

Holiday Greetings from all of us at Howard Lamcke. Best wishes for a safe and prosperous New Year! Thank you everyone for your business, your referrals, and especially your friendship. This has been a crazy busy year for our industry. Next year promises to be the same if the large number of completed blue prints we have reviewed is any indication. Our plan is to expand our work force and continue to improve and reinvent our management policies to keep up with the increased volume of work. We have also secured the additional services of some excellent new subcontractors and suppliers. That said, experiencing a remodel project is starting to feel a little bit like the airline industry on a vacation. Some things are just out of our control.

If you are planning a remodel next year, here are some thoughts. First, plan early! If you are getting plans and engineering for a permit, be aware that everyone is busy. When you do get all your paperwork in order, you may find that the city is behind for approval. Before you start construction, order all your parts as soon as possible. Everything we order seems to take twice as long as two years ago. As a small example, we have taken to stocking pocket door frames from Home Depot because they are rarely in stock. Once construction is underway, understand that changes and additions may cause considerable delays. That doesn’t mean don’t do them, we want you to have your dream project and to have it perfect! Remember also that the city inspection times continue to be a problem; in most cities it’s 3-8 days wait time. I guess what we are saying is patience, planning, communication and cooperation are needed now more than ever. We promise to practice what we preach! We pledge as always to provide you with the best service and parts at the most reasonable prices possible. Call us, and together we will make all your remodeling dreams come true. Until then, Happy New Year!

**End of the Year Check List**

We haven’t done one of these in a while. On your next holiday shopping trip, pick up a large package of AA batteries and maybe a few 9V too. Then come home and change every battery in your smoke and C/O detectors. By the way, if you don’t have C/O detectors you should buy one for each level of the house and place them outside the bedrooms. Since you have the batteries in your hand replace all those in your clocks, in your thermostats, and even your channel changers. Come on, it will be fun! After you are finished, commit one hour to do all of the following. Change the furnace filters. Check to be sure the areas around your furnace and water heater are clear from obstructions. Check the top of your water heater for leaks and corrosion. Check under all the sinks in the house for leaks from drains or water supply. Change the water filters on your refrigerator. Run a load of ice down your garbage disposal. Go outside and make sure all of your downspouts are draining and directed away from the foundation. Then, all done for now; have a holiday cookie!