

MID-ATLANTIC Builder



Vol. 51 Issue 1
January/February 2009
www.homebuilders.org

Models of Excellence

The Remodelers Council of HBAM announces the winners of its Remodeling Award of Excellence competition

PLUS

NEW Pull-Out Section
Mid-Atlantic Remodeler
Pages 21-28



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Winner 2008 HBAM Remodeler Award for bathroom renovation 50K-100K

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MID-ATLANTIC BUILDER

is a bi-monthly publication of HBAM Member Services, Inc., a subsidiary of the Home Builders Association of Maryland, Inc., 7127 Ambassador Road, Suite 150, Baltimore, MD 21244 410-265-7400, www.homebuilders.org.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Home Builders Association of Maryland, Inc., 7127 Ambassador Road, Suite 150 Baltimore, MD 21244.

CUSTOM PUBLISHING SERVICES PROVIDED BY

Network Media Partners, Inc. and Network Design Group, Executive Plaza 1, Suite 900, 11350 McCormick Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031, 410-584-1900

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The HBAM Remodelers announced the winners of their 18th annual Remodeling Award of Excellence competition which serves to recognize excellence in remodeling design and craftsmanship.

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Feature Lead Paint Lowdown

New lead paint regulations are set to take effect in 2010 and remodelers who work in pre-1978 buildings will face some major changes in the way they remodel.

By Jonathan Sweet



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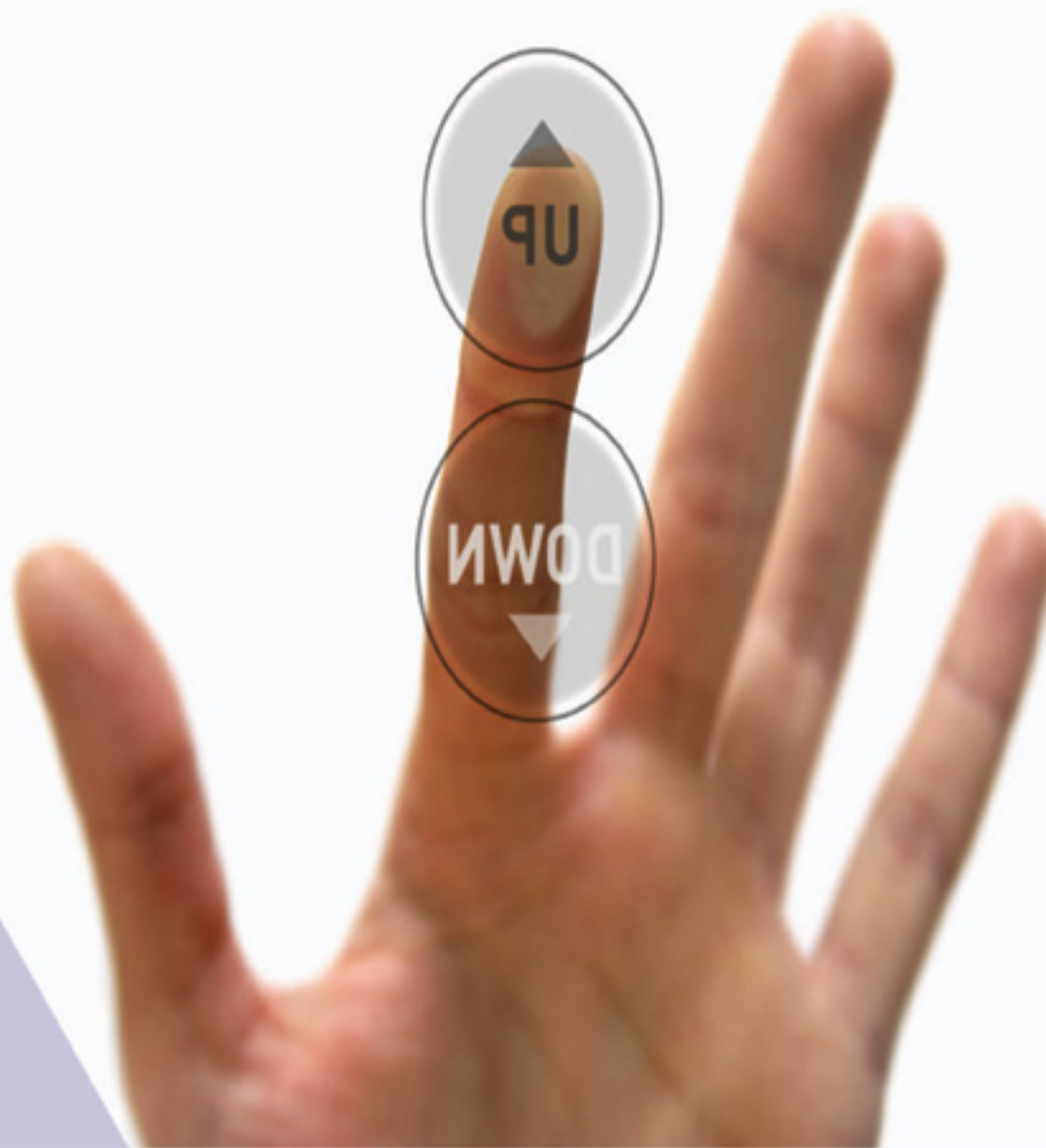
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publisher'smessage

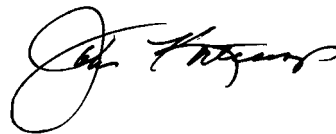
Closing the Books on 2008

It's a good feeling in bad times to just get the last year behind us. A year ago in this column, referring to the economy, I bravely asked the question, "What else could go wrong?" Boy, did I get an answer. Turns out, everything could and pretty much did. Now, as we look ahead to the new year, the focus for optimism is already on the next year, 2010, not the coming one.

It's pretty much a given that the rough ride of '08 will continue and as the President-Elect, has forecast, get even rougher. 2009, like its predecessor, promises to be a year we will want to see end even as it begins. Looking forward to survival isn't the best way to begin a new year, but for most of us, it's the reality and, in case you hadn't noticed, we're not alone anymore. It's not the "housing bubble" or the "housing melt down" that's front page news these days. It's Wall Street, Detroit, the print media, the credit markets, the banks, the insurers, manufacturing and even technology and health care are feeling it. We're all in the soup together.

But, there's no question that in housing, we were the first in and as the saying goes, "first in...first out." It's been a long standing belief among economists that housing leads us into recession and housing will lead us out.

There are very strong signals coming out of Washington that the new guys subscribe to that thinking. There is an expressed commitment on their part to (a) keep people in their homes and (b) get the credit markets moving again. Both of which are potentially very good news for housing. So, as we begin 2009, let's focus on the possible, let's encourage government to begin with housing and let's hope that it's one of those years that just flies by. Here's to 2010.



John Kortecamp
HBAM Executive Vice President

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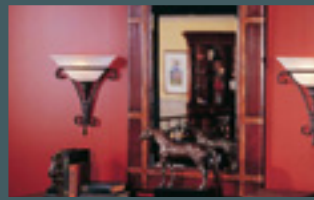
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president's message

The Signs of Spring

Happy New Year! It is my privilege to introduce myself to you as the 2009 president of the Home Builders Association of Maryland. For the past 25 years, I have been actively involved in the remodeling industry along with my three brothers, as owners of Owings Brothers Contracting and Owings Home Services, a general remodeling and building firm located in Eldersburg.

The Remodelers Council of the Home Builders Association of Maryland has recently been ranked as the third largest council in the country. I believe this statistic is very promising for the growth of the Association. As president, one of my objectives is that we, as an organization, will be a vital support center for our builders and remodelers. We hope to roll out multiple programs to increase public awareness to the consumer, giving them an avenue of qualified, stable and respected companies from which to choose.

However, we realize that the present economic turmoil is affecting all of our businesses as well as our personal lives. It would be difficult for me to say that I have news that would inspire my fellow builders and remodelers to expect a quick recovery. In this country, we have gone into a type of hibernation. Consumers and business owners have been cautious in spending and we have seen consumer confidence drop with fear of the unknown.

