



Happy New Year!

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Vol. 4 No. 4

Ricci Lumber Gazette

NEWS FROM THE RICCI LUMBER COMPANIES

Saving Energy and Money



HAYES

With winter and frosty temperatures almost here, you will probably be asked by your clients about insulation and

ways to cut down heating bills. You might also have heard that President Bush recently signed into law the Energy Tax Incentives Act of 2005, which provides many tax incentives to individuals and businesses that make energy efficient improvements or purchases.

Fiberglass insulation, at 40 cents a square foot for 6" R-19 batts, continues to be one of the best values out there in the insulation world. It is easy, albeit itchy, to work with as it comes precut into pieces designed to fit into an eight-foot wall cavity. Ricci Lumber is well stocked with a great selection of traditional fiberglass insulation. We recently began stocking fiberglass insulation for cathedral ceilings (8" thick), for between I-joists (full 16" wide) and for steel studs (3-5/8" thick). With Ricci's varied inventory in insulation, you can now get an R-13 value for your 2x4 walls, an R-21 value for your 2x6 walls and an R-38 value for your ceilings.

Polyisostyrene, also known as foil-faced board comes in 4' x 8' sheets and gives you an R-value of 6.4 per inch of thickness. Styrofoam in 2' x 8' sheets remains very popular at Ricci and comes in with an R-value of 5.0 per inch of thickness. We also stock weather-stripping, caulking and switch plate backs to make a dwelling more energy efficient.

Your customers should know that with the new Energy Tax Act they might qualify for tax deductions or tax credits for improvements that are made to their homes. A 10% tax credit is avail-

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Service & Experience

Rick Becksted Sr. says he is "Just a regular guy, pounding nails to make a living." And, he will be the first to tell you, his years of work with Ricci Lumber has certainly helped make that possible.

Becksted, whose family-owned contracting business is based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, estimates he has been working in the industry for more than 40 years. He has owned his own business for nearly 20 years, and for the last eight years his son, Rick Becksted Jr., has been his business partner.

"My uncle owned a lumber yard, and I started working for him when I was 15. After going to college to become an architect, I decided that wasn't really what I was looking to do. I didn't want to sit at a desk. I just love pounding nails," said Becksted Sr.

His son tells a similar story: "I've been working with my father since I was 14. I went away to college, but realized I wanted to stay in the business."

As a family business, the pair works hard with their crew on a wide variety of projects throughout the seacoast. And, for longer than Becksted Sr. can remember he has been getting his nails and other supplies from Ricci Lumber.

"I've always gotten materials from Ricci. I know everyone there," he said.

Becksted says the reason he works with Ricci Lumber is simple: "I get great service."

"If I need six 2x4's late on Friday afternoon, well, then I know I can get them from Ricci. They're there when I need them. I can't say that about Home Depot."

Becksted always relies on Ricci Lumber for special orders as well.

"Sometimes a customer will ask for something exotic – something I've nev-



PHOTO: RICK BECKSTED

er heard of. Anita at Ricci will stay on the phone for hours tracking down just what I need," he said.

As a small contracting company, the Becksted team handles practically all aspects of a job.

"We do just about anything. Sometimes I feel as if I learned too many different parts of the business," Becksted Jr. says with a laugh.

And, working with Ricci Lumber, this family business can get all the materials they need.

The project they are currently work-

ing on with Ricci Lumber is a renovation of a 1,100 square-foot, two bedroom home in Kittery Point, Maine. Started more than two years ago by another builder, the project was halted due to code violations and financial problems. The Becksted team are picking up where the project was left off. They finished the framing and roof of the home, with all the lumber purchased from Ricci Lumber, and they are currently finishing the exterior work. Looking ahead,

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TOOL TIME

New Tools for Contractors

Ricci Lumber is excited to offer two new professional nailers from Bostitch, the F21PL-21° Industrial Framing Nailer System and the F28WW-28° Industrial Framing Nailer System. Both nailers are ideal for a wide variety of projects including:

- Framing
- Sheathing
- Siding
- Installing metal connectors
- Trusses
- Bridging
- Wood to masonry
- Engineered lumber
- Strapping
- Fencing
- Exterior decks

The F21PL - 21° Industrial Framing Nailer System features:

