



WINTER 2019

# GRANITE STATE **builder**

Official Magazine of The New Hampshire Home Builders Association

COVER STORY

## FIND THE **BEST,** KEEP THE **BEST**

Build a Stronger Business  
by Developing a Stronger  
Workforce



2018 Cornerstone Awards  
Recognize Excellence in  
Building Industry



Tips and Tricks for Better  
Project Pictures



Planning for Success:  
NHHBA Seminar Helps Members  
Ensure Profitable Growth



Legislative Update:  
The Session Ahead



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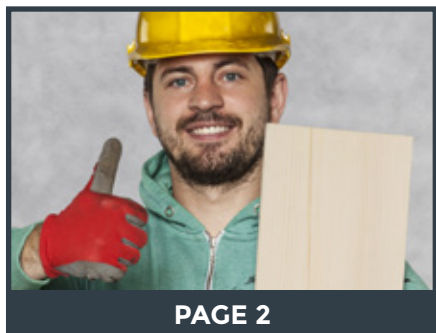
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## FIND THE BEST, KEEP THE BEST

Build a stronger business  
by developing a stronger  
workforce

## THE 2018 CORNERSTONE AWARDS

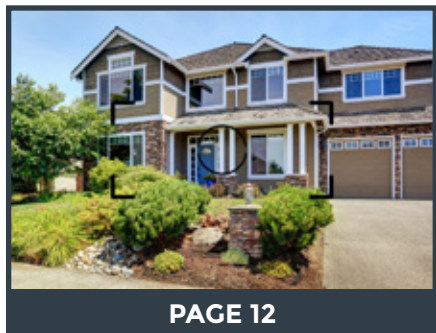
Many of the state's best home  
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## DEAR MEMBERS,

**W**ell, another year is coming to a close and along with it my term as President of the New Hampshire Home Builders Association. I'd like to thank all the members for their support as we've worked to make the association a stronger advocate for you, the member, and at the state house.

The executive team and various committees have worked hard on workforce development, education, membership and marketing. We recently conducted a successful and well attended educational event in October focusing on Producing Successful Construction Projects with Shawn McCadden. Hopefully, those who attended are even better suited for success based on what they learned.

A big thank you to all who organized, submitted projects for, and attended the 2018 Cornerstone Awards. This program provides a unique opportunity to showcase the outstanding work of our members. In March, the winning projects will be highlighted at the NH State Home Show, providing visibility and recognition to 7,500 homeowners. Next year, we're adding on-air promotion of the People's Choice award through our partnership with iHeart radio and NH Today host Jack Heath – another great reason to submit your entries!

Our website update is also in the works, with [www.nhhba.com](http://www.nhhba.com) scheduled to launch before the end of the year. The goal is to make it easier to navigate and find what you need. Please submit photos of your projects and/or interesting things happening in your business so we can use them on our website and social media. This will encourage homeowners to work with and easily find members of the NH Home Builders Association. Photos can be sent to [submissions@nhhba.com](mailto:submissions@nhhba.com).

We love showing our appreciation by hosting events where members can connect with vendors and potential recruits. A Fall BBQ was held at our Concord office while another coincided with the Home Show in March. Both were well received and we're looking to continuing these next year.

I joined the NH Home Builders Association in 2011 and have found it to be an invaluable part of my business. It has provided a connection to a variety of businesses I've utilized myself and referred to others. Involvement in State and Local leadership has also widened my perspective from my little world to the building industry as a whole. I've enjoyed learning about every aspect of membership and finding ways we can work together to strengthen our industry.

Even though my term is ending in December, I'll still be actively involved, putting time into the Builderscare NH Foundation to help with workforce development and the Hammers for Veterans program. I hope you'll find a way to give back to the community that has given us so much.

Happy Holidays and I hope to see you in the New Year.

Thank you,

Lynette Rogers

2017 / 2018 NHHBA President

**I'd like to thank all the members for their support as we've worked to make the association a stronger advocate for you.**





# FIND THE BEST, KEEP THE BEST

**Build a Stronger Business  
by Developing a Stronger  
Workforce**

**E**mployees are the lifeblood of any business. That's especially true in the world of building and contracting, where human capital drives the ability to complete projects.

Yet the challenges of the workplace shift constantly, almost on a daily basis. At the end of the day, the success of your business often depends on the men and women who you've brought on board to represent your company. How do you get the best people, and how do you get the best out of them?

## **Finding good employees**

The first order of business is getting good people in the door, and convincing them to stay to work for you. Sounds simple, right? In reality, it's nothing of the sort.

## **"If money is the only motivator, then anyone can offer them more and take them from you."**

Wholesalers. "We see and talk to a lot of 'good' people, but it's about putting the right person in the right place."

According to Nicholas Couture of Crossroads Contracting, "our best hires have happened when we focused on who the person is more than focusing on if they currently have all of the skills that we need for the position."

"Of course the person you hire needs to be able to perform the job, but we would rather hire the right person and do a lot of training rather than hire a person that has all of the skills when hired but may not be a great fit for our team and culture," Couture says. "Do they have the same core values as we do? Are they a team player? What motivates them? Is this person all about the money or do they value a team, a positive work environment, good benefits, working for people who care and a happy work-life balance."

"If they take the job for reasons other than money, then it becomes much easier and potentially less expensive to keep great employees," he says. "If money is the only motivator, then anyone can offer them more and take them from you. If they value the things that you provide and those things set you apart from your competitors, it makes it much easier to keep key employees. A content employee won't look in the first place."

Couture speaks from firsthand experience. He joined Crossroads 18 years ago as a part-time carpenter, while he was still earning his degree. He became a lead carpenter in 2004, and then moved up the ladder, working as a project manager and sales consultant. This year, Couture bought the company, along with business partner Johnny Hawkes, from former owner Jan Jacome this year, only a year after becoming a general manager.

"Personal integrity is of ultimate importance to me as a person, so I looked for an employer that also had integrity and would not put me in compromising situations," Couture says. "Because Jan, the former owner, knew what I value and supported (those values), working for her was never just about the money."

"So, as new owners, we make sure that anyone we hire is joining the team for reasons other than just money. In doing this, we are able to maintain a strong team of happy, long-term employees."

For Joshua Manning, general manager of Lewis Builders Development, referrals and networking often lead to the best job candidates.

"In a difficult job market, no one wants to steal help from anyone else," says Manning. "Sometimes it's just a matter of having a conversation with a potential candidate that will end up coming back around in the future to turn into something more. Networking is key and building that relationship."

"I wish we could boil this down to a science, but unfortunately finding the right people is one of the most critical business challenges for all of us," says Tracie Sponenberg, senior vice president of human resources with The Granite Group

"A lot of times relationships may be formed with a potential job candidate before an actual job opening is even there," he says. "We've also had good luck with sites like Indeed.com."

Prior work experience and references are key, said Manning. "It's tough to have to train people from scratch, so when you can find someone with experience, it's all the better," he says. "We've made many hires that have been a result of word of mouth."

