

# Don't Try this at Home: DIY Mistakes to Avoid

Welcome  
Newest Lewis  
County OMB  
Member!  
Naillon Timber,  
proudly joining us  
this November!



Even in the midst of a cold Lewis County winter, it's tempting to tackle a long-put-off household project. While small tasks like changing air filters, swapping out lightbulbs, or clearing gutters are inexpensive and straightforward ways to keep your home running smoothly, larger projects require careful planning. Before grabbing the hammer or power tools, take an honest look at what you can realistically handle and consider whether hiring a professional remodeler might be safer and more effective. DIY missteps can not only cause costly damage to your home but, depending on the task, put your personal safety at risk. As winter winds down and you start dreaming of spring improvements, it's worth pausing to plan wisely

and avoid common DIY pitfalls.

## Budgeting

Home projects can really add up if you avoid mapping out all the materials, tools and equipment needed to complete your project. If you are not a home remodeling professional, chances are you will not purchase exactly everything you need the first time you go shopping. A good rule of thumb is to budget for at least a 10 percent overage for project materials.

## Permits

Adding a wall or a deck? You might need a permit to complete your project. If you are not sure, contact your local city hall. Not all permits are

intended to drain your home remodeling budget or serve as a roadblock to building, in many cases it is to ensure the job is done correctly. Avoiding this step can yield negative consequences such as being ordered by the city to stop work and paying hefty fines. Professional remodelers are knowledgeable about the permitting process.

## Tools and Equipment

If you're a home owner, you likely have at least one tool to manage small home repairs. New home projects may require specialized tools or equipment outside of your usual toolbox. Specific tools can make the difference for making the job easier, safer and avoiding damage to your home. Some specialized equipment can be

costly for a single use. Hardware stores often have tools available to rent but make sure you know how to use it to avoid injuring yourself or ruining your project.

## Materials and Measurements

One of the attractive parts of DIY projects is saving money on labor costs. Should you also save money on materials? The cheaper option when buying materials for your home may not always be the best one. Installing or replacing materials with flimsy or ill-fitting items not measured correctly can cost more money in the long run. If you work with a professional remodeler, he or she will be able to recommend the most cost-effective materials to complete your project.

Completing a home project can be rewarding with the careful preparation or with the right contractor. To learn more about finding a qualified contractor for your home in Lewis County, visit omb.org.

## Building With Confidence

Whether you're breaking ground on a new home, updating your kitchen, or repairing storm damage, hiring a member of the Olympia Master Builders gives you peace of mind. You're choosing a professional who values quality, integrity, and community—someone who's committed to building Lewis County the right way.

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If you're planning a project, start with confidence. Hire an OMB member.

## Lewis County Housing and Homebuilding Update

### Lewis County

The BoCC officially adopted its 2045 Comprehensive Plan in December. With the plan completed, the County is now turning to the Critical Areas Ordinance update. This next phase is expected to have the most direct impact on homebuilding in 2026, as it

will determine future rules for wetlands, streams, fish and wildlife habitat, geologic hazards, buffers, and mitigation requirements. OMB is preparing to engage early to ensure that the update remains science-based and avoids unnecessary increases in costs or regulatory burden for builders.

### Centralia

Centralia is beginning work on its required middle-housing compliance for the 2026 deadline. Staff are reviewing updates to parking standards, design requirements, and allowances for duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. Draft language is expected in early 2026. The City is also continuing internal conversations about future impact-fee adjustments, although no proposals have been introduced at this time.

### Winlock

Winlock continues to feel the effects of rapid residential growth. Although no new UGA expansion proposals have been advanced since the comp plan adoption, the topic remains active. Water and wastewater capacity remain key concerns, and the City is exploring funding options for future upgrades. Builders should expect continued pressure on infrastructure availability in 2026.

### Smaller Cities

Toledo, Mossyrock, Vader, and other small jurisdictions are working through water-system planning requirements that may influence future connection policies. OMB is monitoring these efforts to prevent unexpected limitations on new residential construction.

## What OMB Is Monitoring for Builders

- Kickoff of the Lewis County Critical Areas Ordinance update
- Centralia's middle housing code development
- Utility-capacity planning work in Chehalis and Winlock
- Water-system plan updates in smaller Lewis County cities

For further information please contact Olympia Master Builders Government Affairs Director, Jessie Simmons, at ga@omb.org or (360)754-0912 ext. 102.

### Chehalis

Chehalis has made progress in reducing permit backlogs. Single-family permits are moving more efficiently than earlier in the year, while subdivision and civil reviews remain slower but show improvement. The City is continuing to evaluate sewer-capacity needs in west Chehalis, which may influence future project timelines.

### Napavine

Napavine is preparing an update to its subdivision ordinance as part of a broader code modernization effort. The intent is to clarify and streamline processes rather than create new restrictions. Review timelines remain extended due to staffing, so project planning should account for delays.

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