- Tool converts to metal connector nailer in seconds with included tip
- Lightweight magnesium housing weighs just 8.1 lbs.
- More power: 1050 inch lbs. for engineered lumber
- Tool free adjustable exhaust
- Patented push-button depth of drive
- Aggressive teeth for toe nailing
- Steel guards with anti-skid rubber inserts
- New Smart Trigger included

Product Details

- Height - 14-1/4", 361.95mm
- Length - 20-1/4", 514.35mm
- Weight - 8.1 lbs. 3.67 kilos.
- Driving Power - 1050 inch lbs.
- Fastener Gauge - Framing: .113" - .162" Diameter/ Metal Connector Nails: .131" - .162" Diameter
- Fastener Range - Framing: 2" - 3 1/2" 21° Plastic Collated Stick Framing Nails/MCN: 1 1/2" - 2 1/2" Metal Connector Nails
- Magazine Capacity - 60 Nails
- Operating Pressure - 80-120 psi
- Power to Weight Ratio - 130
- Thread Fitting Type - 1/4" NPT



PHOTO: F21PL - 21° INDUSTRIAL FRAMING NAILER

The F28WW - 28° Industrial Framing Nailer System features:

- Lightweight magnesium housing weighs just 7.7 lbs.
- More power: 1050 inch lbs. for engineered lumber
- Tool free adjustable exhaust
- 4 stick magazine: holds up to 100 nails
- Patented push-button depth of drive
- Aggressive teeth for toe nailing
- Steel guards with anti-skid rubber inserts
- New Smart Trigger included

Product Details

- Height - 14-1/4", 361.95mm
- Length - 20", 508mm
- Weight - 7.7 lbs. 3.49 kilos.
- Driving Power - 1050 inch lbs.
- Fastener Gauge - .113 - .131
- Fastener Range - 2" - 3 1/2" 28° Wire Collated Stick Framing Nails
- Magazine Capacity - 100 nails
- Operating Pressure - 80-120 psi
- Power to Weight Ratio - 138
- Thread Fitting Type - 1/4" NPT

Ricci Lumber carries many Stanley-Bostitch products. The company manufactures top-quality, innovative fastening tools and fasteners for industrial, construction and home improvement applications. Products include pneumatic staplers and nailers, compressors, manually operated staplers and tackers, coil-fed screw systems, rivet tools, glue guns, a broad assortment of collated nails, screws, staples and specialty fasteners in a variety of materials and finishes, plus office products and carton-closing staplers - many of them industry firsts.

Ricci Lumber is offering an introductory price on both these nailers of \$275 each.



PHOTO: F28WW - 28° INDUSTRIAL FRAMING NAILER

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Who conforms with the rules of ordinary deck design, when you can create a non-slip Trex® deck? Design a signature deck that reflects your personality. Enjoy a splinter-free deck that never needs sealing. To learn more about the benefits of a Trex® deck, come in and talk with a salesperson. Trex decking is what dreams are made of.

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Builders Applaud House Passage of GSE Reform Bill

The nation's home builders applauded House passage of legislation on October 26 that would strengthen the regulation of government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the Federal Home Loan Banks while preserving their vital housing mission.

"H.R. 1461 offers a sound regulatory solution for our secondary market institutions," said Jerry Howard, executive vice president and CEO of the National Association of Home Builders. "It would strengthen and safeguard the financial health of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac while enabling them to continue to fulfill their mission of providing affordable housing credit for millions of working American families."

H.R. 1461, the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act of 2005, was approved by a

strong bipartisan vote of 331 to 90. It would:

- Call on the new regulator to incorporate a true housing focus by establishing a deputy director of mission oversight for all the housing GSEs.

- Enhance the affordable housing requirements for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Tougher mortgage purchase goals and a new affordable housing fund to be tied to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts during the fund's first two years would direct the housing finance entities to segments of the market that they previously have not reached.

- Require safety and soundness to be the determining factor for any minimum capital increase. The regulator would be

"Tougher mortgage purchase goals and a new affordable housing fund to be tied to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts during the fund's first two years would direct the housing finance entities to segments of the market that they previously have not reached."

required to periodically assess the minimum capital standards and be allowed to adjust levels based on such reviews.

- Stipulate that there be no specific portfolio caps or directive for the regulator

to reduce the portfolios of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Instead, the regulator would have the authority to address safety and soundness concerns unique to each individual housing enterprise.

- Ensure that program and activity approval processes are rigorous while allowing the GSEs reasonable flexibility for innovation.