Sponenberg said the talent strategy at The Granite Group "includes a number of different ways to attract the best and brightest, including increased brand awareness, an external advertising program and a strong internal referral program."

"We look for a number of things, including experience, which is critical for certain positions," she says. "For many of our other positions, we can train the skills necessary, so we look for desire to work for our company or industry, eagerness to learn, ability to work as part of a team and other soft skills. I don't put a lot of stock in references, since most people won't give you a bad reference."

Teamwork is a consistent and prominent theme among hiring experts.

"We do whatever we can to make sure our team is happy and engaged and compensated fairly," Sponenberg says. "Our best defense is a strong culture, close-knit community, great co-workers and managers, and we feel that we have that."

## **Competition for good workers**

The 800-pound gorilla in the room, of course, is the matter of keeping your recruitment of employees "above board." How you bring people into your company often says a great deal about your company's values, say the experts.

"I would never go to an employee of someone I know and offer them a job," Couture says. "It would ruin the relationship you have with their current employer, and the person you poached would be highly susceptible to being poached from you. Now, if an employee of someone I know came to me looking for a job, it would all depend on their reasons for leaving."

Unfortunately, said Sponenberg, poaching "happens quite a bit in areas of our industry."

"We have a really strong company culture, and a family atmosphere, despite the fact we have over 35 locations and over 500 employees. If a team member is being 'poached,' more often than not they'll tell their manager," she says. "Occasionally, someone gets an offer they cannot refuse, and we wish them well. Sometimes they come back to us, sometimes they don't. But that happens in any business."

Likewise, Manning said finding the comfortable middle ground between proper recruitment and poaching can be challenging.

"This is extremely difficult to handle," said Manning. "In most

**"A lot of times relationships may be formed with a potential job candidate before an actual job opening is even there."**

*continued on next page >*



cases here at our company, we operate slightly different than most, being that we are primarily self-performing most of our work.

“For example, if we hire a plumber that may have left a plumbing company, sometimes they are coming to us because we are not just a plumbing company,” he says. “We are much more diverse and perform different tasks.”

Kevin Salemi, marketing manager at Lewis Builders Development, said an open and honest approach with employees is the best approach.

“We do our best to build strong relationships with our employees, and we understand that they have families and personal lives that are more important than working with us,” Salemi says. “If they need to take that better opportunity with another employer to improve their life, then we’re happy for them and thankful for their contributions to our company. On the flip side, we’re not going to shut the door on someone else who would benefit from an opportunity with us.”

## Keeping the best employees

So, you’ve got a stable of excellent employees. In an ever-changing marketplace, how do you keep them?

“I think it is just as important as how and why you got the employee first,” Couture says.

Couture said he hopes to keep his workers by providing the same supportive work environment for them that Jacome did when he was a newer employee trying to balance work and family commitments.

“Jan was always there to listen when I was having a tough day, and gave me emotional support and time off when I needed it personally, or needed it to support my wife,” Couture says. “It was an extremely emotionally challenging period in my life, but it was comforting to know I had a boss that supported me so I could focus on my family and not worry that my job may be in jeopardy as well.

“I will always be grateful to Jan for how she handled the situations,” he says. “Most times things would happen without notice, which meant she would have to step up to make sure the job I was on was taken care of so I could then take care of my wife and myself.”

Still, the myriad factors that can come into play when trying to keep key employees can differ dramatically, Sponenberg says, and “can vary widely across generations, and even individual to individual.”

“The real key to keeping an individual is getting to know that person and their motivations and what makes them stay,” she says. “But some things help keep our turnover low in general, and help retain our team — a strong culture, meaningful work, great co-workers and a supportive manager. It’s not all about beer and ping-pong tables.”

Sponenberg acknowledged that The Granite Group can’t always compete with packages offered by “start-up tech companies,” but there are other benefits that her company employs to balance the ledger.

“We can provide an amazing place to work,” she says. “Our retention strategy includes setting up a strong total rewards program, including ensuring fair and equitable pay, (and) a robust benefits program that we review regularly and add to with team member feedback.”

The Granite Group is also promoting student loan assistance for employees in its trainee program, “and we have anecdotal evidence that it is a strong retention tool for some of our emerging leaders,” she says.

Similarly, Manning said Lewis Builders is supporting employees “in their continuing education goals,” helping them to stay current on new technology and trends in the field.

“I believe in diversity, keeping things fresh and not getting people stuck in ruts,” he says. “Being able to explain to someone that there is career growth opportunity within the company is a huge part of keeping good people.” ▲

**“We do our best to build strong relationships with our employees, and we understand that they have families and personal lives that are more important than working with us.”**



Freelance writer Brion O’Connor is a product of New Hampshire schools — Manchester Central High School and the University of New Hampshire. He currently resides with his wife and two daughters on Boston’s North Shore.

# Parade of Homes Winners Announced

Some of the Lakes Region's most stunning custom homes threw open their doors recently as part of the highly-anticipated Lakes Region Parade of Homes – an annual open house event that puts some of the building and remodeling industry's best work on display.

Held over Columbus Day weekend, visitors were once again treated to a collection of beautiful homes in six Lakes Region communities: Wolfeboro, Moultonborough, Meredith, Ashland, Laconia and Gilford. Participants received a guidebook with a map and home descriptions and an official ticket. As the visitors toured the homes, they were asked to choose their favorite home and cast their ballot at the completion of the tour.

Visitors took into account elements such as energy efficiency, exterior siding, kitchens, use of smart technology, lighting and custom millwork. Parade-goers were also asked to pick the home that resonated with them as the best out of the 11 homes.



The Best in Class award went to Sippican Partners' "Wingspread Residence".

**Sippican Partners Construction** won the Best in Class award with its "Wingspread Residence" in Ashland. This Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired home sits high atop Squam River Landing, illustrating the perfect design melding humanity with its environment. The home was also awarded Best Kitchen and Best Exterior Finish at the conclusion of this year's event.



"Lone Pine Cottage" was the visitors' overall favorite home on the tour and voted Lakes Region Parade of Home's People's Choice Winner.



**Retreat Custom Builders'** "Lone Pine Cottage," in Moultonborough, was named the 2018 People's Choice Award Winner. This classic lake house welcomed visitors through a timeless, columned porch into a stunning vaulted living and dining room. Two guest rooms with a Jack and Jill bathroom perfectly complement the in-law and master suites. A panoramic view from a large screened-in porch with an outdoor dining table and a casual seating area helped Lone Pine Cottage stand out to the more than 1,000 participants who took part in the Lakes Region Parade of Homes this year.

**The Lakes Region Tiny House** was also open for viewing during the three-day annual event. A collaboration between the Lakes Region Builders and the Huot Tech Center, the project

was designed to excite students about careers in the trades. Students from construction and plumbing classes spent the entire school year learning all aspects of building a home from scratch. The Tiny House



sits on an 8-foot by 24-foot trailer and offers 272 square feet of living area. This home was completed in the spring.