As business owners, we understand that the present climate is partially due to what we call pent up demand. Many Americans have chosen to hold their decisions to spend on needed or wanted services and products as they wait and watch our economic situation. I, personally, have contributed to this philosophy by deferring a much needed and wanted purchase of my own, a new mat-

ress. If this is true of me and my affect on the retail mattress industry, can it also be true of those who are in need of, or desire, a new house or the remodeling of their present home? We cannot know the numbers these pent up buyers represent.

I believe, as with any hibernation, the signs of spring will draw us out into the light of day and we will begin foraging in greener pastures with anticipation of the birth of a new climate. Our hope is that the consumers who are in need of the product and services our industry provides will come through the winter of this economic turmoil and see signs of spring in the nation. All I know is that I have hope and faith that we are a resilient group of people and that being a part of this organization gives us a bond for supporting each other and sticking together through good times and bad. It is during these times that we must take advantage of all this organization has to offer from awards programs to educational forums to networking events.

As we progress through this coming year, I hope to meet many of you and get to know you and your business, so we can discuss current and future needs for the Association. I am passionate about the industry and I hope to encourage and assist you, through the Association, in succeeding to reach your business goals. One thing that I can guarantee is that by the time you read this article I will be sleeping better, thanks to my new mattress.

Michael Owings
2009 HBAM President

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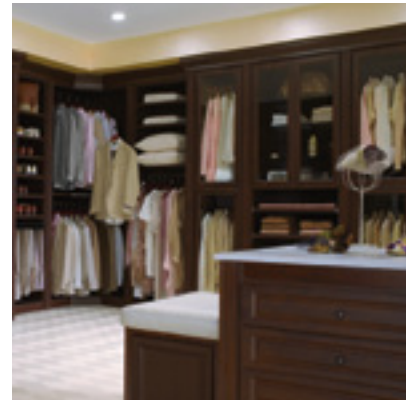
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2008 Remodeler Award Winners

Models of Excellence

The HBAM Remodelers announced the winners of their 18th annual Remodeling Award of Excellence competition at the Boumi Temple in White Marsh, Maryland in November. This program serves to recognize excellence in remodeling design and craftsmanship, to create a greater public interest in the remodeling industry and to recognize outstanding contributions by individuals and companies in the remodeling industry. An evaluation team that consisted of remodeling contractors from outside the Baltimore Metropolitan area rated all entries. The criteria used to judge the entries included: quality of construction, degree of difficulty, value and cost effectiveness, unique and creative design approach and sensitivity to existing structure.

Individual awards announced at the event included the 2008 Remodeler of the Year Award which was presented to Donald F. Lynch Jr., of Lynch Construction. This annual award is given to that member of HBAM Remodelers who has demonstrated dedication to the remodeling industry, has

been a visible and vocal supporter of remodeling and of his or her fellow remodelers and has demonstrated leadership in promoting remodeling programs, certifications, membership growth and retention and more. Donald F. Lynch, Jr., President of Lynch Construction since 1979, has served on the Board of Directors of HBAM Remodelers since 2005 and is now entering his 2nd year as President of the HBAM Remodelers. Lynch is actively involved in HBAM Remodelers subcommittees such as Programs and Events and the Award of Excellence. He is a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) and holds the Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR) designation.

The 2008 Remodeling Associate of the Year award was presented to Cheryl Crowthers of Thos. Somerville. Cheryl is an active supporter and advocate of the industry who has enthusiastically served on the HBAM Remodelers Board and committees and who is a strong supporter of the council's programs and events.



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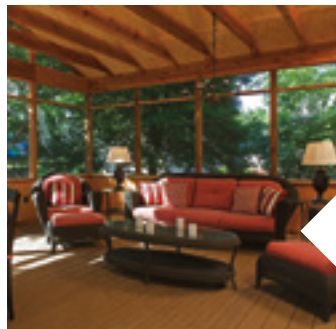
WHOLE HOUSE RENOVATION
500K - 600K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Starcom Design Build
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 SILVER MERIT
Company Coastal NRM Builder
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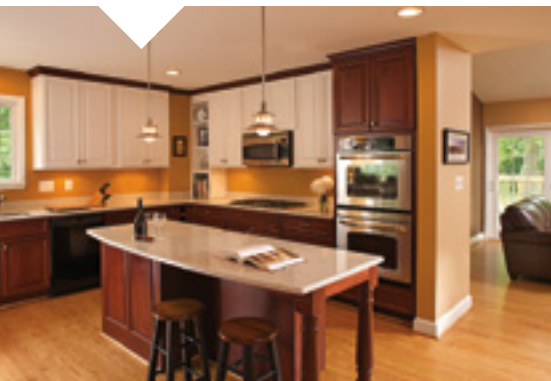
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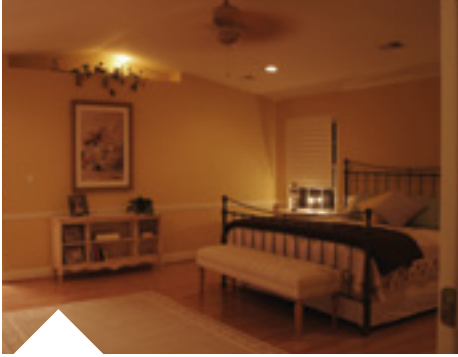
250K - 300K

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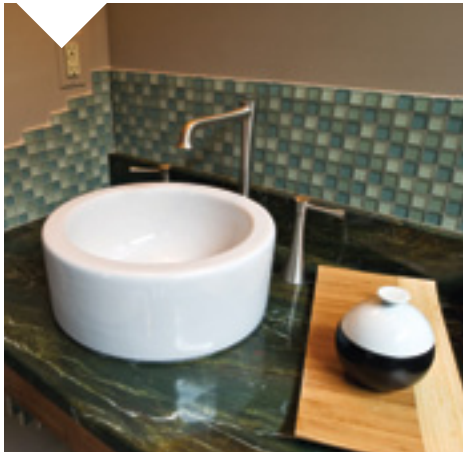
ADDITIONS
100K - 125K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Trademark Remodeling
Project Zahn Master Bedroom Addition



ADDITIONS & ALTERATIONS
300K - 325K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Robert Kutner Associates, Inc.
Project Macht Sun Room and Master Bedroom Suite

ADDITIONS
100K - 125K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Starcom Design Build
Project Acott Renovation

BATHROOM RENOVATIONS
50K - 100K
 SILVER MERIT
Company River Crest Design Build
Project Winbigger Bath



BATHROOM RENOVATIONS
50K - 100K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Home Professionals Inc.
Project Ripley Residence



BASEMENT
200K - 250K
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Company Van Deusen Construction Co., Inc.
Project Glen Angus



BATHROOM RENOVATIONS
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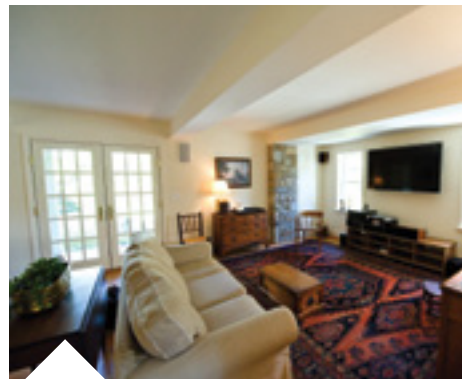


**FAMILY ROOM ADDITIONS
190K - 225K**

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Project Tracy Sunroom
and Garage Additions



**DETACHED GARAGE & INTERIOR ALTERATIONS
400K - 450K**

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

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Project Emrich Family Room Addition
and Kitchen Remodel