"This legislation represents a key opportunity to advance GSE regulatory reform. We urge all members of the Senate to pursue a compromise similar to H.R. 1461 that would address the nation's housing concerns at the same time as it assures the soundness and safety of institutions that are indispensable to our housing finance system," said Howard.

New-Home Construction Rebounds From Shock Of Hurricanes as Builder Confidence Returns To Pre-Katrina Level

New-home construction nationwide rebounded from the shock and devastation of hurricanes Katrina and Rita to maintain a vigorous pace in September, the U.S. Commerce Department reported today.

Total housing starts increased 3.4 percent for the month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 2.108 million units following upward revisions to the July and August rates. The September construction pace was 10.3 percent above a year ago and remained above 2 million units for the sixth month in a row.

Single-family home construction rose 2.6 percent to a near-record pace of 1.747 million units for the month. This was 12.3 percent above the pace of a year ago.

"Builders are operating at a very healthy pace and see little letup in the months ahead, despite the initial shock and economic uncertainties immediately following hurricanes Katrina and Rita," said Dave Wilson, president of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a custom home builder from Ketchum, Idaho.

"All the fundamentals remain in place and the overall housing market continues to exhibit ongoing strength," said NAHB Chief Economist David Seiders. "Favorable mortgage rates as well as strong household income and job growth continue to bolster housing demand."

Two of four regions reported increases in housing activity for the month. Construction of new homes and apartments rose 1.9 percent in the Midwest and 6.9 percent in South, despite the effects of the Gulf hurricanes, while in the Northeast and West construction continued at the same pace as the month before.

Multifamily housing starts increased by 7.8 percent for the month to a seasonally adjusted pace of 361,000 units. This was 1.1 percent above the pace of a year ago.

Issuance of total building permits increased 2.4 percent to a seasonally adjusted rate of 2.189 million units for the month. Single-family permit issuance was up 4.4 percent to a record pace of 1.749 million units for the month. The pace of multifamily permit issuance decreased 4.8 percent.

In other positive news for the industry, builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes re-

bounded by a couple of points in October to the same level at which it was gauged prior to hurricanes Katrina and Rita, according to the National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI), released today.

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"This is a reassuring sign that builder attitudes are bouncing back from the initial shock of the hurricanes' devastation and the economic uncertainties immediately following those storms, even in the midst of higher mortgage interest rates"

initial shock of the hurricanes' devastation and the economic uncertainties immediately following those storms, even in the midst of higher mortgage interest rates," said Wilson.

"At the same time, the fact that the confidence level remains below the mid-year high may indicate that builders see the market finally beginning to plateau at a slightly slower, but quite healthy,

pace," noted Seiders.

The HMI rose two points to 67 in October, returning to the same level it hit in August but still off the year's cyclical high of 72, set this June. The gain marks an end to a three-month trend of downward movements.

Derived from a monthly survey that NAHB has been conducting for approximately 20 years, the NAHB/Wells Fargo HMI gauges builder perceptions of current single-family home sales and sales expectations for the next six months as either "good," "fair" or "poor." The survey also asks builders to rate traffic of prospective buyers as either "high to very high," "average" or "low to very low." Scores for each component are then used to calculate a seasonally adjusted index where any number over 50 indicates that more builders view sales conditions as good than poor.

Each of the component indexes of the HMI registered small gains in October. The indexes for current single-family sales and traffic of prospective buyers both edged up a single point, to 73 and 50, respectively, while the index gauging sales expectations in the next six months had deteriorated substantially in the September HMI.

Regionally, builders in the West continue to report vigorous activity in their markets, with a remarkable seven-point gain in their confidence level (to 90) in October. Meanwhile, builders in the Midwest and South posted two- and three-point gains in their confidence levels, to 44 and 74, respectively, while the Northeast was the only place where builder confidence fell this month (by two points, to 66).



Tom Johnson
 Director of Zoning,
 Building Codes & Health
 Durham, NH

As the Director of Zoning, Building Codes and Health in Durham, New Hampshire for the past four years, Tom Johnson knows all about false assumptions.

"Don't assume anything," he says. "With no statewide building code for residential housing, it's up to each town to set the code. Just because something was within code in one town doesn't mean it works everywhere."

Having worked in the construction industry for more than thirty years as a union carpenter in both commercial and

residential construction, Johnson understands both sides of the equation.

"I'm a carpenter, too. We're all partners here," he said. "I don't enjoy telling a builder they've done something wrong, and they need to tear it down. That causes the most tension."

