimicrobial ... highly recyclable, virgin resin polyethylene."

It even promises the material will be "green."

But most of the photographs on the company Web site show big white plastic coverings on everything from playground equipment to a high-rise luxury hotel.

The company's bread-and-butter business is to provide wrappings for shipping containers, vehicles and agricultural products.

"The whole world needs wrapping," Fast Wrap founder Mike Enos says in his sales pitch. "And in tough times, it's more important than ever to protect your assets."

If only I had shrink-wrapped my 401(k).