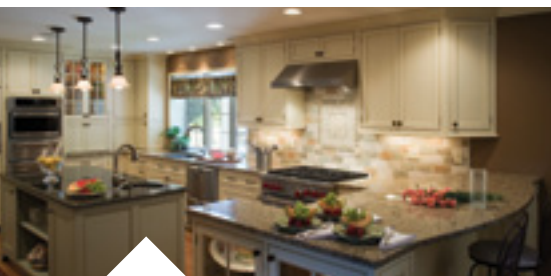


**INTERIOR ALTERATIONS
UNDER 50K**

SILVER MERIT

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Project Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McClellan



**DETACHED GARAGE & INTERIOR ALTERATIONS
450K - 500K**

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**DETACHED GARAGE & INTERIOR ALTERATIONS
450K - 500K**

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

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INTERIOR ALTERATIONS WITH KITCHEN

135K - 180K

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Company Wheatley Associates

Project North Country "Open Spaces"

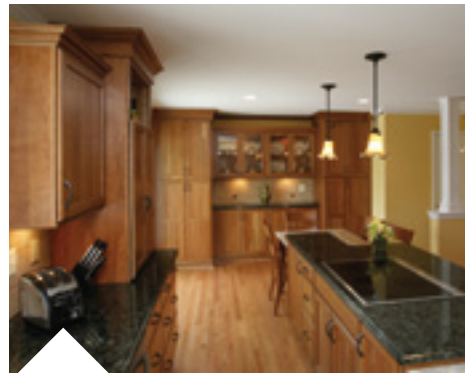
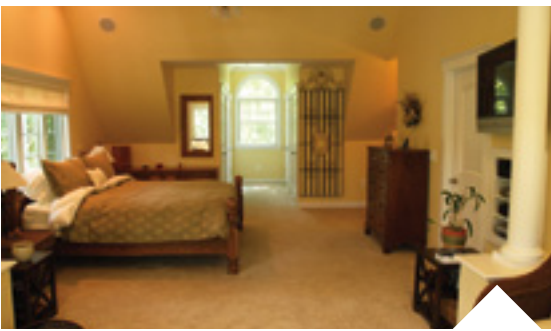
EXTERIORS

UNDER 100K

SILVER MERIT

Company Rauser Professional Contracting

Project Allen Exterior Alterations with Screen Porch



KITCHEN REMODELING

125K & UNDER

SILVER MERIT

Company Chesapeake Home Remodeling, LLC

Project Mason Residence-Kitchen and 1st floor living area remodel

INTERIOR ALTERATIONS WITH KITCHEN

135K - 180K

SILVER MERIT

Company Owings Home Services

Project Meadowood Project

INTERIORS /EXTERIORS ALTERATIONS

275K - 300K

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Company Home Professionals Inc.

Project Inman Watson Residence



INTERIOR ALTERATIONS WITH KITCHEN

135K - 180K

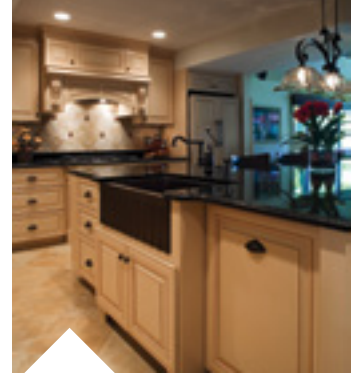
SILVER MERIT

Company Lynch Construction, Inc.

Project Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rettman



KITCHENS WITH ADDITION
450K - 500K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Wheatley Associates
Project Ruxton Kitchen Addition

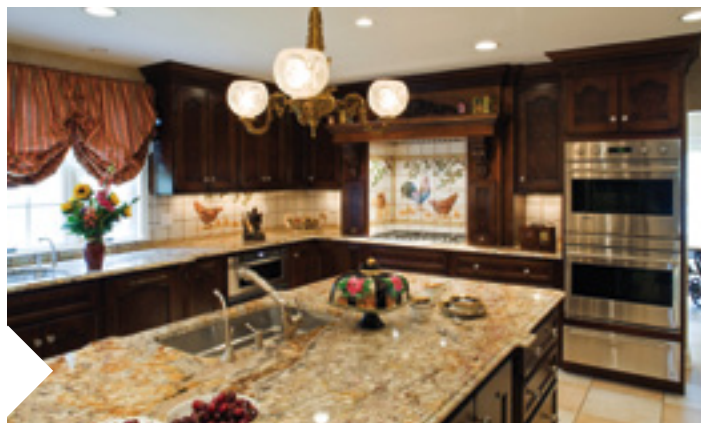


KITCHEN REMODELING
125K & UNDER
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Owings Home Services
Project Ellicott City Project



MASTER SUITE ADDITIONS & ALTERATIONS
200K - 250K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Wall To Wall Construction, LLC
Project Rockenbaugh Project

KITCHENS WITH ADDITION
300K - 350K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Owings Brothers
Project Westbrook Project

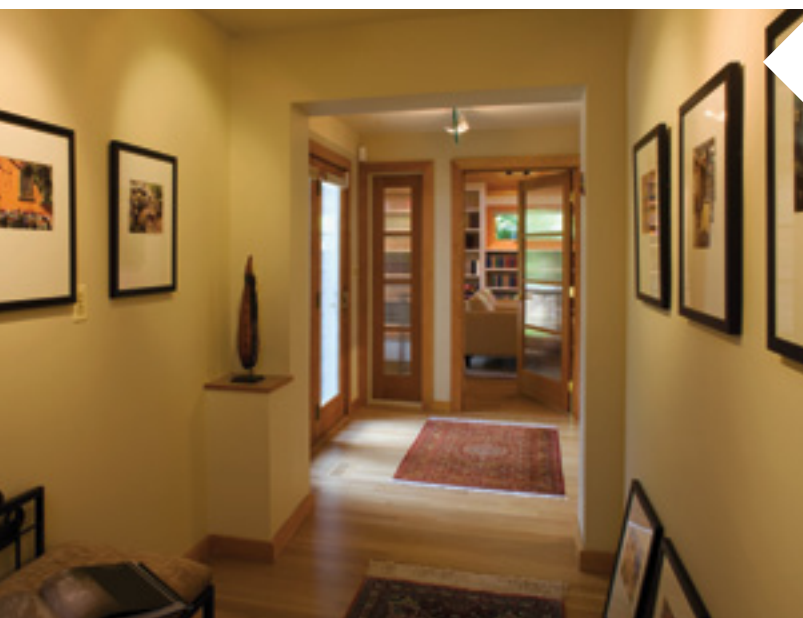


KITCHEN WITH ADDITIONS
100K - 150K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company A. Lohmeyer Contractors
Project Fields

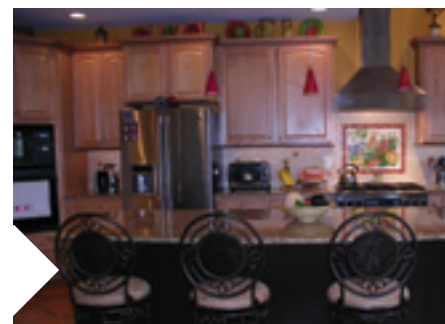
MASTER SUITE ADDITIONS & ALTERATIONS
200K - 250K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Trademark Remodeling
Project Frederick/Quesnel Master Bedroom Suite Addition



LIBRARY ADDITION
250K - 300K
 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Company Owings Brothers
Project Library Project



KITCHEN WITH ADDITIONS
100K - 150K
 SILVER MERIT
Company Rauser Professional Contracting
Project Tan Addition & Alteration



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Wheatley Associates, North Country "Open Spaces"
Interior Alterations with Kitchen 135K - 180K

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about the house

Wheatley Associates

North Country "Open Spaces"

Lead Carpenter: Ronald Wall **Interior Designer:** Mary Pitt/Sisters Treasures

The project focus for this 15 year old home was to reconfigure the main level incorporating better flow and use without adding to the existing footprint. A family space with an open floor appeal where everyone could gather was the goal for this young family. Interior walls were removed between the kitchen and dining room and the dining room and family room. Columns were added for not only structural support but architectural interest. A larger portal and glass doors were added to the underutilized living room to allow for privacy away from the family room activities. A portion of the attached garage was reclaimed to provide for a larger laundry room and storage area. The tones were kept warm with lots of natural light to filter into the newly designed spaces. Oak flooring, granite countertops, new cabinetry and new windows were installed to enhance the transformation of this home. ■

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Tactics to pursue every year

Dear Fellow Remodelers:

I think we can all agree that change is in the air. From the White House down to the smallest single family home, our nation is bracing itself for changes in the way we live, do business, borrow money, educate our children and view the world.