"Don't assume anything...With no statewide building code for residential housing, it's up to each town to set the code."

Johnson believes that the easiest way to resolve any issues is to stop them before they start by working with local code enforcement officials from the beginning, not once the project has already gotten underway. Johnson also warns against relying on subcontractors, even if they have worked in the town before. Also, in many towns there is only one building inspector, so be sure to talk to them before beginning any project, as opposed to any town official because he or she may not be really familiar with the code.

"I never mind an early inspection," said Johnson. "We're here to help and teach. Unfortunately, some builders have the attitude 'we won't deal with him until we have to.' That's the wrong philosophy."

Johnson points out that building codes are designed to protect the public: the consumer, the owner, the occupant. As minimum standards, the building codes represent a simple way to ensure that all projects are safe.

"Builders will often purchase pricey tools and equipment in order to be more efficient, when they could spend \$30 or \$40 on a copy of the code book," Johnson says.

So, before you begin your next project, be sure to have a quick check with the local building inspector just to be certain. It can save time and money in the future.

Johnson adds, "Don't rely on what your father or grandfather told you twenty years ago. A phone call can go a long way."

Got a Question for a Building Inspector?

Fax them to 207-772-2066

The Importance of Back Up

By Pat Moretti



PAT MORETTI

I was sitting in my home office one Saturday night around 10pm, when an email popped up in my inbox. It was from one of our contractors, so I opened it thinking it was a question or price request. Instead, I found a panicked message, asking for a phone call as soon as someone read this message. Normally, I would have waited till Monday to call him back, but the word URGENT appeared in his message over and over again. One might have even thought this was a hoax message, but a plethora of phone numbers were typed

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Beauty is Only Skin Deep, But Solid Goes to the Core Board Sheathing in a Composite World

Builders and remodelers today have nothing if not options for what to build with. Combine composite with technologies like oriented-strand board (OSB), plywood and particleboard with a booming industry, and new building products are climbing out of the proverbial woodwork. But some quality minded builders find it hard to improve upon what nature provides, naturally. One look at buildings constructed in the 1800s (abundant in the northeast) shows an attention to detail and craftsmanship that have helped homes stand strong for centuries. These are the model homes that composite products get their inspiration from; what composites aspire to be.

But behind the inspirational moldings and ripped-off profiles of the nation's oldest houses, you'll find Eastern White Pine board sheathing - a building technique that produces strong, quiet, and well-insulated structures. Long before OSB and plywood came on the scene and began to dominate the market, there was just wood. Good, strong boards. Today's

builders are flush with backlog and the speed at which the current project is completed is important. But the speed advantages of building with OSB and plywood versus board sheathing is overestimated, the pricing and supply can be erratic, and old-school methods still stand the test of time.

Take Bob Vail of Vail General Contracting Inc., in Cumberland, Maine for instance. Vail and his crew of five build only a few new houses each year, and have several remodeling jobs going throughout Maine's short building season. The only marketing he has are his well-built homes. Vail has no shortage of work, and with one look at the detail and craftsmanship of his finished houses is proof positive. But it's what is under the surface, visible only during construction, which sets him

apart. It's the Eastern White Pine board sheathing used over framing that adds an increased level of superior quality to his homes.

He won't sheath with OSB or plywood. "No chips. No glue. No pressing. Just natural boards," says Vail. Vail preps his walls with 7/8-inch Eastern White Pine on the diagonal. It makes for a quieter and more insulated home and he doesn't have to worry about hurricanes or international re-building efforts affecting

the price of his boards; unlike builders who felt the pinch of the great plywood drought of recent years. Planed on three sides and rough to the weather-side, the Eastern White Pine Vail uses is plentiful in the northeast. His crews are well

trained, and therefore quick at installing the sheathing. "Once the technique is learned, we can frame and sheath a house in about the same time and for about the same price as any OSB-sheathed home," says Vail.

Homeowners enjoy the building process more, he claims. During construction, where other homes appear "boarded up" with plywood, Vail's homes, sheathed on the diagonal are attractive and unique.

