

LEWIS COUNTY CHAPTER OF OLYMPIA MASTER BUILDERS



5 Simple Ways to Make Your Home Healthier This Winter

As daylight shortens and temperatures drop across Lewis County, many families spend more time indoors—cooking, celebrating, and gathering for the holidays. That makes indoor environmental health especially important. Lewis County OMB builders and remodelers understand how crucial a healthy home is to overall comfort and well-being during our Pacific Northwest winters.

Here are five simple, effective steps Lewis County homeowners can take to create a healthier home this season:

1. Install a Whole-House Water Filter

Many Lewis County homes rely on well water, and water quality can vary throughout the year. A whole-house water filter connects directly to your well or municipal line, improving

water quality for drinking, cooking, and bathing.

Before installation, review your home's flow rate: 10 gallons per minute works for most smaller homes 20 gallons per minute is ideal for larger households or homes with multiple water-use activities happening at once. An OMB builder or remodeler can help ensure the right system is chosen and installed correctly.

2. Consider Using an Anti-Mold Primer

Moisture is a year-round concern in Western Washington. Anti-mold primer is an easy, proactive way to help prevent mold growth before it becomes a costly, hazardous issue. It functions just like a traditional primer and can be painted over later. Addressing mold early protects both your home and your health.

3. Install an Indoor Air Quality Sensor

Indoor air quality monitors can detect radon, carbon dioxide, humidity levels, VOCs, and more—issues that can be heightened when homes are closed up for winter. Many models are Wi-Fi enabled, allowing you to track your home's air quality from your phone. Monitoring your indoor environment brings peace of mind and helps you make adjustments before concerns grow.

4. Switch from a Dehumidifier to a Humidifier

Although summers in Lewis County can get humid, winter air can be surprisingly dry—especially in tightly sealed or newly built homes. A humidifier



can improve comfort, support better sleep, and help reduce static and dry skin. You don't need high humidity; even a small adjustment can make a noticeable difference.

5. Add an Integrated Pest Management Approach

When temperatures fall, pests—including rodents—often look for warmth indoors. Sealing cracks, closing access points, and monitoring your home's perimeter are essential winter steps. For homes where

sealing is difficult, targeted treatments may be necessary. Whenever possible, choose eco-friendly options to protect kids, pets, and wildlife.

Whether you're a builder, remodeler, homeowner, or renter, these simple steps can help keep Lewis County homes healthier throughout the winter season. For more tips, resources, and trusted local professionals in Lewis County, visit omb.org – your partner in building safe, healthy, and resilient homes across our community.

Government Affairs Update for Lewis County

Lewis County

Lewis County officially adopted its 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update on September 23, 2025, completing the long-range planning framework that will guide growth, zoning, and housing strategy for the next decade. With the Plan adopted, the County has now shifted fully into the final phase of the periodic update: the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO).

Draft CAO materials are already in circulation, including a gap analysis and preliminary concepts related to buffers, habitat protections, floodplain standards, and geologic hazards. No CAO rules have been adopted yet, and the draft remains under technical review by staff and consultants. Builders should expect the CAO to be the most consequential regulatory action of the year.

Key points for homebuilders:

- The Comprehensive Plan is fully adopted, and zoning/UGA policy updates are now active
- The Critical Areas Ordinance is the next major decision point, with a full draft expected soon
- Floodplain permitting constraints continue to affect projects near the Chehalis, Newaukum, and Cowlitz Rivers
- Housing demand remains strong, driven by buyers relocating from Thurston and Pierce Counties
- Construction labor shortages in framing, electrical, plumbing, and concrete continue to slow production
- No new fees have been proposed at the county level, but infrastructure needs are growing

Upcoming Lewis County meetings

- Lewis County Planning Commission: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month

- at 6:00 pm
- Most recent meeting: November 10, 2025, which included a staff presentation on CAO draft
- Board of County Commissioners: Meetings occur weekly and include legislative and administrative sessions

Centralia

Centralia continues its post-Comp Plan alignment work, focusing on transportation and utility capacity in several key corridors. Studies along Harrison Avenue, Mellen Street, and Gold Street are underway but have not yet resulted in new fee proposals. The city is also reviewing its subdivision and development standards to match the countywide planning framework.