The remodeling industry has already seen a lot of change — most of it not good. Business is down across the board, reflecting the world-wide credit crunch, fears about liquidity, uncertainty in the markets and the understandable tendency to “hunker down and wait” when faced with so much bad news, practically on a daily basis. When people see their home equity drop by tens, maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars, it's hard to convince them to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on that home.

In such times, of course, there are still opportunities and as I talk with my fellow remodelers, I am cheered by stories of successes even in this staggering economy. The sobering truth is that our business is under stress. So here are four tactics that every remodeler should pursue this year and every year:

Stay in touch with your customers and prospects. Referrals remain the largest single source of consistent leads in our industry. Your customers know you and trust you. Remind them that you're still there, still producing and building and that you stand ready to help them or someone they know. There are plenty of people who will refuse to postpone their plans due to the economy and you need to be visible in order for them to find you.

Take advantage of “down time.” As a member of HBAM, you can take professional certification courses and become a Certified Graduate Remodeler, a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist, a Certified Master Remodeler, a Certified Green Professional and more. Holding these certifications puts you a step ahead of your competition and lets you stand out from the crowd -- and that's even more important now and in the future. You can check out the courses and certifications offered at www.homebuilders.org/page/remodcertifications/.



Reach out to your fellow professionals. We're all in this together and sharing experiences and ideas is a proven path to success. At HBAM, we've arranged several excellent venues for you to socialize with your peers and fellow remodelers. We just held our 2008 Celebrity Chef Night in October; our 9th Annual Key Connections event is Wednesday, February 18, 2009;

our Spring Dinner is held in April, the Awards of Excellence was in November and there are more. Consult www.homebuilders.org/page/Events/ or the pull-down Event Listings link for a complete list.

Uphold your brand. I spoke about this in my last President's Message, but it bears repeating. You have a valuable service to offer your customers — don't dilute it! Yes, times may be tough right now, but we cannot and should not shortchange the quality and service that we have been delivering. If we do that, we will tear down what has taken years to build: our reputation; our Image; our BRAND.

It's an adage of business that the companies who keep in touch with their customers and further improve their image during challenging times are the businesses that prosper most when times improve. Your HBAM Remodelers Council is ready to help you do just that. Call me at 410-808-5855 and I'll be glad to talk further about how HBAM can make a positive difference for your company.

Be profitable and be well.

Donald F. Lynch, Jr., CGR, CAPS
HBAM Remodelers President

Education

All courses will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the HBAM Conference Center, 7127 Ambassador Road, Suite 150, Baltimore, Maryland 21244

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A person with a backpack is climbing a tree in a lush green jungle. The scene is framed by a parchment-like scroll that has a hole in the middle, revealing the person and the tree. The text is written on the scroll in a stylized, red, outlined font.

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Lead Paint **Lowdown**

What you Need to Know about the New Federal Rules

BY JONATHAN SWEET

New lead paint regulations are set to take effect in 2010 and remodelers who work in pre-1978 buildings will face some major changes in the way they remodel some homes and businesses. Matt Watkins, an environmental policy analyst with NAHB, discussed the new rule. The full rule — the lead renovation, repair and painting program rule — is available at www.epa.gov/lead.

What facilities and homes will be affected?

It's really targeting housing that is occupied by children under the age of six or that has a pregnant woman residing there. To qualify as a child-occupied facility, there has to be a child under six years of age, two different days a week, at least three hours, with a combined total for the week of six hours and an annual time frame of 60 hours.

So this could apply to a home where people are simply seeing their grandkids every weekend?

Could be grandparents every weekend, it could be grandparents who are doing day care. For that matter, it could be the next-door neighbor's house, because they're there two or three times a week.

What type of training is this rule going to require for remodelers?

Training is an eight-hour course broken down into six hours in the classroom and two hours hands-on. I guess the model that's out there right now is the current EPA/HUD remodeling course for folks that are already doing work in HUD housing. That said, in addition to what's in that curriculum they'll probably add how to use the pre-renovation lead test kit and the post-renovation cleaning verification.

From a contractor standpoint, does it make sense to send their entire crew to get this kind of training?

I think from an economic standpoint, it would be costly to do that. Lead-safe work practices are pretty common steps, so I think just one person being trained in that and training the rest of the staff shouldn't be a problem.

How big an economic impact do you expect this to have on remodelers?

More than \$35 per project. [EPA's estimate of the cost.] I think from talking to some of the remodelers about this, I don't know that we've come up with a quantifiable number, but it's certainly bigger than what has been cited by EPA.

What are the key things remodelers need to be thinking about before they start on a job?

I think initially a remodeler should be thinking, "Should I even bother working in homes that were built prior to 1978?" Then, once they've decided, "I think I want to; that's a significant amount of my market," I think they're going to be thinking about insurance. Most liability insurance policies have a toxic materials exclusion, so once lead paint is spoken your policy almost becomes worthless. There really aren't any products out there for a remodeler to get that aren't extremely costly.

Then when they go out, they'll be thinking, "Well, how do I properly estimate a project?" Whether it's replacing windows or doing an addition or gutting a kitchen or bathroom, they're going to have to figure out how to estimate this. This is a new way of doing things. There's going to have to be some education of consumers on why this costs more.

Whether it's replacing windows or doing an addition or gutting a kitchen or bathroom, they're going to have to figure out how to estimate this. This is a new way of doing things. There's going to have to be some education of consumers on why this costs more.

Is NAHB concerned that we're going to see homeowners opt for the untrained contractor or try to undertake it themselves?

That's certainly a huge concern for us, that the economic desire to hire a fly by night or to do it yourself will outweigh the cost of protecting your family. That's the big hole in this whole regulation, that the entire do-it-yourself market has been exempted.

Are there any other parts of the rule that you're concerned about?

There's a record-keeping requirement that EPA has put in the rule that records have to be kept for three years after the job has been completed. The EPA has specifically said that the reason for keeping these records is strictly for compliance. It has nothing to do with protecting children or protecting the population or protecting the next home buyer. It's specifically there to keep the remodeler in check.

I think there are concerns, like I said, about insurance. I think there are concerns about pre-existing lead conditions. The remodeler might come in and do the windows, but there's lead on the base board and lead on the door jambs and those weren't addressed. Will there be a false sense of security on the part of the homeowner, saying, "Well, we had the windows changed out, so the lead's gone?" Those pre-existing conditions have not been affected by the work that's been done by the remodeler, but could they then come back at a later date and say the child has lead poisoning?

Is there anything a remodeler can do to protect themselves in that situation?
Aside from having a proper insurance policy in place, not really. I think in a civil case it would be their job to try to prove this child wasn't lead-poisoned by something they did.

What were some of the major wins for remodelers in the rule?

The biggest concern we avoided was having a third-party clearance test once we were done with the work. That didn't happen in the rule.

The recertification requirement had been every three years and that got changed to every five years. To a certain degree we got some modified grandfathering; if you've already taken a lead course from HUD/EPA, you only have to take a four-hour refresher to be certified, so for the guys that have already been certified, it's good for them.

What steps do remodelers have to take after the project?

You implement all of your lead-safe work practices and at the end of the project, you use a HEPA vac, then wash it down with a wet mop. Once you've done that, starting with window sills, you have to take a wet disposable cloth and wipe down the sill and compare it with a comparison card and if the dust that's on that sill is less than what's on that comparison card, you're done. If it looks like there's more dust than with the comparison card, vacuum again, wash again and do a wet wipe. If it still looks dirty, you HEPA vac and wash one more time, then do it with a dry cloth, then you're done. Basically, you're going to have to do the cleaning regime a maximum of three times.

