

Happy Holidays from all of us at Howard Lamcke. We wish for you and yours a very safe and prosperous New Year. The recent heavy but welcome rainfall has not dampened the enthusiasm for remodeling. It does present some challenges for exterior work that we have been fortunate to avoid the last few years. That includes putting tarps on roofs every night and extra drops on the floors every day for muddy feet. There could be schedule delays; not just for rain but for things like drywall mud and paint to dry. With a little bit of patience, construction does go on year around in California, as it has been for years! We have had a very fine year: completing over 80 jobs. Thanks to all for your business and your referrals. We are especially grateful for all our old friends through the years, and for the new friends we have met. We hope to be your “contractor for life”, and remain committed to bringing you the finest products and services for the best price possible.

Remodeling, the Ecstasy and the Agony- Continued….

Disruption of electrical service is an entirely different story. Wires get crossed and cut during demolition. Circuits get blown, workmen get shocked; (not as bad as it sounds, really!). We find more shoddy electrical work that needs repair than all the other trades combined as part of our remodels. Often these need to be attended to immediately, and sometimes the only way to do that is to cut off all the power to sort out the mess. 37 years ago this was less of a problem; but with computers it can be a real disaster. All I can tell you is to be aware that this might occur, and be patient when it does. My employees have been trained to inform our customers when work is about to be done, but emergencies come up. More than any other service, loss of electricity is most irritating.

A more general and longer lasting disruption of services may occur to the two most important rooms in the house: the kitchen and the bathroom. Most of our customers have two bathroom homes. If one is being remodeled, one is still available for use. Of course, that means use by everyone; the crew included. That means a lot more extra men and we are not in the least insulted if that is distasteful for you. We are happy to provide a portable toilet out front; the charge is approximately $100 per month and well worth it! More problematic is when there is only one bathroom in the house. A full remodel with mortar set tile takes at least 2 weeks, so obviously other arrangement have to be made.

The surprising irritation about a kitchen remodel is not the loss of the cooking appliances but instead it’s the sink. Kitchen remodels last 4-6 weeks minimum. One can always microwave or BBQ, but washing dishes in the bathroom sink or tub is tiresome. If a laundry tub or room is available it is simple. If not, we have a wonderful portable kitchenette that we have developed for the customers’ use. It has a sink with at least a cold water hookup and drain with sump pump. It has either a gas or electric cooktop, and space for a microwave. We have used this very successfully on several jobs now…