**Online:** [lakesregionbuilders.com](http://lakesregionbuilders.com) 🏠

## A number of other winners were selected in different categories, including:

**Best Landscape:** Stephens Landscaping Professionals LLC and 3 Lakes Landscaping

**Best Interior Finish:** Retreat Custom Builders

**Best Interior Design:** Retreat Custom Builders

**Best Floor Plan:** Retreat Custom Builders

**Best in Class New Build:** Sippican Partners

**Best Bath:** Retreat Custom Builders

**Best Use of Latest Technology:** Lighthouse Contracting Group

**Best Unique Features & Products:** J.C. Hayes Construction

# Planning for Success

## NHHBA Seminar Helps Members Ensure Profitable Growth

**Y**ou own a contracting business. You have the skills, the employees, the equipment and, presumably, the customers. Now the question is, how do you make it all work to make sure your business prospers?



Shawn  
McCadden

That's Shawn McCadden's department. McCadden is owner of Remodel My Business, Inc., and a nationally known speaker and business trainer with more than 40 years of experience in the remodeling and new home construction industries.

This past October, McCadden led a discussion entitled "Estimating, Pricing and Producing Successful

Construction Projects" for two dozen contractors from throughout the Granite State at the New Hampshire Home Builders Association's Concord offices. The general consensus of the group, during their introductions, was that they were looking for ways to get a better handle on their companies' finances, and especially the tricky art of estimating jobs.

"Business success starts with financial planning, and then with sales and estimating processes," McCadden says.

During a comprehensive seven hour presentation, McCadden employed a mix of good-natured Mark Twain-style common sense and sharp business savvy to help contractors maximize their bottom line. That's vital, since recent federal statistics indicate that half of private contracting companies fail within the first five years, and at the 10-year mark, 90 percent have either folded or are doing business under a different name.

"Businesses seldom fail because they're not profitable," he says. "It's mainly because they run out of cash."

First and foremost, McCadden warned attendees not to mistake having a particular skill set with having business acumen. In other words, an accomplished roofer, finish carpenter, plumber or general contractor may have mastered their trade and can do the work, but that's not the same as running a business.

Businesses have numerous factors that the owner needs to comprehend and consider — such as goals, standards, management style and employees — in order to create a flourishing work environment and a prosperous company.

"Think of a business as a system, and all these other things as gears that have to come together," says McCadden. "You're trying to figure out how everything fits together."

How a business owner meshes those "gears" is crucial to a company's overall health. Using a top-down approach, McCadden said that once owners have established goals, they can establish standards to help them measure whether the company is meeting those goals. Those standards will also help determine what kind of employee, and what kind of management style, they want.

"We need profiles to hire the right people, people who fit our

standards," McCadden says, adding that he prefers a "mentoring" style of management as opposed to supervisory. "If we've got good management who can drive and mentor our own people to meet our standards, then we'll meet our business goals."

Successful business owners must also devise a sound and predictable business budget, and then create methods and systems to monitor performance. In order to ensure sustainable growth, McCadden recommends charging customers what you'll need in the future to cover anticipated overhead, reserving excess funds to finance desired growth and "acting big from Day One."

"Why not test the market to see what you can charge," he says. "It's better than starting your business all over again because you raised your prices."

A company's financial system, he says, has to cover all of the following bases:

- **Knowing what to charge**
- **Understanding the difference between direct and indirect costs**
- **Knowing everything that needs to be in an estimate/proposal**
- **Creating good cash flow**

Cash flow, or more specifically the lack of cash flow, is the chief culprit in many failed businesses, he said. "The worst thing is going to bed not knowing if you can pay your bills," McCadden says.

To avoid sleepless nights, McCadden suggests setting up payment schedules that are front-loaded, when legal. This not only delivers a large portion of the payment at the start of the job, allowing payments to correspond with the project's cash flow needs, but also benefits customers by providing a firm set of expectations.

McCadden advises contractors to develop proposals with a strict payment schedule, and then hold fast to the terms of that agreement. In short, a precise, detailed proposal holds both the customers and the contractor accountable.

"Stick to the rules of the game, but be sure to let the client know what the rules are," McCadden says.

For example, McCadden recommends charging customers a \$750 fee if a crew needs to leave the job site because a payment isn't made on time. That arrangement is important to maintain cash flow, but it also assures the customer that the job will be completed on time.

By tying payments into project "milestones," contractors can make sure they're getting the money needed to pay for the upcoming work, while giving the client something to look forward to (completed portions of the project). Ideally, the payment schedule will require a "significant amount of the outstanding balance at the second-to-last payment," leaving a very small final payment (McCadden suggests 3 percent of the total project cost).

Though he uses the word "estimate" for putting together a proposal, McCadden prefers a different phrase when discussing projects with potential clients: "Are you providing estimates, or solutions at a fixed price? You want to think about how you present yourself."



Avoid bidding wars for projects, McCadden says, which can turn the process into a “reverse auction,” or a race to the lowest price, and often results in contractors compromising their financial model. Instead, he recommends that contractors develop estimation models that are sound, producing proposals that are both reasonable and achievable, and then stand by those figures. McCadden said the major three points that he hoped every attendee would take away were **knowing the numbers, avoiding underestimating the value of your estimating system and making sure to job cost constantly.**

## Know your numbers

According to McCadden, too many contractors lack a full understanding of the financials for a construction business, and resort to guessing at what to use for labor rates and mark-up.

“Think of how silly and unprofessional that really is,” says McCadden, who ran his own Massachusetts-based company — Custom Contracting, Inc. — until 2004. “Besides, it's very empowering to know and have confidence in the pricing you give consumers.”

Essentially, business owners (and their estimators), need to know the cost of everything required to run the business — not just one specific project — and then make sure that the proposals they present to customers are covering those costs.

## Don't underestimate the value of your estimating system

Contractors must make sure their estimating system supports their financial system, and vice versa.

“If it doesn't already, your estimating method should provide much more than just the price you will quote a prospect,” says McCadden. “It should give your production team what they need to prepare and to build the job on their own.”

To avoid making a WAG (wild-ass guess), or even a SWAG (scientific wild-ass guess), on any project, McCadden recommends that estimators devise a system that takes into account every dime that the company spends.

“I think of estimates as the center of the universe,” he says.

An estimating system with integrity — combining the right systems and the right people — not only reduces the likelihood of performing revised estimates, but also improves a contractor's ability to compete for projects.

“Contractors make money by selling,” says McCadden. “Then they protect the profits by producing.”

Estimates must include direct costs and indirect costs. Direct costs include labor, materials, subcontractors, equipment rental, cell phones, vehicle expenses and maintenance, employee/client meetings, employee benefits, liability insurance, worker's comp insurance, tools and tool maintenance, general production supplies and even employee training. Meanwhile, indirect costs include overhead, or everything needed to run the business off the job site (office expenses, sales and marketing expenses and salaries) and net profit.

“Profit,” emphasizes McCadden (a self-described capitalist), is not a four-letter word.