Some people are arguing there should be a third-party, post-project testing. Any indication that the rule will be revisited?

This will be the rule for now. I know that health advocates made some squawks when the rule first came out to some of the environmental folks here in town, but since that time we haven't heard anything from them and we've seen nothing anyplace else. ■

Why join HBAM Remodelers?

Member Benefits

HBAM Remodelers offers many benefits to its members. Remodelers benefit from a variety of educational, mentoring and networking opportunities. In addition, the HBAM Remodeler's serves to improve the quality of the industry and its members through these programs. By promoting certification programs to consumers, members of the council are sought after for their strong professional and ethical principles.

News & Information

National: Members of the Council receive a free subscription to Professional Remodeler magazine. Each issue focuses on practical business insights from the country's leading remodelers. Members also receive NAHB Renewals, a monthly e-newsletter about national news that affects our industry.

Regional: Members of the Council receive a free subscription to ChesapeakeHome Magazine and are offered special advertising opportunities designed to help you reach upscale homeowners.

Local: The council is offered a section in each issue of HomeFront, HBAM's monthly newsletter to promote it's members, programs, and events.

For more information contact 410-265-7400.

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remodeler news

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We all know that our HBAM chapter is a local affiliate of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), its parent organization. We are proud to be a very active local group and with reason, because it turns out that our local HBAM is a trendsetter in the industry. There are few other local chapters, so we have learned, that offer the thorough programs, educational opportunities, member outreach and events programs, at the level achieved by our local HBAM.

We are proud to lead in this way and we urge all our members to TAKE ADVANTAGE of HBAM's strengths! Just browse through our web site at www.homebuilders.org and you'll be sure to find something that not only is of interest, but will also be of benefit to your company's growth and success.

NAHB.ORG – Well Worth a Visit!

Have you visited the NAHB web site recently (www.nahb.org)? Space doesn't permit us to list all the programs, functions, opportunities and materials available to NAHB members, but they include educational programs at the highest level; complete marketing materials and marketing training and guidelines; a plethora of information on suppliers, relationships, contractors and business models; training descriptions and seminars; special events all over the industry and the country; opportunities to join peer groups such as 20 Clubs and much more.



The good people at NAHB have put all their decades of experience and professionalism to good use in creating this site, one of the most thorough and well-organized we've ever seen. All builders and remodelers should consider it a priceless resource! This information is only available to NAHB members, so join today. ■

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GETTING TO GREEN – SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT WATER

A Practical Guide to NAHB Model Green Building Guidelines

BY H. ALAN MOONEY, P.E.

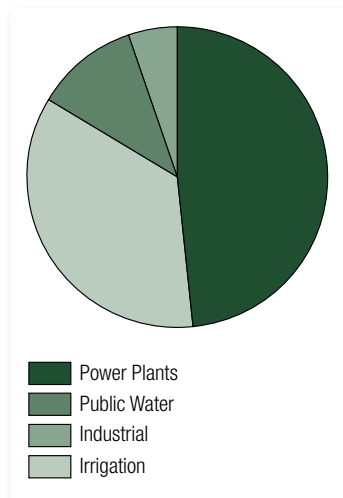


Figure 1. Water use.

Water conservation is a big part of green building. While many of your buyers are motivated to conserve, not everyone really understands the growing crisis related to our water supply. As you offer green building and, particularly, water conservation options and arguments to your buyers, this background information may be valuable.

Saving water is important!

The following are excerpts from our YOUR HOME newsletter. You can find the complete text at www.criteriumhomeinspection.com/articles1.html.

This information was gathered from various established, credible sources including the following:

- American Ground Water Trust (AGWT) – www.agwt.org
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – www.epa.gov/ebtpages/water.html
- American Water Works Association (AWWA) – www.awwa.org
- National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) – www.nahb.org
- U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) – www.usgbc.gov
- American Ground Water Trust (AGWT) – www.agwt.org

How We Use Water

- The average person consumes about 16,000 gallons of water in a lifetime.
- With normal activities (not including exercise), 35 percent of the water we consume is processed by our kidneys, 45 percent is exhaled through our lungs and 20 percent is lost to perspiration.
- About 130 million people in the U.S. get their water from ground water sources. That's almost 50 percent of the population.
- Of those, 40 million get their water from individual wells.
- In the U.S., lawns occupy more land area than any single agricultural crop. That's worth noting since many of us irrigate our lawns.
- 20 million homes in the U.S., about 20 percent of the population, have on-site wastewater disposal systems. That's important because improperly maintained systems can contaminate private water wells.
- A few years ago, the top five states with the most homes with private wells were New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Florida and Michigan.
- There are more than 160,000 public water systems in the U.S.

To put all this in perspective, note the following summary based on USGS (United States Geological Survey) data from 2000:

- Withdrawals from water sources totaled 408 billion gallons per day.
- Seventy-nine percent of withdrawals were from surface water (lakes, etc.).
- Eighty-five percent of withdrawals were fresh water.
- Thermoelectric power plants (those that use water for cooling) withdrew approximately 195 billion gallons per day, or 48 percent of the total.

- Irrigation withdrawals were 35 percent of the total and 40 percent fresh water, or 137 billion gallons per day.
- Public water supplies account for 11 percent of withdrawals, or 43 billion gallons per day.
- Industrial users account for 20 billion gallons per day, or 5 percent of the total.
- 43.5 million people had their own water supply and used about 3.5 billion gallons per day.
- In 1950, 62 percent of the population was served by public water supplies. In 2000, this grew to 85 percent.
- Worldwide, approximately one billion people do NOT have access to safe water for drinking, personal hygiene and domestic use, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Where We Get Water

As noted above, 79 percent of withdrawals are from surface water (lakes, etc.). Many public water systems use water from lakes. Some, however, use groundwater wells. And the 43.5 million people noted who have their own water supply are typically relying on wells that tap into groundwater supplies.

Groundwater is water located below the ground surface, filling the voids in rocks, gravel, sand and various soils. Saturated regions of groundwater that receive, store and transmit water to wells are called aquifers.

Aquifers get their water from rain and melted snow. As the water migrates down into the soil, plants use some of it, some evaporates and the remainder finds its way to aquifers. This is part of what is known as the hydrological cycle, where water accumulates in the atmosphere, causes precipitation, which is returned to the atmosphere through evaporation and plant growth. That's a simple explanation, but it captures the essential concept of the hydrological cycle. In short, water is constantly moving from one place to another.

Groundwater produces water of satisfactory quality for drinking in most areas because the ground through which it passes filters it. However, it is important to test the quality of your water on a regular basis if you are getting it from a private well. Annual testing is recommended.

Most households use 75 to 150 gallons of water per day per person. For a four-person household, that means you will need as much as 600 gallons of water a day for cooking, hygiene, cleaning, drinking, etc. A reasonable output for a private well is 3 to 5 gallons per

minute, which will normally keep up with peak demand for an average household. Low-yield wells (for example, 1 gallon per minute) will work, but to handle peak demand will normally require supplementation by a storage tank. Local regulations, however, may dictate the minimum output of a well before an occupancy permit is granted.

Of course, today, we can buy our water in bottles. Bottled water is now the most popular commercial, non-alcoholic drink. Buying bottled water strikes some as excessive, especially since some bottled water brands use public water systems as their source.

What About Quality?

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is a federal law first passed by the U.S. Congress in 1974 and last amended in 1996. SDWA applies to every public water system in the U.S.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers standards for groundwater and drinking water. The SDWA establishes standards used by EPA. Standards have been developed for known contaminants such as arsenic, lead, copper, microbials and radon. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/safewater/standards.html.

The EPA estimates that approximately 20 percent of human exposure to lead is attributable to lead in drinking water.

On October 11, 2006, the EPA finalized the Ground Water Rule, which targets utilities that provide water from underground sources, requiring greater vigilance for potential contamination by disease-causing microorganisms. More than 100 million Americans will benefit.