Still, most builders won't touch it. They think OSB or plywood is better. They don't understand the building technique and perhaps don't even recognize the value in the increased performance. But Vail grew up with it and can't imagine a home built without sheathing in Eastern White Pine. He started his building career remodeling homes originally built in the 1800s. During those projects, he saw how things had been done. Things were still sturdy. The details were still there. The houses still solid. When he began

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below his signature and most of them I recognized. Looking at my watch, I thought it might have been a little late, but I decided calling the cell number was worth the risk. I dialed the number expecting the cell phone message center to pick up, instead I got a anxious voice asking who this was. When I identified myself, he started talking a hundred miles an hour, making no sense, except that something was missing. After trying to break into his rambling sentences a dozen times or so, he finally paused for a minute, so I could ask what was missing. His equipment, a trailer and almost anything else that wasn't nailed down at the new jobsite was carted off. The contractor and his wife were coming back from dinner earlier that night; when he decided to stop and inspect the project. As soon as he turned into the long driveway, he says he knew something was wrong. Even though the sun was almost down in the west, the sky was still bright enough for him to see that things had been moved around. Lumber that we delivered and placed in front of his now missing trailer a day earlier was scattered all over the site. Sheets of plywood that had been nailed on openings of the building were now lying on the ground near those openings. When

he went inside the house, everything of value was gone right down to the extension cords. While he waited for the police to arrive at the site, he told me about the range of emotions and numbness he felt. From going through a list of enemies and competitors that might have done this, to the feeling of "why me", he looked for a motive. A feeling of being violated was overwhelming and a man that very rarely loses his composure was fading quickly. After talking to the police at the site long after dark, he and his wife drove home almost in silence. He told me that all he could think about was everything that he had lost. Twenty plus years in business was nearly wiped out by a couple of midnight thugs. Many of the items taken were irreplaceable, like jigs, templates and specialized time saver tools that he and his coworkers had conceived over the years. Everything that he had worked for had driven off in that trailer with little chance of recovery.

Upon reaching home, he started to call his employees to give them the bad news. All promised their support to go forward and did their best to comfort the owner in his time of need. While he sat at his

desk looking for possible list of tools and equipment that was taken for the police reports and insurance company, he realized that he had never made one. He had been so busy running his business and getting jobs, he had neglected to inventory his equipment. Piles upon piles of invoices from vendors filled file cabinets and file boxes with tools invoices mixed in with material purchases. Like most small builders, he always intended to breakout those tool purchases, but it was never really that important, until now. Panic now set in, as he could not file a claim without proof of those purchases.

Yet, to fish through the last five years of invoices was going to be a monumental task. He says that's when he looked at the wall of his desk and saw many of his suppliers business cards tacked to the corkboard. Writing one general message and sending to all those vendors that had email, he hoped that someone would call him and hopefully be able to help. I was the fortunate one to be the first in line to offer whatever we could do to assist him. Since we are one of his larger suppliers, I told him that Ricci Lumber would be able to recreate up to four years of his-

tory from our computer system. With a little database criteria searching, we could most likely have what he need for the reports by Monday noon. In reality we had it for him by 8am that Monday. A few months later he finally settled with the insurance company. Still, he only got back what he could prove on paper that he owned. He figures he only received about half of what he should of gotten but blames himself for poor record keeping.

There have been changes in his company, particularly in recording his equipment and assets. For example, every tool that he buys, no matter how small, is purchased on a separate invoice than materials. At Ricci Lumber, he has set up a separate job called TOOLS on his account to make it easier to track. All equipment is then logged onto a spread sheet in his computer with a date purchased, the invoice number, a cost, and if possible, a serial number. Invoices are then scanned on to a CD for additional backup and quicker record recovery. Equipment is always inventoried when a job starts and again when it's finished. The exception is personal equipment like hammers and small hand tools. He feels that even though this may be a little more time consuming in the beginning, the peace of mind it gives him and his employees is well worth the effort.

"Since we are one of his larger suppliers, I told him that Ricci Lumber would be able to recreate up to four years of history from our computer system."



James Hardie®

Remodelers Promote Aging-In-Place Features In Existing Homes

As housing industry professionals celebrate the third annual National Aging In Place Week (Nov. 6-13), the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Remodelers™ Council encourages consumers to take proactive steps to modify their homes as they age. With careful remodeling, homeowners can remain in their residences throughout their maturing years.

“Aging-in-place means living in one’s home safely, independently and comfortably, regardless of age or ability level,” said Remodelers Council Chairman Don Novak. “As Americans get older, we know the vast majority would rather live in their own home than an assisted living facility.”