“Profit is a good thing,” he says. “You have to have profit and overhead figured into the mark-up.”

In the same vein, McCadden discourages contractors from ever

discussing mark-up with customers. He prefers discussing “margins” instead, which is typically a lower figure.

“Tell the client you're planning on a 10 percent net profit,” he says. “If the client won't let you have a 10 percent net profit, that's your invitation to get out of there.”

## Job cost constantly

In short, being a business owner means constantly monitoring the financial well-being of the company.

“Like filing taxes, too many contractors wait until everything is done to see how they did,” says McCadden. “If you job cost as you build, you can learn your mistakes much sooner, giving you the ability to use the information gleaned to better price and produce your projects, at your planned profit.”

Prevent falling short on estimating job costs by using the cost of the highest paid worker (and presumably most skilled) on the job, he says. However, that method also requires that the proposal reflect the time it would take that skilled worker to complete the task (presumably shorter than a lesser skilled employee).

Once you've agreed to a project in principal, it's essential to manage homeowner expectations before an agreement is signed. Initially, this role falls to members of the sales team, who review project specifications and details (what's included, what's not), payment schedules and how change orders will be handled and paid for. If your estimating system is solid, you'll have the time, materials and related cost for each task, a list of equipment needed and a “critical path” (or construction sequence) for completing the project.

Holding a pre-construction meeting with the customer (if a married couple, both spouses must be present), a representative of the sales team, and the point person on the job, is also important. That “point person,” says McCadden, should be the lead carpenter.

The lead carpenter has myriad duties overseeing the project, including confirmation of the start date, scheduling dumpster, equipment and material deliveries, keeping subcontractors, homeowners and the project manager informed of progress and any speed bumps, scheduling and managing building inspections, and scheduling the pre-completion meetings. But, again, his (or her) chief role may be managing client expectations.

“We refer to the lead carpenter as an ambassador with a tool belt,” he says.

The moniker is apt, because a lead carpenter can help short-circuit many potential problems by acting on them quickly, resolving issues before they get blown out of proportion.

Finally, McCadden recommends dispensing with the time-honored “punch list” in favor of a pre-completion meeting between the clients (again, both spouses in the case of a married couple), and the company's representative. Here, final outstanding issues can be addressed, as well as confirmation of the project accounting and final balance due. That way, the contractors pave the way for complete payment, and the customer is assured of a job well done.

Then it's on to the next project. 🏠

**“Think of a business as a system, and all these other things as gears that have to come together. You're trying to figure out how everything fits together.”**

# The Best of the Best in NH

## 2018 Cornerstone Awards Recognize Excellence in Building Industry

**M**any of the state's best residential and commercial builders and remodelers were recognized recently at the annual New Hampshire Home Builders Association Cornerstone Awards.

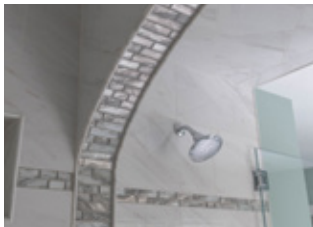
Contractors, managers, builders and NHHBA members gathered at the Manchester Country Club, in Bedford, for an evening of networking, dining and awards. Dozens of industry professionals were feted at the event, in categories ranging from Marketing to Green Building excellence. The Cornerstone Awards recognize NHHBA members who exhibit excellence in the building industry throughout the year.

**The People's Choice Award** this year went to **BathHouse Remodeling** for its "Stunning Creative Solution." BathHouse Remodeling also won two Gold Awards – one in the Commercial Under \$500k category, and one in the Bath Remodel \$50k-\$75k category.

Lewis Builders Development, Inc., Meredith Bay and DeStefano Architects, of Portsmouth, each took six awards at this year's event.

Below are some of the winners shown in pictures, along with a complete list of this year's winners.

**The People's Choice Award**  
**BATH REMODEL**  
**\$50K — \$75K**  
PROJECT:  
**Stunning Creative Solution**  
GOLD:  
BathHouse Remodeling, LLC



**KITCHEN REMODEL**  
**\$25K — \$50K**

PROJECT:  
**Spacious Kitchen Remodel**  
GOLD:  
DeStefano Architects

**Members are reminded to start planning to enter their projects and programs into the 2019 awards program at [nhcornerstoneawards.com](http://nhcornerstoneawards.com). The deadline for submitting projects for next year's awards is June 29, 2019.**



## LANDSCAPE DESIGN

**PROJECT:** A Perched View of Sachem Cove  
**GOLD:** Stephens Landscaping Professionals LLC



## MOST UNUSUAL PROJECT

**PROJECT:** The Sugar Shack at Meredith Bay  
**GOLD:** Meredith Bay



## SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED CONDO

**PROJECT:** The Rosewood: An Easy Living Design Ranch at Sawmill Ridge Condominium  
**GOLD:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.



## This year's NHHBA Cornerstone Awards winners:

### DESIGN

Architectural Design — Light Commercial  
**Gold:** CJ Architects  
**Silver:** Spencer Thomas Group Office Renovation

Landscape Design  
**Gold:** Landscaping Professionals, LLC

Light Commercial Interior Design  
**Gold:** CJ Architects

### MARKETING

Best Brochure  
**Gold:** 2DiFore Marketing Solutions, LLC

Best Creative Use of Social Media  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.  
**Silver:** Stephens Landscaping Professionals, LLC

Best Direct Mail Campaign  
**Gold:** Meredith Bay

Best Video (Broadcast TV or Youtube) — Local/Regional  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.  
**Silver:** Meredith Bay

Best Newsletter  
**Gold:** 2DiFore Marketing Solutions, LLC

Most Creative Public Relations  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.

Sales & Marketing —  
 Most Valuable Team Member: Associate  
**Gold:** Juli MacDonald, Associate,  
 DeStefano Architects

### REMODELING

Bath Remodel, \$50k-\$75k  
**Gold:** BathHouse Remodeling, LLC

Kitchen Remodel, \$25k-\$50k  
**Gold:** DeStefano Architects

Kitchen Remodel, \$75k-\$125k  
**Gold:** Crossroads Contracting

Residential Remodel, \$100k-\$300k  
**Gold:** ALC Design  
**Silver:** Cedar Mill Group

**Bronze:** Crossroads Contracting

Residential Remodel, \$300k-\$500k  
**Gold:** Crossroads Contracting  
**Silver:** ALC Design

### NEW CONSTRUCTION

Single Family Detached, \$500k-\$750k  
**Gold:** Meredith Bay

Single Family Detached, \$750k-\$1M  
**Gold:** Meredith Bay

Single Family Attached Condo  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.

Commercial, Under \$500k  
**Gold:** BathHouse Design, LLC

Commercial, Over \$500k  
**Gold:** DeStefano Architects

Best Tiny Home  
**Gold:** Lakes Region Home Builders Association

Best Energy Efficient Project  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.

