

Hello from Howard Lamcke! Summer is in full swing, and it’s starting to feel like old times for the construction industry. Home prices are up and equity loans are resuming. Everyone is feeling better about putting money into their homes, and those projects have been on hold for a while. The weather has been very cooperative as well. Drought has been a big friend to our business. One note: I have experienced 3 times the number of calls to look at cracks in sheetrock and stucco than in previous years. I believe the overwhelming majority of these are due to an unprecedented winter without rain. However, I am always glad to come and check out the situation, and to talk with you about all your residential remodeling needs. We remain committed to providing you with the best products and services for the most affordable prices possible. Until then!

Remodeling- the Ecstasy and the Agony Continued…

Dust control during a major remodel is quite difficult, particularly on larger projects where walls are being removed. Enter the Zip-wall. A Zip-wall is a commercially available floor to ceiling zipper pre-built into an adhesive plastic panel strip. They are designed to attach easily to a temporary plastic wall. We can set these up using scrap lumber and 6 mil. plastic to seal off half of a room. Or we can place them across a hallway entrance. The advantage of the Zip-wall is that the workers can use it during the day, and the homeowners can use it at night. Not so great for moving large parts and equipment through, but we have used it with success on a number of projects. Dust and dirt during a remodel is by far the number one irritant for the home owner. Every situation is unique, and solutions are custom tailored to fit the layout and the access needs. Just remember, the more you can isolate the work area, the better you can control the mess!

The next issue is access and scheduling. Nothing drives a homeowner crazier than to not know when the crew is showing up. Of course, nothing drives a contractor crazier than to have to schedule access every day! This is particularly true on small projects where the chores don’t take all day and a crew is not permanently on site. For years we have used a lock box with a key so that the crew and subcontractors can come and go. We specify that the hours will be 7.30-4.00 Monday-Friday when we could be in and out. Any other times are to be arranged in advance. This system has worked well on hundreds of jobs, but we recognize that some homeowners do not want to leave a key, and would prefer to know the schedule each day. We are happy to accommodate anyone to their comfort level and hope here is a mutual understanding of the issues involved. We have provided calendars of the work schedule to help with the process, and are always available by cell phone. Still…. Stuff happens. Scheduling remains the hardest thing to do for the owner of any service industry company, and there is always room for improvement. To be continued….