While water quality need not be a concern with most public water systems, it is worth noting that many public systems use groundwater as their source. The water comes from wells: The difference is that they are larger, deeper wells, managed as part of a controlled public utility. Public systems not served by wells are typically served by surface water from lakes. In this case, contamination must be monitored closely since open bodies of water are at higher risk than wells that access groundwater.

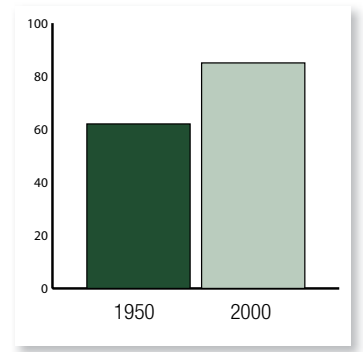


Figure 2. Public water usage.

Water usage has become a **critical concern.**

How Can You Conserve?

No matter where you get your water, the demand is actually growing faster than the population growth. Between 1950 and 2000, the population grew by 90 percent while the water usage grew by 127 percent. Basic economic laws of supply and demand mean less water will lead to higher prices. Many public water systems are being purchased by investment groups (both onshore and offshore), as they are recognized as good investments: good for the investor, but perhaps not so good for the consumer.

Green Building, a popular topic and the focus of many builders today, is based on guidelines from two primary sources: the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Both guidelines are currently voluntary but may become mandatory in the future and they put high priority on water conservation to achieve any level of green building certification. For example, the NAHB guidelines have this to say about water conservation:

Water usage has become a critical concern. Use recycled water for irrigation. Production of wastewater should be minimized. Consumption of potable water should be reduced. Low flow devices are already part of many codes. Re-use of wastewater and rainwater, filtering systems and other approaches are all important.

Most major plumbing manufacturers are rapidly expanding their product lines to include low water usage devices. Listed below are a few things that can be done to conserve water:

- Install low flow showerheads
- Take shorter showers
- Install low flow toilets; current models work much better than the earlier versions
- Install an on demand domestic water heater
- Keep your hot water heater close to its point of use
- Use low flow irrigation for vegetation, i.e., a drip system instead of sprinklers
- Separate and reuse gray water (sink, laundry waste water) where permitted by code
- Collect rainwater for non-consumption use where permitted by code
- Minimize discretionary use of water, e.g., car washing, irrigation

"Get used to living with less water" is a lead quote from The Kiplinger Letter, June 22, 2007. The article goes on to talk about mandatory limits on water usage now in place in some states, water recycling requirements and, in general, water conservation. The September 2007 issue of Popular Mechanics has an article about water conservation entitled, "Know your footprint – Water." Conserving water is a reality; now. ■



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Success With Traditional Trim



Figure 1. For the look of a traditional stool, the author uses full 1-inch-thick stock profiled with a router. He shapes the bottom edge with a cove-and-bead bit and the top edge with a 5/16-inch roundover bit. At right, the finished edge profile with the router and trimmer held in place.

Window details like profiled stools and aprons with applied moldings have helped this builder find a profitable niche



ALL PHOTOS BY BRYAN STRIEGLER

BY GARY STRIEGLER

Just about all my trim details could be described as old-fashioned; I like to build new houses with the traditional look and feel of homes built a century ago. I still cope molding joints rather than resort to corner blocks and I still build railings with balusters and handrails rather than using drywalled cripple walls with wood caps. I don't take shortcuts when it comes to trimming the windows, either: Instead of picture-framing the units, I always build stools with aprons underneath and fitted window casings.

Years ago, when I was trimming apartments, I could make a window stool and install it with casings and an apron in less than 30 minutes.

Today I spend several hours to trim out a single window using the method described in this article. I consider it time well-spent, however, because nearly everyone notices how attractive my windows are. I've even gotten a couple of new homes to build because of my window detailing.

Even though I own a high-end custom residential construction company, at heart I'm basically a trim carpenter. This approach — careful detailing of traditional trim — reflects my passion for fine interior millwork and has been responsible, in part, for our success in the lucrative custom-home market.

The Look Starts With the Stool

The window stool is critical to giving new windows the character of homes built 100 years ago, so that's where I focus much of my attention. Instead of 3/4-inch stock, I always use material at least one inch thick, which better matches the standard stools of that era. I typically use 5/4 poplar for paint-grade work, choosing the flattest, straightest lumber I can find. I clean up both faces with my planer and belt sander while leaving as much thickness as possible — preferably more than an inch.

I also think that a traditional-style stool should have a routed cove-and-bead profile that faces down, with the top edge simply rounded over (See Figure 1). That seems to best match the stool profiles I've seen in photos and old millwork catalogues. While the exact underside profile isn't critical, I generally use a 5/16-inch roundover bit to profile the upper edge. A smaller bit doesn't take enough off, and a larger bit can interfere with the underside profile, particularly when you're using thinner stock.

Before routing the stool, I carefully check that the edge of the stock the bearing rides on is defect-free, since any small void or irregularity will be transferred to the profile.

To determine the stool's length, I measure between the inside faces of the window jambs and add 3 inches to allow for stool overhangs, jamb reveals and casing reveals, plus twice the width of the casing trim.

For the apron style that I use here, the stool must be wide enough to leave 2 1/2-inch-wide ears after it's notched around the drywall. I start the cuts for the ears with my table saw, then finish them with a jigsaw (Figure 2).

Install the jamb extensions and stool as a unit before installing the stool, I first cut and assemble the jamb extensions from 3/4-inch stock. I carefully measure from the outer edge of the window jamb to the surface of the finish drywall at the window's four corners, then do a quick drawing of the required jamb extensions. Unless you are living in a perfect world, these widths will vary slightly and so should your jamb extensions. I take the time to taper the jamb extensions with my jointer to the correct width for each corner, though this same taper could also be cut with a power planer or even a block plane. I also back cut the extensions with a 2-degree bevel on their face, with the high point on the inner edge (a good reason to use a jointer). This extra step helps me get precise mitered casing joints because it allows the miters (which I also back cut) to lie flat against the wall even if the jamb extensions extend slightly past the wall plane.

When working with larger windows, I like to install the jamb extensions and stool together as a unit. First I fasten the jamb extensions together at the top butt joints with pocket screws and then I pocket-screw the side extension jambs to the stool (Figure 3). The pocket screws offer a very strong, tight connection without requiring glue, allowing me to shim and install the whole assembly at one time. On smaller windows with shorter stool stock, where extra joint strength isn't necessary, it's okay to simply use pins or staples to fasten the extensions together and the stool to the extensions from underneath.

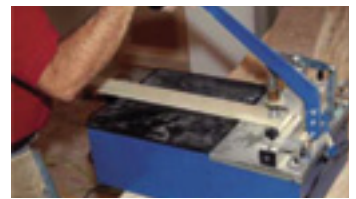


Figure 2. It helps to have the right tools: The author uses a table saw to cut the ears on the stool (top) and a jointer to taper the extensions so they match the plane of the drywall next to the window (center). A Kreg machine makes quick work of boring pocket holes (bottom).

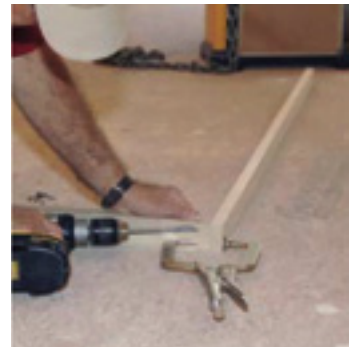


Figure 3. Pocket screws hold the jamb extensions together so they can be installed as a unit (top). On large windows the author attaches the stool with screws (bottom); on small ones he pins the stool to the side jambs from beneath.

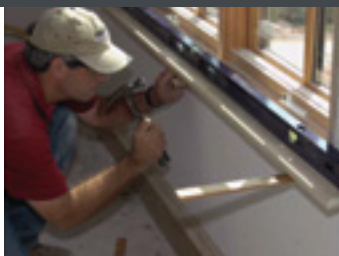


Figure 4. The author uses a level as a straightedge when shimming the stool, which results in an even reveal along the bottom edge of the window.

