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## Opportunity House gets facelift from volunteer effort

**By Holly Roney, Staff Writer** Posted Aug 27, 2011 @ 09:30 AM

Hillsdale, Mich. —

Laurie Helsel said she felt like she was on Extreme Makeover: Home Edition when she saw a transformed Opportunity House on Friday. The Community Action Agency, CAA, and the First Presbyterian Church of Hillsdale came together this week to make Hillsdale a little nicer for families in need. The groups performed an “extreme makeover” on the Opportunity House, a temporary shelter run by CAA on Griswold Street. The shelter has the potential to house up to four families who have no other place to stay, with sometimes an entire family staying in one bedroom. Downstairs, three families share a living room, bathroom and kitchen. Upstairs is a small apartment for a single family.

About 25 volunteers put in close to 1,000 hours Monday through Friday to get the house ready for families to return. They repainted, put in new carpet, re-roofed the front porch and garage, weeded and cleaned up outside and replaced or fixed windows and doors.

“I just hope we can be an example to the community,” said Dawn Treloar, project coordinator. Treloar said she came up with the idea after going on a mission trip last summer to the Appalachia region in West Virginia. “I really felt like God was impressing on me,” she said. “There's just as great a need for this work here in Hillsdale.” Treloar and her family, along with others from the church, stayed at Michindoh Conference Center during the week, along with one of the residents of Opportunity House. Treloar said they were trying to remove themselves from their daily lives as much as possible.