Basic alterations can make it easier and more affordable to carry out daily activities, such as bathing, cooking or climbing stairs, and can improve a home’s overall safety. Projects for aging-in-place remodeling vary from the installation of shower grab bars or adjustments of countertop heights, to private elevators and first-floor master suites. Since professional modifications are

often barely noticeable to visitors, homeowners can enjoy their home safely and without any institutional feel.

To meet the demand of a changing population, the NAHB Remodelers Council created the Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) designation program – the only program that teaches remodelers how to modify homes for the aging-in-place market. CAPS designees are specifically trained how to evaluate a homeowner’s needs and implement a project in a professional, aesthetically

“Aging-in-place means living in one’s home safely, independently and comfortably, regardless of age or ability level.”

pleasing way. More than 800 professional remodelers have completed the education requirements for CAPS since 2002. Consumers interested in finding a CAPS trained home remodeler can visit www.nahb.org/remodel.

For more information on aging-in-

place or National Aging In Place Week activities, consumers can consult two Web sites developed by National Reverse Mortgage Lenders Association and the Aging In Place Council, www.senior-safehome.com and www.ageinplace.org. The Web sites provide information on design ideas, useful products and how to find them, and professionals who can help homeowners plan and implement home modifications. An information booklet also can be downloaded.

ABOUT THE REMODELERS™ COUNCIL: The NAHB Remodelers™ Council represents the 14,000 remodeling industry members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). Founded in 1982, the Council provides information, education and designation programs to improve the business and construction expertise of its members and to enhance the professional image of the industry. “Remodelor” is the trademarked identifier of NAHB members active in the remodeling industry. The Council’s membership incorporates 160 local councils in 43 states.

Final EPA Rule Provides Liability Protection To Encourage Redevelopment Of Brownfields

A new “brownfields” rule from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will encourage redevelopment of old, abandoned industrial facilities, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

The final rule, promulgated Nov. 2, will provide crucial liability protection for those who seek to rehabilitate and redevelop brownfields. The rule also effectively establishes a new commercially accepted method for conducting traditional “due diligence” in all real estate transactions.

The EPA’s “all appropriate inquiry” rule spells out the necessary requirements to ensure that a property purchaser cannot be sued for environmental contamination that took place on a property prior to the purchaser’s ownership. As such, it will instill crucial legal certainty in transactions involving both tainted and untainted properties.

“Federal brownfields law says that those who purchase previously tainted properties can be protected from federal liability if they perform a property investigation called “all appropriate inquiry” before taking title to the property, but until now, it was unclear what such an investigation entailed or who was quali-

fied to undertake it,” explained NAHB member Marty Mitchell, a land developer with Mitchell & Best Homebuilders based in Rockville, Md. “The new rule clearly explains these requirements so everyone can understand and comply with them.”

The new EPA rule seeks to encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of approximately 500,000 abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial sites where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Brownfields redevelopment can be an important part of efforts to revitalize blighted areas near old, unused industrial facilities. Many brownfields sites are located in urban areas or inner suburbs close to residential neighborhoods, employment opportunities and retail centers.

A number of cities, including Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Minneapolis, have made brownfields redevelopment a centerpiece of neighborhood revitalization efforts. Replacing unused, decaying buildings with new commercial facilities, homes and parks means more jobs, more tax revenue and a cleaner environment.

“This will serve as a catalyst for private sector investment in brownfields cleanup,” said Mitchell, who served on the EPA advisory panel that developed the new rule to provide reasonable clarity and assurance for redevelopers. “It sends a strong signal to builders, developers, lenders and others that the government wants to make rehabilitation of these old industrial sites feasible.”

“The EPA is to be commended for its actions in this endeavor, which ensure that innocent purchasers who are interested in redeveloping brownfield properties can do so without fear of retribution under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund,” said NAHB President David Wilson, a custom home builder from Ketchum, Idaho.

“Moreover, EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson and his staff within the EPA’s Brownfields Office deserve applause for making this happen through an innovative regulatory process known as a ‘negotiated rulemaking.’ We hope to see more of this kind of commonsense approach to environmental regulation in the future.”

Builders Offer \$100,000 Reward to Nab ELF Saboteurs

In partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, The Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) has announced that it is offering up to \$100,000 for the identification of and information leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals responsible for criminal acts in the state claimed by the Earth Liberation Front (ELF).

ELF is a radical environmental organization whose members utilize economic sabotage and property destruction to call attention to suburban “sprawl.” In recent years, the radical terrorists of the organization’s militia have started burning down new residential construction.