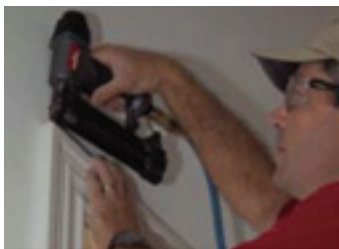


Figure 5. After marking the 1/4-inch reveals around the perimeter of the window (top to bottom), the author sets the side casings in place on the window stool and transfers the mark to the casing. Before fitting the top casing, he back cuts the miter cut slightly with a block plane to ensure a tight fit, joins the miter together with glue and cross-pins the joints.

I size the jamb extensions to leave a 1/4-inch reveal where the extension meets the window jamb. On casement units, I like to leave a larger 1/2- to 3/4-inch reveal along the bottom of the window above the stool so the crank can turn freely.

After setting the jamb extension and stool assembly in place against the window, I center and shim the stool to have an even reveal along the bottom of the window (Figure 4). For twin window units, I use a straightedge to make sure there are no humps or dips in the stool.

I also use the straightedge to check the window jambs. While the windows may not always be perfectly plumb, it's more important that the jambs and their extensions are straight and square. When the head jamb extension is centered with an even reveal at each side jamb, I check the side jambs and extensions with the straightedge, shim to fit, then secure the jamb extensions and stool by nailing through the shims into the framing.

Tight Miters

After I've installed the jamb extensions, I begin casing the window by first marking the 1/4-inch reveals along the faces of the jambs with a tri-square (Figure 5).

Most of the time, I'm installing a profiled casing with mitered corners, which typically requires more careful fitting than flat casings with butt joints. I get the best results by nailing both of the side casings on first, then fitting the head casing. Rather than use a tape measure, I mark the side casings in place, using my reveal markings on the jambs. After cutting the 45-degree miters, I like to block-plane a little back relief on each miter cut, which makes it a lot easier to get a tight joint later on.

With the side casings nailed in place, I cut the head casing about 1/8 inch too long. This allows me to check the fit at each corner when I'm centering the head casing and to make small adjustments in the miter cuts for near-perfect joints. I think it's worth making a couple of extra cuts to get great joints. Also, with the backcut on the casing miters and the 2-degree bevel on the outer edge of the jamb extensions, I can get tight miters even if the jamb extensions are slightly proud of the wall in spots. No matter what type of material I'm using, I always glue and cross-pin the joints.

Three-Piece Apron Dresses Up the Trim

Finally, I build a detailed apron by wrapping the two long edges of a 1x3 with a decorative molding (Figure 6, opposite page). For this window, I used stock panel molding but any base cap or similar molding that has a square shoulder would also work.

Building up a three-piece molding is a lot more work than using the standard piece of casing as the apron. By the time you've completed the last return of panel molding, you've actually cut and assembled seven pieces, including the four mitered returns. But I've found that just about everything in construction that looks better requires a little extra work. To find the length of the 1x3 apron, I measure across the window from outside to outside of the casing and subtract 1 1/2 inches to allow for the two 3/4-inch-thick molding returns.

After cutting the 1x3 to length, I typically glue and nail in place the panel molding pieces that wrap the top and bottom of the apron. I use a 23-gauge headless pinner for this because it won't split the short return pieces of molding, and it leaves small holes that are easily filled.

The last step is nailing the apron assembly under the stool. I take care to center it accurately, using centerline measurements marked on both the apron and the drywall, since any offset will appear visually exaggerated by the built-up trim. If I have done everything right, the outside edges of the panel mold returns should line up with the outside of the casing trim. ■

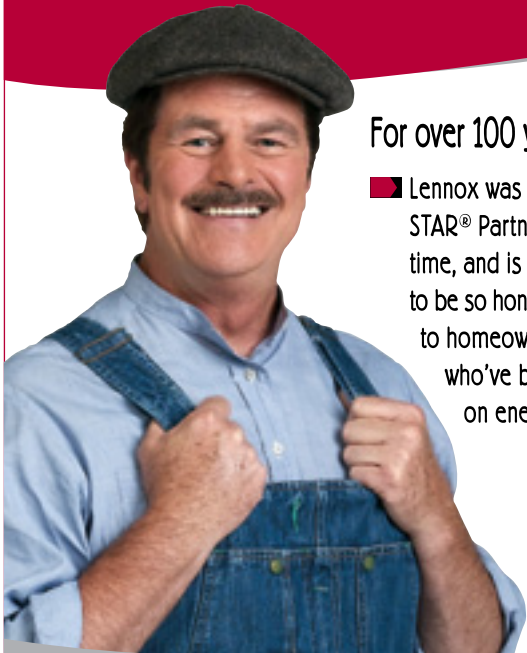
Gary Striegler is a builder in Springdale, Ark.

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Figure 6. The 1x3 apron is wrapped with panel molding top and bottom (top right). The author glues and pins the small pieces together with a 23-gauge headless pinner (center right), then installs the apron in one piece (bottom right). The finished window (above).

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What Can You Recycle?

BY CARL SEVILLE

Almost every renovation project has a dumpster parked in front. Dumpsters are an easy way to get rid of waste. Throw it in, haul it off and it's gone (usually with a neighbor's couch thrown in). But where does it actually go? Usually to a landfill, many of which are being closed as they fill up. So it goes to a transfer station, where it is unloaded, then reloaded and driven farther away to a new landfill. This takes time, money, fuel and land, all of which are limited resources. On top of this, much of the debris that remodelers throw away can be reused or recycled, saving money and our natural resources in the process. We all know how to recycle the basics; recycling construction debris is more involved but, with a little extra effort, can be very successful.

Let's look at what can be recycled in a remodeling project. Asphalt and fiberglass shingles can be ground up and recycled into a gravel-like material that can be used as a base for driveways or, in larger quantities, roads and parking lots. After the roof comes off, usually the decking, rafters and other framing materials follow. Depending on where you live, you may find framing materials made from heart pine, cedar, fir, cypress and other old woods, all of which can be salvaged and remilled into flooring and other trim. Any unpainted lumber, new or old, can be ground into mulch and used for erosion control or plant bedding. Nails can be removed and lumber reused on the site or sold at a premium.

Masonry and concrete are easily recycled. I recently salvaged more than 15,000 bricks from a house being demolished and delivered them to a renovation project down the street where they were

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reinstalled. Landscape contractors and suppliers may be interested in older bricks which they can use to build walls and walkways. Broken or unusable bricks, as well as concrete block and clay roof tiles can be ground into gravel for use on or off the job site. Cabinets, appliances, doors, windows, plumbing fixtures, lighting and flooring can be removed carefully and re-used on or off the job site, sold or donated to many non-profit organizations that reuse or resell them to support their programs. Copper wires and pipes, aluminum gutters and other non-ferrous metals are easily segregated during demolition and construction and sold at recycling centers.

This is just the start of a long list.

Knowing the challenges involved is important: locating resources to take your excess materials; educating your staff and trades to properly sort recyclables from waste; and finding enough space on the job site to store materials waiting for recycling. Your local waste management authority is a good place to look for information on recycling. Check out Habitat for Humanity and local municipal landfills and recycling centers (remember that donations to non-profits can provide tax deductions for your clients — another selling point). To properly educate your team, write and publish a company waste management policy, post it on the job site and include it in your employee handbook and subcontract agreements. If space on your job site is tight and your customer is concerned about their yard resembling a landfill, enlist them in the process — get their buy-in on your recycling program before you start. Turn it into a marketing opportunity by posting signs saying “This Remodeler Recycles.”

Instituting a recycling program on your job site won't be easy, but then again we didn't become remodelers because we thought it was easy. With some careful planning, team education and job site management you can reduce the waste generated during demolition and construction providing both cost savings and environmental benefits. ■

Carl Seville is an advisory board columnist for Professional Remodeler magazine. This article is reprinted with permission from Professional Remodeler.