### SPECIALTY

Residential Remodel, Over \$500k  
**Gold:** DeStefano Architects  
**Silver:** Lighthouse Contracting Group

Best Historical Renovation  
**Gold:** DeStefano Architects  
**Silver:** Homescapes of New England, LLC  
**Bronze:** CJ Architects

Community Service Project  
**Gold:** Warrenstreet Architects, Inc.  
**Silver:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.  
**Bronze:** DeStefano Architects

Landscape Construction — Residential  
**Gold:** Stephens Landscaping Professionals, LLC

Most Unusual Project  
**Gold:** Meredith Bay

Specialty Outbuilding — Residential  
**Gold:** Lewis Builders Development, Inc.  
**Silver:** Meredith Bay

Outdoor Living Space  
**Gold:** Stephens Landscaping Professionals, LLC

# Legislative Update: The Session Ahead

## For the New Hampshire Building Trades, the Election Kick-Starts the Process

**A**s in the past, the 2019 legislative year will be shaped by the coming general election and feature numerous initiatives aimed at construction law, land development and, directly or indirectly, home building. We take a look at a handful of the bills from last session likely to reemerge in the coming year.

### Creating a Housing Appeals Board

Senate Bill 557, sponsored by Sen. Bob Giuda (R-Warren), proposed the creation of an administrative tribunal to hear and decide developer appeals from local land use decisions. At present, the State Superior Court is the only forum for such appeals – an appellate track that is known to impose delay, expense and, ultimately, uncertainty.

The House Appeals Board would present a new option for bringing an appeal. As a housing-oriented forum, full-time commissioners would be subject matter experts. The proposed board would be loosely modeled upon the existing Board of Tax and Land Appeals, which offers an alternative to the State Superior Court for tax abatement appeals.

Last year, a division of the House Finance Committee diverted the legislation to interim study. Interim study is a means of “holding” a piece of legislation so that further work and discussion can continue. This fall, legislators announced a renewed interest in supporting a further bill. Legislation will again be sponsored to enable the creation of the Board.

→ Because the delays associated with conventional appeals can often kill or harm otherwise successful development proposals, the NHHBA SUPPORTS the creation of a Housing Appeals Board. NHHBA will continue to advocate for the passage of legislation.

### Relative to the Department of Transportation’s Permitting Procedures

Senate Bill 464, sponsored by Sen. Sharon Carson (R-Londonderry), would have imposed new and strict timelines upon the Department of Transportation’s review of infrastructure modification applications. Private developers often propose new or redeveloped improvements that have a direct connection to a state highway. In these instances, the developer must obtain a permit from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to create, alter or modify intersections with state highways. This process is often cumbersome, expensive and open-ended. SB 464 attempted to streamline the DOT application process by imposing a new review clock with real deadlines.

Concerns regarding the impact of reform upon the department caused the House Public Works Committee to send the bill to interim study for further discussion. As a consequence, a study committee has recently held several meetings to shape and recommend further legislation.

→ As these types of review timelines have proven effective in the context of environmental permitting, the NHHBA SUPPORTS the establishment of review timelines. NHHBA will continue to track and advocate for reform.

**Members of the NHHBA are encouraged to take an active role in pending legislation affecting the homebuilding industry.**

## Relative to Regulatory Reforms

House Bill 1104, sponsored by Rep. Dick Hinch (R-Merrimack), is the central work product of Governor Sununu's Regulatory Reform Steering Committee. Amid a list of business-friendly reforms, the highlights relevant to the building trades included:

- (a) enabling of a "certified application preparer program" to streamline minimum impact wetlands applications;
- (b) reduced and enhanced environmental permitting timelines and procedures; and,
- (c) licensure reciprocity with other state jurisdictions for occupational or professional licenses.

HB 1104 passed the Legislature, and was signed into law by the Governor on June 21, 2018. This new legislation takes effect January 1, 2019.

→ The NHHBA SUPPORTED passage of HB 1104, and looks forward to its various procedural improvements.

## Establishing a Committee to Examine the State's Adoption of National Codes

House Bill 1254, sponsored by Rep. Steve Beaudoin (R-Rochester), proposed examination of the state's existing process for considering and adopting national building and life-safety codes. At present, national codes are considered and, potentially, adopted by act of the legislature. Meanwhile, the State Building Code Review Board (BCRB) and the State Fire Control Board (FCB) maintain subject matter jurisdiction over recommendations and local New Hampshire amendments. The process can be confusing for the regulated public, as local amendments are immediately effective, but must be ratified by the Legislature after adoption to remain effective.

HB 1254 was enacted and the study committee has met regularly during the fall. The committee is likely to recommend further legislation aimed at a more meaningful vetting process for code changes and local amendments. Specifically, the committee has discussed a more structured cost/benefit analysis relating to proposed code requirements and increased expenses to builders and consumers.

→ The NHHBA SUPPORTED passage of HB 1254, and looks forward to examining the Committee's findings and recommendations.

## Conclusion

As the general election occurs, and the next legislative session commences, NHHBA will continue to track and help shape both reemerging proposals and new legislation. The fate of the above-mentioned ideas, and the new bills that emerge from their sponsoring legislators, can be tracked using the New Hampshire General Court website at [www.gencourt.state.nh.us](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us).

Members of the NHHBA are encouraged to take an active role in pending legislation affecting the homebuilding industry. Members should consider attending meetings of the NHHBA's Government Affairs Committee and to offering testimony at public hearings relating to pending legislation. 🏠



Ari B. Pollack is an attorney and lobbyist employed with Gallagher, Callahan and Gartrell, P.C. in Concord, New Hampshire. Ari is the long-time lobbyist for the New Hampshire Homebuilders Association, and focuses his private practice on New Hampshire land use development, state and local land and environmental permitting, and construction law.



2016 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD

**NAHB members benefit from these special offers.** Members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) can now enjoy a private offer<sup>1</sup> of up to \$1,000 toward the purchase or lease of most new Chevrolet, Buick, and GMC vehicles. Choose an eligible vehicle at your local dealer and present your NAHB proof of membership. You can add on incentives from the National Fleet Purchase Program<sup>2</sup> and Business Choice<sup>3</sup> to get the best value on vehicles that run your business. For private offer details, visit [nabh.org/gm](http://nabh.org/gm).

GENERAL MOTORS FLEET



<sup>1</sup>Available at participating dealers. Private offer amount varies by model. Retail and fleet deliveries for City Express receive a \$250 offer. Retail deliveries for all other eligible vehicles receive a \$500 offer. Fleet deliveries on the following vehicles receive a \$1,000 offer: Buick Enclave; Chevrolet Traverse, Silverado, Express; GMC Acadia, Sierra, Savana. All other fleet deliveries will receive a \$500 offer. Valid toward the purchase or lease of eligible 2015 and 2016 model-year vehicles. Customer must take delivery by 1/3/17. Not compatible with other private offers. Not valid on prior purchases. Compatible with many current incentives. Incentives are subject to change without notice. Excludes Buick Regal, Cascadia; Chevrolet Corvette, Impala Limited, Sonic, Spark, Trax, SS, Volt; all Cadillac models. FAN required for fleet deliveries. See dealer for complete details. <sup>2</sup>Offer eligible for non-CAP customers only through 12/31/16. See dealer for details. <sup>3</sup>To qualify, vehicle must be used in the day-to-day operations of your business and not solely for personal/non-business-related transportation purposes. Must provide proof of business. For complete program requirements, including information regarding offers, vehicles, equipment, options, warranties, and ordering, consult your dealer or visit [gmbusinesschoice.com](http://gmbusinesschoice.com). Take delivery by 9/30/16. ©2016 General Motors. All rights reserved. The marks appearing in this ad are the trademarks or service marks of GM, its subsidiaries, affiliates, or licensors.