“While ELF used to spike trees and sabotage logging equipment, they’re now firebombing neighborhoods and burning down apartment complexes,” said Lyle Fox, president of the association. “ELF’s increasingly brazen attacks on urban targets have BIAW and the FBI worried that it is only a matter of time before someone is hurt or killed by ELF terrorists.”

“In Washington alone, ELF terrorists have embarked upon an arson spree that has caused nearly \$8 million in property damage since 1996.”

While ELF has targeted cities around the country, the West Coast has been particularly hard hit.

In Washington alone, ELF terrorists have embarked upon an arson spree that has caused nearly \$8 million in property damage since 1996. Much of the damage has occurred in residential developments.

California has sustained more than \$53 million in damage, and Oregon has been hit with more than \$3 million in losses. Nationally, ELF has claimed responsibility for acts of sabotage in 14 states that have destroyed nearly \$100 million in property.

Home Builders Continue Historic OSHA Alliance To Improve Worksite Safety

An ongoing working alliance between the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was cemented by way of a formal re-signing ceremony attended by leaders of both organizations yesterday. This alliance was first initiated in May of 2003.

“Training and education are by far

“Training and education are by far the best way to promote worker safety on construction sites”

the best way to promote worker safety on construction sites,” said NAHB

President Dave Wilson, a custom home builder from Ketchum, Idaho. “This agreement is another illustration of the private sector working jointly with the government to identify and eliminate hazards that are responsible for the majority of serious injuries on home building job sites.”

Doing the honors for the federal agency was Jonathan Snare, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, and signing for the home builders was Andy Anderson, 2005 Chairman of the NAHB Construction Safety and Health Committee. NAHB comprises 220,000 builders and housing-related professionals across the country.

A particular focus of the alliance this year will be on identifying and abating major worksite hazards that cause the lion's share of injuries, and on improving the information that employers and employees are given to help avoid such incidents. This includes the further development of safety training materials for non-English speakers and employees with limited English reading and speaking abilities.

“This is an outstanding example of the kind of voluntary, cooperative relationship between industry and government that just makes sense from any point of view,” said Wilson.

Builders Prevail Against Costly Energy Code Change

In a victory for housing affordability, NAHB prevailed in an effort to roll back new, more stringent insulation requirements at International Code Council hearings in Detroit on Sept. 29.

The new requirements would have provided little savings to consumers in reduced energy costs, changed established construction practices and unfairly benefited the fiberglass insulation industry.

Faced with the daunting challenge of mustering a two-thirds majority of code officials to vote “yes” on the EC16 rollback proposal, NAHB launched a campaign earlier this year to encourage members to lobby code officials for their support. Members delivered the message that builders support building codes that promote energy efficiency, but home buyers should not bear the burden of expensive new requirements that provide little benefit.

The stricter requirements were orchestrated during last-minute amendments made to a Department of Energy (DOE) proposal that was intended to simplify compliance with the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC).

During a hearing on the DOE proposal, the fiberglass insulation industry convinced the code officials to increase wall insulation requirements, or R-values, for wood-framed construction. The higher insulation requirements would have potentially excluded from the marketplace many types of insulation, such as sprayed cellulose and expanding foams, which could not have achieved the new ratings using standard 2x4 wall construction.

NAHB opposed the changes because they were not cost-effective and would not have provided a significant energy savings to new home buyers.

NAHB's grassroots campaign resulted in dozens of meetings with local code officials around the country, with a number of ICC state delegations promising to support NAHB's proposal. After a heated debate in Detroit, code officials cast a resounding vote for housing affordability by eliminating this costly and unjustified increase in wall insulation requirements.

NAHB's efforts were supported by a coalition of industry organizations that included APA — The Engineered

Wood Association, Icynene, Nu-Wool, the Cellulose Insulation Manufacturers Association (CIMA) and the glass block industry. Moreover, nearly a dozen code officials testified in support of NAHB's proposal, saying that last year's floor amendments were unjustified and should be overturned.

In the end, EC16 sailed through with a comfortable 80% margin of 271-68. It is estimated that the increased insulation requirements would have cost consumers from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per new home constructed for an average annual energy cost savings of only \$15.

BEAUTY

Continued from Page 4

his own company, he knew he wanted to build homes that would last.

“I want the home I build to be someone's last home. Even if it's their first,” said Vail. “It's about building it right, and adding value to a home.”