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Liquidity, Good Business Practices are Keys to Survival

BY JOSHUA NESTER

Liquidity and good business practices are the only true solutions to surviving the current downturn, according to a panel of industry and financial experts.

“Cash is king” and will create a buffer to help builders through the tough market, says Ron Robichaud, of Robichaud Financial Services in Laconia, New Hampshire. “We’ve seen builders who have run through all their cash reserves and exhausted all their assets. Creating liquidity is the key to survival.”

Builders can spend their cash to boost their businesses if they have it, says bankruptcy attorney Harley Riedel, of Stichter, Riedel, Blain and Prosser, P.A. of Tampa, Florida., “but only if it solves your problem.”

“I know some builders who have been pulling money out of their savings accounts to stay alive,” said builder Randy Noel. “At some point you look at it and say, ‘Where do I stop bleeding and where do I get off this train?’”

Bring in Professionals to Take a Good, Hard Look at Your Business

Commercial and mortgage banking expert Tom Flowers, who has worked at Bank of America and U.S. Bank, said builders should conduct a “realistic, hard-nosed assessment” of where they are in their marketplace. This could require bringing in outside legal, accounting and other business professionals, he adds.

Outside professionals will see things that the typical builder might not see because he didn’t have to deal with that adversity when times were good, according to Flowers. “This may be a good time to find some additional help.”

Follow their advice, Flowers added, while noting that builders need to be aware of any unintended consequences

that can occur if they make capricious moves with their capital. Outside professionals should be able to warn them, he notes.

Builders must ask themselves some very basic — and difficult — questions: Can I survive? Do I want to survive? What’s the best course for me in the short run? For the rest of my life?

“If you know you’re going to have difficulties, be aware of them,” Flowers adds. “Recognize what those issues are going to be and make plans and take steps early to deal with them.”

Protect Business and Personal Assets

Riedel discussed several ways builders can protect their business and personal assets if they are facing financial distress and potential bankruptcy:

- **Keep Business Banking and Business Negotiating Separate:** Riedel recommends that builders not bank with the same institutions where they are about to negotiate contracts and loans. If those banks are owed money, they can issue stop payments, bounce checks and take the balance on the builder’s accounts. The banks can also take the builder’s personal account, according to Riedel.
- **An Automatic Stay Could Preserve Cash:** In a bankruptcy proceeding, an automatic stay gives the debtor protection from his creditors, subject to the oversight of the bankruptcy judge, and brings all of the debtor’s assets and creditors into bankruptcy court, where the rights of all concerned can be balanced. This procedure can help builders preserve cash and increase liquidity, Riedel says.

- **Don’t Jeopardize Personal Assets:** Riedel recommends that builders determine what assets are exempt from being taken in a bankruptcy proceeding and only “dip into them” if they are 100 percent protected. Under federal law, retirement benefits are exempt and in many states, homesteads, jointly-owned property, annuities and insurance proceeds are exempt. Builders need to understand the bankruptcy laws in their states before they use these types of assets to bolster their business, he said.

Keep Communication With Banks Open

Restructuring expert Troy Taylor, of Algon Group in Atlanta, urges builders to continue communicating with their banks and lenders, even though these discussions can be unpleasant. If builders are at the point where they think they are even remotely approaching a serious problem, they should “sit down with the bank and communicate,” he says. If need be, builders should bring along their legal and business teams to help in the discussions. “Sitting down with your bankers and telling them you’re not going to be able to pay them is not going to be a great conversation, which is one of the reasons why having a third party there will help a little bit to take some of the bullets,” Flowers says. ■

For more information about this item, please contact Joshua Nester at 800-368-5242 or email jnester@nahb.com.

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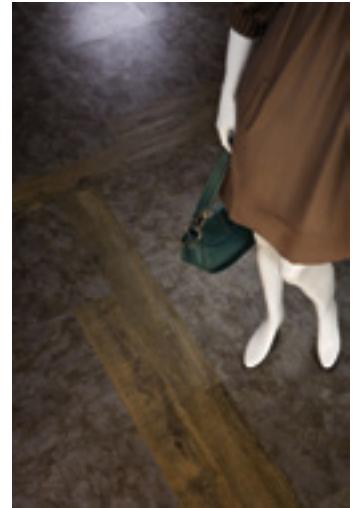
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beauty of aged surfaces combined with the versatility, durability and comfort of resilient flooring. It's an ideal choice for most any commercial setting, including retail, hospitality, healthcare and corporate environments. Patina is available in 18" x 18" square tiles and five metallic colors: Brass, Zinc, Platinum, Rose Gold and Silver. For more information, call 888-338-1029 or visit Parterre online at parterreflooring.com.



Ecolife™ Stabilized Weather-Resistant Wood Now Is AWPA Standard

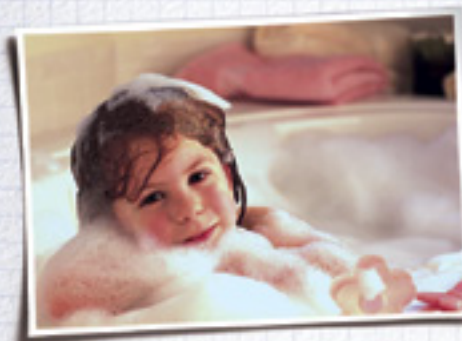
The American Wood Protection Association (AWPA) standardized Viance's Ecolife™ Stabilized Weather-Resistant Wood, effective immediately. The new standard will be printed in the 2009 AWPA Book of Standards, to be published in May 2009. The AWPA is the principal consensus-based standards writing organization for the wood treating industry in the United States. This standardization shows that industry experts agree that Ecolife treated wood is a preferable new technology that architects, home inspectors, builders and homeowners alike can trust.

Extensive, valid laboratory and field or service data must be provided and reviewed by independent wood scientists and leaders in the wood treatment industry for a product to be included in the AWPA Standards. For more information about AWPA-Standardized Ecolife Stabilized Weather Resistant Wood, visit www.treatedwood.com.

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Steve Rubin is Harkins Business Development Manager

General contractor Harkins Builders, Inc. of Marriottsville, Maryland is pleased to announce the hire of Steve Rubin as Business Development Manager. Mr. Rubin has been active in the home building and development industry in the Baltimore/Washington corridor for fifteen years, is a member of the board of Home Builders Association of Maryland and is 2008 president of the association's Land Development Council. He will be focusing on business development opportunities in the Mid-Atlantic region, where Harkins serves clients engaged in the development of multifamily residential, mixed-use, commercial, senior living, student housing and military projects.



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- Best Operating Facility for Classic Moulding & Door, a division of TW Perry
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To view the article please visit ProSales' website at www.prosalesonline.com/excellence.

Greenhorne & O'Mara Names Frank R. Finch, P.E., CEO

Engineering consulting firm, Greenhorne & O'Mara Inc., announced that President Frank R. Finch, P.E., will assume the added role of Chief Executive Officer. Current CEO John Healey, Ph.D., P.E., will continue as Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Finch joined G&O 6 years ago as Senior Vice President of Water and Environment and in March of 2007 was selected for the position of President. He has more than 30 years of broad-based experience in the engineering consulting and construction industries, serving in significant positions as a senior officer with the U.S. military and in executive positions in the private and public sectors.

As Chairman, Dr. Healey will be responsible for the management and performance of the Board of Directors. He will remain active in seeking opportunities for continued growth for G&O and for solidifying its reputation as one of the top engineering firms in the country.

Greenhorne & O'Mara (G&O) is a full-service engineering consulting firm. For more information, visit their website at www.G-and-O.com.

Masland Contract Adopts DOW™ LOMAX™ Technology

Masland Contract will use LOMAX™ Technology from The Dow Chemical Company in the manufacturing of its high-quality latex carpet backing systems. Currently, this technology involves the usage of landfill gas (methane) as a renewable energy source. In using this alternative energy source, Dow has replaced more than 90 percent of its fossil fuel demand, which results in a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

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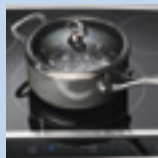
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