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# Polish Those Project Pictures

## Tips and Tricks for Putting Your Best Face Forward



There is an old saying that goes something like this:  
**“The best camera is the one you have with you.”**

While the saying was originally meant to encourage people to get out there and take photographs regardless of their equipment, it’s taken on a new meaning over the past 10 years. The smartphones we carry around in our pockets are equipped with cameras that are better than point-and-shoot cameras that cost \$500 or more less than a decade ago. These cameras are capable of taking stunning images that, when taken correctly, stand up against cameras that cost thousands of dollars.

Despite smartphone cameras being so powerful, there’s more to taking a great photo than just pointing and shooting. And if you want your potential clients to get a good look at what you can deliver, it’s best to know how to harness the power of that camera to provide the best imagery possible. Below are a few tips and tricks to remember when shooting your work.

### 1 SETTINGS: Largest Photo Size

Get into your camera settings and make sure that you’re shooting photos as large as possible. Most smartphones these days can shoot photos that are 5000 pixels or larger, so make sure you’re capturing the largest images you can.

### Aspect Ratio

Make sure your phone is shooting photos in 16:9 aspect ratio. Most phones will default to a 16:9 aspect ratio (think widescreen) but some will default to 4:3 (think TV before widescreen). Although both are fine, we live in a widescreen world now, so it only makes sense to shoot in widescreen.

### 2 COMPOSITION: Horizontal

First and foremost, **hold your phone horizontally** when taking photographs of your projects. Whether on screen, in print or in a large format setting, photos are almost always displayed horizontally, so it only makes sense to take them the same way.

Exceptions would be when taking individual portraits and when taking photos of tall, vaulted spaces (like a two-story entryway) or small narrow spaces (like a small guest bathroom). Then it makes sense to take vertical photos of vertical spaces or things.

### Think in thirds

When composing a photo, especially photos that show an entire structure/project, think about separating the picture into thirds. In this example at the top of the right page, the foreground (grass) takes up a third of the photo, the subject (parking garage and train) takes up a third and the background (sky) takes up a third.



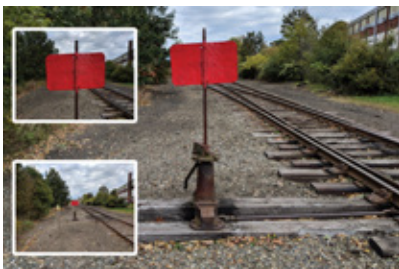
### 3 EXPOSURE

The most important part of taking a good photo is to make sure the exposure is set correctly. Without getting too technical, exposure is the amount of light that reaches your camera sensor, and it is a crucial part of how bright or dark your pictures appear. Smartphone cameras automatically set the exposure so that the brightest part in the frame is in focus and clear. When taking photos outside, this results in a high level of contrast between the sky and objects that are not in direct light. Fortunately, setting the exposure on smartphone cameras is easy. **Simply tap the part of the photo you want to be in focus/well lit and the camera will automatically adjust.**

The example below is actually two photos laid over each other. The right side of the image is the default setting. The sky is a crisp blue, but the building and all of the foreground is dark and lacks detail. On the left side, the building was tapped on the smartphone screen to set the exposure and allow more light in. The sky is a bit washed out, but you can see much more detail in the building.



The same rule applies to the left, right and center thirds of a photograph, too. The trees are in the left third, the subject (red sign) is in the middle third, and the tracks are in the right third. The inserts show similar photos of the same subject that are composed poorly. The top insert is too close, and the bottom insert is too far away.



### Perspective

Don't always take photos from the same perspective. 99 percent of smartphone photos are taken chest high and straight on, but that's not always the best angle. Sometimes photos need to be taken off center, with an object in the foreground (see the golf photo) or from a lower angle (see the golf ball image). Don't be afraid to experiment with angles and perspective.



Although those are the “big three” when it comes to taking great photographs with your smartphone, there are a few other quick pointers to make sure you capture an image that you're proud of.

- **Perspective/Angles.** Don't be afraid to experiment with angles and perspective as there's no limit to the number of shots you can take — which leads right into the last tip..

- **Take many pictures of the same shot.** Seriously, don't be skimpy. Years ago, photographers had to be economical with their shots. Rolls of film had limited exposures and were pricy to develop. Fortunately, your smartphone has almost unlimited storage, so take as many as you can and pick the best one.

### Send us some photos

Send photos to [submissions@nhhba.com](mailto:submissions@nhhba.com) with the word “Submissions” in the subject line, or navigate to our website at [www.nhhba.com](http://www.nhhba.com) and click the “Submit Photo” button on the bottom of the home page. If we use your photo, we'll give your business a shoutout!



A graduate of the University of Tampa, Steve Bowles has spent his entire professional career in marketing. Away from the office, he's all about sports — rooting for Boston teams and playing golf all summer and skiing all winter.

# Out and About with Our Members



Congratulations to the incoming 2018-19 Greater Manchester/ Nashua Home Builders and Remodelers Association (GMNHBRA) officers and directors: From left, Karen LaMontagne, of LaMontagne Builders, Inc.; Mike Joy, of Mill City Energy; Lorinda Gilbert, of the Merrimack County Savings Bank; Mike Loughlin, of Eversource Energy; and Shelly Akatyszewski, of Northpoint Mortgage.

2018-19 SNHHBRA Officers and Directors, from left, Tom Loosigian, of Birch Creek Building Development; Jack Holmes, of CJ Architects; Janet Bagley, of Vizuluxe; Jason Mlocek, of Santo Insurance; Paul Muckerheide, of Granite State Hydroshield, LLC; Lynette Rogers, of Homescapes of New England; Travis Terry, of Travis Terry & Co. CPA; John MacKinnon, of MacKinnon Construction; and incoming president, James Degnan, of Andersen Windows and Doors.



Past GMNHBRA and NHHBA President Sandy LaMontagne swears-in her daughter, Christine LaMontagne, as president of the GMNHBRA.

Sen. Regina Birdsell officiates at the Southern New Hampshire Home Builders and Remodelers Association (SNHHBRA) installation of officers and directors ceremony.







