

LEWIS COUNTY CHAPTER OF OLYMPIA MASTER BUILDERS



How to Make Your Home More Livable

The COVID-19 pandemic had a resounding effect on the way people live — not only in how they interact with those around them but potentially in how they view their homes as well. More time at home changed the way individuals think about tangible elements, such as increasing their capacity to work from home, as well as the not-so-tangible elements, like indoor air quality, noise reduction and overall home performance.

High-performance homes can provide increased comfort, improved air quality, reduced noise, and lower energy and water bills, which can benefit the health, well-being and finances of you and your family. Your current home may not provide these elements, but investing in remodeling or a new home could ensure they're incorporated going forward. Asking the right questions will help ensure you're getting the types of features you're looking for in a remodel or your next new home.

For example, you may notice now that it seems like the AC or heater is running all the time, or that there are fluctuations in temperature as you move from room to room throughout the day. Or maybe you're using more energy and water during the daytime, so you're increasingly concerned about how this will affect your utility bills. Raising

these types of concerns with a home builder or remodeler can help them identify the right high-performance solutions for your current or future home.

Solutions may include:
Products and building materials to increase energy efficiency, such as:

- Smart thermostats to help regulate temperature.
- High R-value insulation in floors, walls and ceilings to

- retain heat within home.
- Weatherstripping around windows and doors to avoid air leakage, which can overwork air conditioning units.
- WaterSense-labeled fixtures to reduce water usage.
- Appropriately sized heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment to comfortably and efficiently heat and cool your home.

Products and building materials to improve ventilation and air quality, such as:

- Smart appliances to improve efficiency.
- HVAC systems with sensors and automation to help regulate circulation,
- Sustainable building materials that use fewer chemicals and irritants.

For more information, including specific questions to ask your home builder, visit homeperformancecounts.info. Home Performance Counts helps homeowners better understand the rapidly growing high-performance home marketplace.

To find a green building or energy-efficiency professional in Lewis County who can help you, contact omb.org today!

How to Find an Honest Contractor

Severe weather may be approaching with the arrival of the winter months. If Mother Nature damages your home, you may need to call a professional for help. Unfortunately, not all professionals are looking out for a homeowner's best interest. After natural or man-made disasters, unscrupulous contractors try to profit from a community's misfortune.

You may not be able to stop unexpected damage to your home, but a fly-by-night contractor is one disaster you can prevent. There are a few simple steps you can

take to ensure you hire a reputable professional. You can follow these guidelines when evaluating any potential contractor, whether for post-disaster repairs or a planned renovation to your home.

Here are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Price and Payment**
 - Don't get pressured into signing a contract immediately. You should not be told that you need to sign a contract that day or risk a price increase.
 - Paying a deposit of anywhere from 20 percent to 50

percent is typical; however, you should not be asked to pay the full cost in advance before work begins.

- Make sure you're comfortable with the payment options. You should not be asked to pay cash to a salesperson instead of a check, money order or credit card.

- References**
 - Confirm that the contractor has a verifiable mailing address for their business.
 - Check Labor & Industries (L&I), Washington State to ensure the business has no unresolved complaints.

- Ask the contractor to provide references for past work and be sure the references can be reached.
- Check out the business on consumer review sites such as HomeAdvisor, Houzz, etc. Remember to take the good with the bad when reading online reviews.

- Contract and Completion**
 - Be cautious of anyone who tells you that "a contract won't be necessary." Insist on a complete and clearly written contract signed by you and the contractor.
 - Ensure the final payment is

due once the job is completely finished and you are satisfied. Find out if any of the work requires city or county inspection, confirm that it is done and that you have paperwork proving it before making the final payment.

Following these guidelines will help you select a contractor who will do quality work and stand behind it. To learn more about finding a reliable contractor with an established business in our community, contact omb.org for more information.

Lewis County Government Affairs

Lewis County BoCC

RV park permitting is becoming less of a tangled web. The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has adopted amendments to several codes to ensure a more streamlined process. The changes include the removal of the requirement for a Binding Site Plan, only a requirement for a Special Use Permit (SUP) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review will be in place. Thus, reducing the timeline for permitting and review. Changes to the policy can be found at: [https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/community-development/rezones/comprehensive-plan-and-development-regulation-amendments/rv-parks-and-](https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/community-development/rezones/comprehensive-plan-and-development-regulation-amendments/rv-parks-and-campground-code-update/)

[campground-code-update/](https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/community-development/rezones/comprehensive-plan-and-development-regulation-amendments/rv-parks-and-campground-code-update/)

Stay Connected

The City of Chehalis is seeking to remind the public that they value input on city decisions. The city provides the opportunity to sign up for both general information and specific department listservs. If you are in the homebuilding industry, it is important to follow city news and understand the plan for future growth. You can sign up to receive emails at: <https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/newsletter/subscriptions>

Online Services for City of Centralia

Business owners and citizens who frequently work with the Community

development department at the city are beginning to see an increase inefficiency with the implementation of the online services that the department now offers. The website now offers access to public comment on items such as the ongoing comprehensive plan update, land use applications, and building permits. With the influx of growth that the city is seeing, these online tools will be essential in keeping the process streamlined, eliminating significant backlog, and saving customers financially. The online services that the department offers can now be located at: <https://www.cityofcentralia.com/204/Community-Development>

For more information, please feel free to reach out to your Olympia Master Builders

Government Affairs Director, Jessie Simmons, at ga@omb.org or (360)754-0912.

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NEW LEWIS COUNTY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:



At Safecover Roofing, they treat your home like it's their own. That means prompt service, attention to detail, and only the best quality roofing products the industry has to offer. If you're in the market for a new roof, re-roof, or a repair, look no further than Safecover Roofing, Lewis County's best rated roofing company. For more information, visit their website at www.safecoverroofing.com/contact or call (360) 304-8055.

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