Items affecting homebuilding:

- Land capacity evaluations are underway to determine where new housing can be supported
- Utility expansion planning is ongoing in growing neighborhoods
- Potential zoning updates are being considered to add flexibility for infill and missing-middle housing
- Subdivision and development standards are being reviewed and modernized
- Coordination with school and utility districts continues to support predictable timelines

Centralia meeting dates:

- Planning Commission: 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm at Centralia City Hall
- Next meeting: December 11, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Chehalis

Chehalis is continuing its long-term evaluation of school facility needs and utility infrastructure planning. While no impact fees or new development charges have been introduced, the city is preparing for future growth pressures and aligning its local codes with the newly adopted county plan.

Key updates for builders:

- Evaluation of infrastructure financing options to support long-term utility and transportation needs
- Opportunities to increase housing diversity within the existing UGA
- Review of zoning and subdivision regulations as part of the city's 2045 planning work
- Collaboration with the Chehalis School District to understand future enrollment impacts from new development

Chehalis meeting dates:

- Chehalis Planning Commission: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm
- Next meeting: December 9, 2025 at 5:30 pm
- Chehalis City Council meets regularly, with recent meetings on November 10, 2025

Other Cities and Towns

Smaller jurisdictions across Lewis County are now preparing for the CAO's release and reviewing their own codes and infrastructure needs following the countywide Comprehensive Plan adoption.

Highlights include:

- Napavine continues to see strong subdivision activity but remains limited by water and sewer capacity
- Winlock remains one of the most active housing markets in the county and is reviewing future transportation and utility needs
- Toledo and Vader face infrastructure constraints that may require zoning adjustments or targeted capital investment
- Morton has restrictive UGA boundaries and limited developable land supply, prompting discussions about zoning flexibility
- Across these communities, infrastructure readiness remains the primary obstacle to producing needed housing

Meeting dates for smaller cities:

- Napavine City Council: 1st and 4th Tuesday at 6:00 pm
- Winlock City Council: 2nd and 4th Monday at 6:00 pm
- Toledo City Council: 1st and 3rd Monday at 6:00 pm
- Vader City Council: 2nd and 4th Thursday at 6:00 pm
- Morton City Council: 2nd and 4th Monday at 7:00 pm

What Builders Should Watch Next

Lewis County and its cities are entering the most consequential period for homebuilding rules. With the Comprehensive Plan adopted, the critical pieces that determine construction feasibility are now moving forward.

Builders should closely monitor:

- Release of the full draft Critical Areas Ordinance, including proposed buffers, habitat protections, and geologic hazard standards
- Upcoming Planning Commission meetings where the CAO will be reviewed
- City code updates in Centralia, Chehalis, and smaller towns as they align with the countywide plan
- Emerging capital project lists, which identify infrastructure projects that may influence future development costs
- Any movement toward impact fees or development charges in cities facing utility and transportation needs
- State-level discussions heading into the 2026 legislative session that may impact GMA, environmental regulations, or rural land supply
- Local construction labor availability, particularly whether shortages begin to ease heading into the 2026 building season

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

Welcome New Lewis County Member!



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BIG Home & Remodel Show

April 18 and 19, 2026
Sat 10:00am-5:00pm,
Sun 10:00am-4:00pm
Saint Martin's University-
Marcus Pavilion

The Big Home and Remodel Show is the only one of its kind in Olympia – a one-stop shop for all your Home and Remodel needs! You'll see professionals in many home-related fields,

from Remodeling to Garage Doors to Landscaping, and everything in between.

Are you looking to be a vendor in the show? We'd love to have you! Our show typically sees an average of 2,000 customers over the course of the weekend and is a great opportunity for our local businesses to showcase themselves. You do not need

to be a member of OMB to participate, though our members do get a 20% booth discount. Vendor registration will open in February 2026! Visit omb.org for more information.

If you would like to be a sponsor for this event, contact Jenn at membership@omb.org.