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National Association of Home Builders

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# Remodeling Confidence Remains Solid in Third Quarter

The National Association of Home Builders' (NAHB) Remodeling Market Index (RMI) posted a reading of 58 in the third quarter of 2018, remaining stable from the previous quarter. The RMI has been consistently above 50—indicating that more remodelers report market activity is higher compared to the prior quarter than report it is lower—since the second quarter of 2013. The overall RMI averages current remodeling activity and future indicators.

“Remodelers across the country are seeing homeowner demand remain strong through the midpoint of the year,” says NAHB Remodelers Chair Joanne Theunissen, CGP, CGR, a remodeler from Mt. Pleasant, Mich. “Both positive home price growth—albeit at a slightly slower rate—and good consumer confidence are supporting the steady remodeling market.”

Current market conditions rose one point from the previous quarter to 58. Among its three major components, major additions and alterations rose one point to 56, minor additions and alterations decreased one point to 57 and the home maintenance and repair component rose one point to 60.

“The stability of the RMI reflects offsetting trends in the remodeling market,” NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz says. “A sound economy with low unemployment and easing lumber prices are being counterbalanced by rising interest rates and the ongoing labor shortage.”

For the full RMI tables, please visit [www.nahb.org/rmi](http://www.nahb.org/rmi). For more information about remodeling, visit [www.nahb.org/remodel](http://www.nahb.org/remodel).

## Builder Confidence Rises One Point in October

Builder confidence in the market for newly built, single-family homes rose one point to 68 in October on the National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). Builder confidence levels have held in the high 60s since June.

“Builders are motivated by solid housing demand, fueled by a growing economy and a generational low for unemployment,” says NAHB Chairman Randy Noel, a custom home builder from LaPlace, La. “Builders are also relieved that lumber prices have declined for three straight months from elevated levels earlier this summer, but they need to manage supply-side costs to keep home prices affordable.”

“Favorable economic conditions and demographic tailwinds should continue to support demand, but housing affordability has become a challenge due to ongoing price and interest rate increases,” Dietz says. “Unless housing affordability stabilizes, the market risks losing additional momentum as we head into 2019.”

Derived from a monthly survey that NAHB has been conducting for 30 years, the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index gauges builder perceptions of current single-family home sales and sales expectations for the next six months as “good,” “fair” or “poor.” The

survey also asks builders to rate traffic of prospective buyers as “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 conditions as good than poor.

The HMI index measuring current sales conditions rose one point to 74 and the component gauging expectations in the next six months increased a single point to 75. Meanwhile, the metric charting buyer traffic registered a four-point uptick to 53.

Looking at the three-month moving averages for regional HMI scores, the Northeast rose three points to 57 and the South edged up one point to 71. The West held steady at 74 and the Midwest fell two points to 57.

*The NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index is strictly the product of NAHB Economics, and is not seen or influenced by any outside party prior to being released to the public. HMI tables can be found at [nahb.org/hmi](http://nahb.org/hmi). More information on housing statistics is also available at [housingeconomics.com](http://housingeconomics.com).*

## New Home Sales Fall 5.5 Percent in September

Sales of newly built, single-family homes fell to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 553,000 units after downwardly revised August, July and June reports, according to newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau. This is the lowest sales pace since December 2016. However, on a year-to-date basis, sales are up 3.5 percent from this time in 2017.

“New home sales activity has slowed this summer as housing affordability remains a serious issue,” Noel says. “However, sales are up from this time last year and builders continue to report consumer interest in housing.”

“Home price gains and rising interest rates are slowing down the housing market, particularly in high-cost areas and among entry-level buyers who are sensitive to price increases,” Dietz says. “Builders need to provide homes at different price points to address these affordability concerns. Meanwhile, overall job and economic growth should help support the housing market in the months ahead as it adjusts to higher mortgage interest rates.”

The inventory of new homes for sale was 327,000 in September. The median sales price was \$320,000. Meanwhile, the median home price in September 2017 was \$331,500, as the market has shifted to lower-cost homes.

Regionally, new home sales rose 6.9 percent in the Midwest. Sales fell 1.5 percent in the South, 12 percent in the West and 40.6 percent in the Northeast. On a year-to-date basis, home sales are higher in all regions except the Northeast, which has registered a 16.5 percent decrease in sales volume. ■



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Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Business: \_\_\_\_\_ No. Years in Business \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Web: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Contact & Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP PROFILE INFORMATION ON NEXT PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED**

### CHOOSE LOCAL ASSOCIATION

- Lakes Region..... \$515
- Manchester/Nashua..... \$525
- North Country ..... \$490
- Southern/Seacoast..... \$525
- Southwestern..... \$490
- White Mountain..... \$490
- Affiliate Member..... \$ 80

*An Affiliate member is an employee that can join under their company's full-membership in the same Local.*

*Name of Primary Full Member to list Affiliate Member under (required)*

### NAHB COUNCILS

- Remodelers Council.....\$ 80
- Sales & Marketing Council.....\$ 80

### VOLUNTARY DONATIONS

NHHBA Build PAC Fund.....\$ 25  
*Support state and local candidates for public office who support housing and small business related legislation and regulation in the Granite State.*

NHHBA LEGAL ACTION FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Fund established to coordinate the membership's efforts to address government imposed barriers including, but not limited to, growth moratoriums, code restrictions, impact fees, etc.*

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- Membership will be "pending" until approval of application by local association.
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that by providing my contact information I consent to receive all forms of communications sent on behalf of NHHBA (and its endorsed affiliates). I understand that the NHHBA will not share my contact information with other organizations. Full policy available upon request. All applications are "pending" until approved by the chosen local association. I understand that my membership dues entitle me to the benefits and services of the National Association of Home Builders, the State and Local Associations. I will abide by the By-laws and Code of Ethics of the Association and will promote the objectives of the Association to the best of my ability.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Updated July 2018

★★ > Be sure to fill out the other side < ★★

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## MEMBERSHIP PROFILE INFORMATION

(must be completed before application can be processed)

The Membership Profile is designed for use by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and its affiliated state association and local association to provide services which respond to the changing needs of our membership. If you don't know the exact answer for a section, please give best estimate.

**NOTE:** Affiliate members use codes that pertain to your employer.

## MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION (check only one)

- Builder, Remodeler, General Contractor
- Associate Member (suppliers, vendors, subcontractors)
- Affiliate Members (employee of member company represented by a Builder or Associate member of the same local association)

## OCCUPATION CODE 1

### Builders & Remodelers ONLY

(Select only from occupation codes A-K)

- (A) Single Family Spec/Tract Building
- (B1) Single Family General Contracting
- (B2) Single Family Custom Building
- (C) Multifamily Building (Condo/Coop Units)
- (D) Multifamily Building/Ownership (Rental Units)
- (E) Multifamily General Contracting
- (F) Remodeling - Residential
- (G) Remodeling - Commercial
- (H) Commercial Building (Own Account)
- (I) Commercial General Contracting
- (J) Land Development
- (K) Manufacturing of Modular/Panelized Log Homes

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES** FT \_\_\_\_\_ PT \_\_\_\_\_

Do you offer health insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how many employees are covered under your current plan? \_\_\_\_\_

## SOCIAL NETWORKING

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- LinkedIn
- Twitter

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## SECONDARY ACTIVITY (1), TERTIARY ACTIVITY (2)

The **tertiary** industry is the segment of the economy that provides services to its consumers; this includes a wide range of businesses such as financial institutions, schools and restaurants. It is also known as the tertiary sector or service industry/sector.

