

A Good Time to Remodel

Our advice, plan now to take advantage of market conditions

Since opening our doors, we have been fortunate to have developed valued friendships with hundreds of clients and colleagues. In speaking with folks recently, many have asked about the effects of the real estate market and economy on BOWA Builders and residential construction.

In general, the real estate market — and therefore construction and other housing-related industries — is in a slowdown. But the fact of the matter is,



these industries are extremely cyclical. Looking at Census Bureau data, one will see slowdowns in the late 60's, mid-70's, early 80's and early 90's. In construction specifically, each time the market bounces back, material prices increase, subcontractors become unavailable and projects become more challenging.

So our advice to friends and family is: For those who plan to be in their homes for some years to come and have the means to invest in their properties, the conditions are right for moving forward with a renovation project now.

One benefit we have seen in



the current market is decreases in the prices of some materials over the past year. While individually the reductions are not large, slight decreases in a couple of categories of materials, such as dry-wall and lumber, may collectively amount to significant savings.


Another reason to remodel now is the greater availability of top-quality subcontractors. With many area builders in a slowdown, we have found that some of our best subcontractors are more readily available and eager to take on new projects. As a result, we are often getting better pricing from these companies and are able to pass that savings directly on to the client.

And, whereas previously it was challenging to fully staff our projects, we are now finding that some subcontractors are able to send two or three crews to do the same job. The benefit is that the subcontractor — be it electrical, plumbing, framing, etc. — is able to get through their phase of the project faster while still delivering a



quality product. This helps to keep the project running smoothly, and may even shave some days off the production schedule resulting in additional cost savings.

So, what type of project have you been considering? Perhaps your children are growing and you want to finish the basement so they will have a place to gather with their friends. Or perhaps you are planning for your parents' later years and a detached in-law suite is the solution. Or is it finally time to build the gourmet kitchen or luxury master suite you have always wanted?

Whatever the project, our advice is to start planning now to take advantage of the current market conditions. Those of you who have been through a major renovation project already know that the pre-construction planning process takes time. With an inevitable return of a strong real estate market on the horizon, it would be wise to begin the planning process now so as to not miss out on the benefits. 

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Considering Purchasing a New Home?

BOWA's pre-purchase evaluation may be helpful

At BOWA Builders, our clients have been very influential in the development of our new products and services. For example, our Home Projects Team was formed and our Middleburg office serving Loudoun and Fauquier Counties was opened in response to numerous client requests. Both of these developments have been extremely successful for BOWA Builders and our clients.

Recently we formalized another service we had been providing to clients for some time. Over the years, numerous clients have turned to us for assistance in evaluating properties before deciding to purchase a new home.

Fifty-nine percent of home buyers remodel or make improvements to their homes within three months of purchase.

Nat'l Assoc. of Realtors, 2007

After gaining an understanding of their needs, we were able to make recommendations on whether the home can be modified through renovations, additions or minor alterations to suit their family's lifestyle. If they decide to move forward, we work with


the client to identify priorities and develop a master construction plan, which will accomplish their goals with a manageable budget and timeline. In these situations, we have found that many clients appreciate a phased approach to con-



This gorgeous condominium received a whole-house remodel shortly after it was purchased.

struction, which focuses first on top priorities, and allows the client to begin enjoying their new home as secondary priorities are addressed or planned for the future.

Another important step in the process is reviewing the Home Inspector's report. After doing so, we have been able to advise prospective buyers on what is involved to remedy known issues. In our experience, many of the issues that seem to be "red flags" are in fact straight-forward work for an experienced professional. Case in point: one client nearly walked away from a home they considered purchasing because there was six inches of water in the basement. Thankfully they contacted us, and we were able to diagnose the problem in minutes. In the end, they purchased the home, used the cost to remedy the situation as a negotiating point, and are now nearing completion of their BOWA renovation.

If you or someone you know is considering purchasing a home in the area, let us know. We would be happy to discuss the property, and explore how we may be of assistance. 

Home Advisor Features Valuable Tips for the Home

Subscribe today to receive maintenance advice

For 20 years, BOWA has been providing clients with sound professional advice on all facets of home construction and maintenance. Since 2004, BOWA has been packaging this advice in the BOWA Home Advisor, a free monthly email. Enjoyed by hundreds of readers, BOWA Home Advisor provides important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value and family's safety.


Drawing on the expertise of BOWA's seasoned construction professionals and careful industry research, the emails deliver clear, concise overviews of relevant home topics. With tips on how to repair and maintain items in and around the house, as well as design trends and features and benefits of new products, each



issue is a must read.

Recent BOWA Home Advisor topics include:

- landscaping and hardscaping trends
- the latest in laundry room design
- fireplace maintenance and safety
- the benefits of deconstruction when remodeling.