With home prices and real-estate values on the rise, consumers are demanding more quality and durability from their most expensive investments — their homes. With a return to traditional quality building techniques and materials, homebuilders are adding more value to their homes and their relationships with their customers. Sheathing with Eastern White Pine boards richens the experience of home building process for the consumer, protects the builder's reputation and can increase the value of the home.

ELF

Continued from Previous Page

Capturing ELF terrorists in the Pacific Northwest is one of the FBI's top priorities. Many law enforcement officials believe that some members of ELF are becoming disillusioned with the group's increasingly violent and aggressive tactics, but they are not motivated to turn on their comrades.

Builders in Washington are hoping that offering a financial incentive to these disaffected members could provide the motivation that thus far has been lacking.

“BIAW hopes that providing the \$100,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of ELF terrorists will assist the FBI in capturing these criminals,” said Fox.

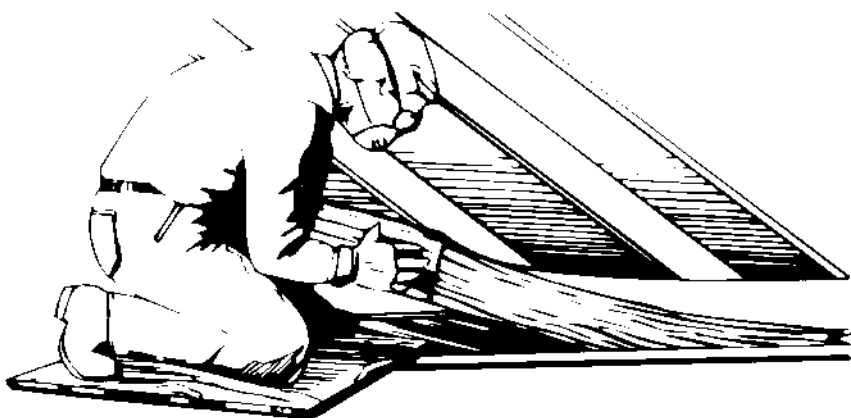
The association is posting reward posters at various locations around the state.

Anyone who has information about possible ELF-related activities is being asked to contact the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force at 206-622-0460, or send an e-mail to seattle@fbi.gov.



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SAVING ENERGY

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able for energy-efficient improvements and property purchases made that go into a principal residence. Purchases that qualify include insulation, exterior windows, skylights and doors placed in service in 2006 or 2007. The credit is subject to an overall limit of \$500 combined for both years but unlike a tax deduction, which merely decreases one's gross income, a tax credit is a dollar for dollar reduction on the federal income taxes owed. And since there is no phase out provision as your income rises, your higher income clients will be able to take advantage of the credit.

Building any new homes next year? Another of the Act's provisions allows home builders to earn a tax credit of \$2,000 for new homes they construct which meet certain energy efficiency standards. The homes have to be sold in 2006 or 2007.

When meeting with potential clients and booking work for next year keep in mind that you may not only build a structure to keep a family warm, but you may also save them some money, too.

"Warmest" regards to you and your family during this holiday season.

Ed Hayes

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SERVICE

Continued from **Front Page**

the Becksted Team has already ordered the kitchen and bathroom cabinets and other interior supplies from Ricci Lumber.

Becksted Sr. has worked on a number of projects on the seacoast throughout the years, and he has seen the industry change around him. Currently, the majority of his work is focused on renovations and additions. New construction has slowed in recent years.

"It's difficult on the seacoast because there is so little land left," he said. "It's the big guys who are handling the new construction; projects now take two or three years to complete because it take that long to build the necessary roads to reach many of the new building lots."

Becksted also cites the cost of real estate as another factor shaping his business. As real estate prices have risen, it has become too expensive for smaller contractors to work with new homes.

However, the Becksteds have found other ways to be profitable, including being a certified builder of Trex Decks. They also have found himself working

increasingly on projects similar to the one in Kittery Point – complete home renovations. Becksted Sr. cites a project in Kittery, which involved the renovation and restoration of an old brick home.

"Basically, we built a whole new home inside an old brick shell," he explains.

Moving forward, Becksted knows he will continue to work with Ricci Lumber on all his projects because of the service he receives.

"I've had my own business for more than 20 years, and I have been working with Ricci even longer than that," he said. "Really, they're always there when I need something, so why would I go anywhere else."

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