

Hello from Howard Lamcke! I’m writing this letter on a beautiful spring day. The continuing drought is a mixed blessing. This weather is perfect for construction, and our industry is working at a frantic pace not seen since before the great recession. As we came out of that period last year, it was very hard to schedule subs and suppliers. Everybody seems to have caught up with the pace and increased their staffing and inventories. That has made it easier for us, but it still takes careful planning and preparation to coordinate everyone. The one area of concern had been a cabinet source since the close of our beloved Burman Cabinets. We now have several excellent choices for quality cabinets at competitive prices. Despite the challenges, being busy again has been wonderful. We have heard from so many past clients and friends. We are working on some really nice projects and are very grateful for all your referrals, and look forward to working with you in the future!

**Remodeling- the Ecstasy and the Agony- Continued…**

We spent last year talking about the excitement of planning a remodel. We discussed ways to prepare for and minimize the disruption. Careful planning and open communication combined with an expectation that things always come up and will be dealt with leads to a successful project. We have done this over 2,500 times; and plan to do it 2,500 more!!! However, we can’t end this series without a brief note about the frustrating permit process.

Did you know that Romex wiring is not allowed in the town of Hillsborough? Or that in San Mateo County only cast iron pipe is allowed for drainage. If you remodel more than 50% of your house in Sunnyvale you will be required to put in fire sprinklers. If you add a sink in Campbell, you will need to put a $4,000 sewer clean out by the sidewalk. In San Jose, it can take up to 7 days to schedule an inspection. All the cities are now enforcing the code to install hardwired smoke and C/O detectors with any work being done. The newest rules involve all the existing plumbing fixtures in your home. You are required to replace all your toilets with 1.28 gallon types; and to install flow restrictors on faucets in showers and the kitchen. This is the requirement even if you pull a permit to replace a window.

The point is, there’s no rhyme or reason to the codes; or continuity between the cities for their enforcement. Knowing the rules before you start will help somewhat with this “Agony” part of your project. We look forward to this conversation with you!