Those who are interested can subscribe to the Home Advisor or view past issues by visiting the "About Us" section of BOWA's website, www.bowa.com. If there are specific topics you would like to see covered in future issues, please contact Kathy Kelly, at kathyk@bowa.com or (703) 873-8005. 

Time to Begin Thinking about Summer Again

With summer upon us, it is time to follow our seasonal maintenance checklist to help protect your home and family.

Interior

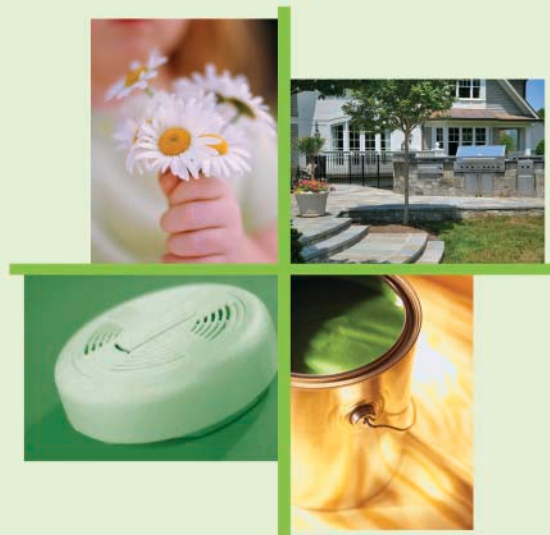
- Check smoke detector batteries.
- Check carbon monoxide detector batteries.

Exterior

- Clean debris from gutters and downspouts.
- Ensure positive drainage away from house.
- Caulk and re-touch exterior paint.
- Power wash outdoor deck or patio surface.

HVAC

- Clean and/or replace filters.
- Turn humidifiers off (turn water off at valve and adjust humidistat to "off").
- Clean and check condensate pipes and/or pumps.
- Get a full system check by a specialist.
- Adjust dampers to correct position for cooling season.



Awards & RECOGNITION

COMPANY/EMPLOYEE HONORS

PROs Awards

Co-sponsored by the MNCBIA and NVBIA, the PROs Awards honor those in the Washington, DC area who are responsible for turning residential construction vision into reality. Nominees were evaluated on their accomplishments, and ability to overcome challenges and excel. BOWA's winners in the following categories clearly set the standard for excellence in the industry:



- Best Field Technician - Customer Service*
- Best Field Technician - Construction*
- Best Superintendent*
- Best Production Manager*



WHOLE-HOUSE RENOVATION

Arlington, VA

First-Place Winner

2007 Monument Award - NVBIA/MNCBIA
 Outstanding Feature in a New or Remodeled Home - Master Suite



Grand Award Winner

2007 Local Contractor of the Year - NARI
 Residential Addition over \$500,000



LOWER-LEVEL and OUTDOOR RENOVATION

Potomac, MD

First-Place Winner

2007 Monument Award - NVBIA/MNCBIA
 Residential Remodeling - over \$750,000
 Outstanding Feature in a New or Remodeled Home - Finished Basement



LOWER-LEVEL and OUTDOOR RENOVATION

McLean, VA

Honorable Mention

2007 Monument Award - NVBIA/MNCBIA
 Residential Remodeling under \$500,000



BOWA Turns 20

BOWA Celebrates 20th Anniversary

The team reflects back with gratitude



As you may know, 2008 marks BOWA Builders' 20th Anniversary. We know that each and every one of our clients, professional colleagues, employees and friends has played a role in our success over the years, and for this, we are grateful – thank you!

Looking back there have been so many highlights: our first client; our first time on the *Inc. 500*; our first *Finest for Family Living Award*; our first whole-house remodel; our first custom home; our first web site; the creation of our Customer Service and Home Projects Teams; being named one of the *50 Great Places to Work*; our expansion to Middleburg; being named *National Remodeler of the Year*; our most recent client and all of those clients in between.

What an incredible journey! And,



One of BOWA's most recently completed projects - an elegant custom home.

what an honor it has been to be invited into so many of your homes and to play a small role in your family's life.

And through it all, we strived to stay true to our core values: a commitment to customer service and our clients' satisfaction; continual self improvement of BOWA and our team members; integrity and honesty in all aspects of the business; hard work in a fun atmosphere; and sharing the success with our employees and community.

As we embark on the next 20 years, we look forward to continuing to grow and learn as a company and further developing our valued relationships. We are thankful for the support you have shown us since we opened our doors, and would love to hear your thoughts on ways we can continue to improve. 



BOWA's first project in 1988, was an enclosed, wooden deck in McLean, VA.



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