- (W4) Landscaping \_\_\_\_\_
- (W5) Plumbing/Heating/Air Conditioning \_\_\_\_\_
- (W6) Roofing/Siding/Sheet Metal Work \_\_\_\_\_
- (W7) Painting and Paper Hanging \_\_\_\_\_
- (W8) Floor Laying and Other Floor Work \_\_\_\_\_
- (W9) Concrete Work \_\_\_\_\_
- (WA) Excavation Work \_\_\_\_\_
- (WC) Land Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_
- (WD) Security Systems \_\_\_\_\_
- (X1) Appliances \_\_\_\_\_
- (X2) Building Materials/Lumber \_\_\_\_\_
- (X3) Floor Coverings \_\_\_\_\_
- (X4) Paint/Wall Coverings \_\_\_\_\_
- (Y) Utilities \_\_\_\_\_
- (Y2) Industry Consultant \_\_\_\_\_
- (Y3) Trade Association/Non-Profit \_\_\_\_\_
- (WE) Insulation Work \_\_\_\_\_
- (WF) Drywall Installation \_\_\_\_\_
- (Q2) Home Technology \_\_\_\_\_

## DOLLAR VOLUME

- Less than \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1 Million
- \$1 Million - \$5 Million
- \$5 Million - \$10 Million
- \$10 Million - \$15 Million
- More than \$15 Million
- No Construction Activity

## NUMBER OF UNITS

- Zero Units Started
- 1-10 Units Started
- 11-25 Units Started
- 26-100 Units Started
- 101-500 Units Started
- Over 500 Units Started

*Dues payments to NHHBA are NOT deductible as charitable contributions for federal tax purposes. However, dues payment may be deductible as an "ordinary and necessary" business expense, subject to an exclusion for lobbying activity. Because a portion of your dues is used for lobbying by NAHB and the NHHBA, 28% of the total dues, is not deductible for income tax purposes.*

## MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

*If, within the first year of your membership you are not completely satisfied, NHHBA will refund the amount of your STATE DUES ONLY. To qualify for this refund, you must have participated in at least one NHHBA Committee, attended at least two NHHBA events and have been present at a minimum of three local association meetings (bringing a prospective member to at least one) within one year.*

★★ > Be sure to fill out the other side < ★★



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- 3) Receive a Rebate Check!

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- Upgrades and replacement hardware

\*\* Carriers require a 5 line minimum



**To learn more, please visit [ememberbenefits.com/NAHB](http://ememberbenefits.com/NAHB) or call 866-430-NAHB (6242) to speak with a member specialist**

# A Letter to Santa Claus Construction

## Dear Mr. Claus,

First, I hope you don't mind if I refer to you as Santa. Whenever our custom home or remodel clients call us by our last name, it always means trouble. Using our first name means they're happy — like the call we got on Thanksgiving as we prepared the annual feast.

"Hello Tricia, happy Turkey Day! We're just here to enjoy the holiday with our kids and stopped by the site. Looking great! Wanted to let you know we are very pleased."

Nice call, short and sweet, happy clients. Now, if it had begun, "Sorry to disturb you Mrs. Morin, but..." Well, that wouldn't have been very merry.

So, Santa, let me start with some gifts for the company. The jobsite heaters are getting old and unreliable. Same with our air pressure tank and nail guns. They keep getting fixed over and over again. Time for some new ones. We left you a nice plate of cookies at the jobsite. Yes, those special cookies my buddy in Colorado sent us. They should make the rest of your night really cool.

For the company president, who is also my lovely wife, Tricia, she could use a new laptop, more ink for the plotter, some country house plans (Craftsman style is on the way out) and some 2019 client leads with good attitudes. Preferably, their jobs should be no more than 20 minutes away from the office.

Our supervisor, Matt, never tells us what he needs, so I will make my best guess. Let's start with a new phone. Calls and texts never get through to him for some reason. At least, not the ones I send. Hmmmm. He also buys our jobsite subs hot java — which adds up — so a large coffee maker should do the trick. He'll have to do a little more work to make them what they need, but that's life in the construction world. Some logo t-shirts would be nice, too. Can we get one that fits his dog?

He's always running around the sites.

Our best contractors should get something. At first, I was giving my finish carpenter a big tip on his bill. I'm thinking more like a sock full of coal hung on the half-finished mantle that should have been done a week ago. That should help the schedule, too.

We have friends at the Home Builders Association, so let's start with the staff: For Sharon and Jennifer, let's do a plaque saying, "We appreciate everything you two do to keep this office open." For the members who stay busy in committees, how about something they could all enjoy? Government Affairs folks would prefer Scotch and nice glasses. And for the presidents of the state and

locals, let's do calendars for 2019 with our meeting times pre-printed. Encouragement to serve another term. Or does that lack subtlety? Whatever.

Santa, it just occurred to me that your shop up there has been around forever and could use some repairs. Please leave our members an invitation to bid on specific things you need. Just bear in mind, the lucky remodeler will need a 50 percent deposit. I suggest you pay it in gift cards for Lowes and Home Depot.

We have our new construction clients to think of as well. The two things they all ask for is completion on schedule and warranty repairs. If you and I can work out a deal, please send your elves to do the work once this whole Christmas thing is over. I'm sure they'll be available at that point. Let me know how to contact the supervisor and I'll get him the lists.

We also have the association's lawyer, Ari Pollack, that I want to include. I know his family is Jewish, but I still want to do something. Please sneak in there with some candy and a plate of potato latkes. Just make sure it's all kosher. They would really appreciate it.

And then there's me. Well, where do I start? For one, I can't drive anymore so I'm thinking a black limousine. Why? Well, I ride in the back so now everyone will think I'm important. We also need a new roof on our house, but just like the cobbler's kids and new shoes, we've had to wait and wait. More coal in my roofer's stockings if you land your sleigh on old shingles. I also have a lot of time on my hands that needs to be filled now that I am retired. Leave my cell phone number in everyone's stockings with a note to "call good ol' Paul." I would love that.

Oh, and one last thing. Santa, you've always been a generous dude. You don't have to fit it in your bag of toys. Just drag it behind you and the reindeer. I want a banner reading: "HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL YOU BUILDERS AND ASSOCIATES!"

Thanks Mr. Claus,

*Paul*



Paul Morin is president of Tarkka Homes Inc. in Weare, NH and a partner in The Abacus Group, a lobbying and consulting firm in Manchester, NH. In 2009, he was the first residential builder to receive the New Hampshire Construction Industry Ethics Award. He was asked to write a satirical article for *The Finish Nail* and directs all offended readers to the publisher for apologies.





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