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The News of the Home Builders Association of West Florida

March 2016

Cluster Mail Box Unit Delivery Has Hit Northwest Florida



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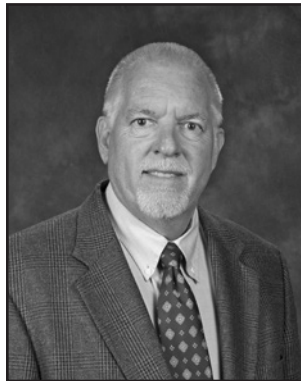
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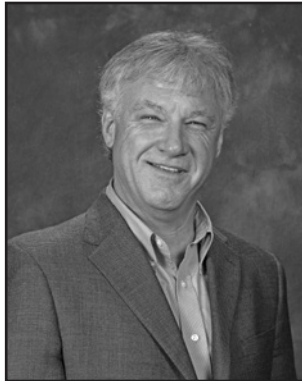
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Cornerstone

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NEW FEATURES KEEP PACE WITH THIS ACTIVE GENERATION

Baby boomers, who were the largest American generation until the Millennials took over, are either retired or quickly nearing retirement age. Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964 and who count more than 76 million, may be getting older, but they are definitely not ready to head to the retirement home!

The boomer generation is more active than generations past, has a more sophisticated style and wants options and choices in their homes. Whether they are selling the homes where they raised their children and heading to sunnier pastures, or staying put and redesigning to accommodate their retired lifestyle, boomers are making an impact on housing trends.

Some features that home builders and remodelers are seeing as they begin to cater to the boomers include:

Home Offices: Some boomers are choosing to work past the age of 65. As they transition from a traditional 9-to-5 job, however, they want home offices for flexibility. A second career or part-time employment often eliminates the hassle of commuting while keeping them active and bringing in supplementary income.

Tech/Media Centers: The tech-savvy boomer generation wants top-of-the-line amenities for their homes such as a media room with surround sound and central control systems, which manage all media sources in one location. The house may include a wireless home network, remote control lighting and security features.

Wider Doors and Hallways: As a person ages, there is a likelihood that use of a wheelchair might become a necessity. Designing a home that is livable now but can transition and be functional as the occupant ages is important in ensuring that the home will be a good long-term investment. Wider doors and hallways are useful for moving larger furniture today, and will also be wheelchair accessible tomorrow.

Better Lighting/Bigger Windows: The need for more lighting usually increases as we grow older. To accommodate this, builders are adding more windows and making them larger to let in more natural light. They are also adding more light fixtures in areas including under cabinets and in stairwells. Multiple switches to reduce the number of trips and dimmer controls to eliminate glare are other options.

First-Floor Bedrooms and Bathrooms: More than 40% of new homes have master suites downstairs, a 15% increase over a decade ago. Boomers not wishing to go up and down stairs with bad knees and aching backs have helped fuel this trend. The bedrooms also are also larger, with more spacious walk-in closets and bathrooms that have a separate tub and shower and dual sinks.

Easy to Maintain Exteriors/Landscaping: Yard work, painting, and other landscaping chores may no longer be enjoyable to aging home owners. People who move to a new home when they retire may opt for a maintenance-free community. Those that choose to stay in their homes might make improvements to exterior surfaces such as installing stucco, brick or low-maintenance siding. Lawns are being replaced with living patios, decorative landscaping, or flower beds which can be a hobby for gardening enthusiasts.

Flex Space: Flex space has become more prevalent in both new homes and remodeling. Flex spaces are rooms that take on the purpose of the present home owner's needs but can adjust with changes as they occur. What may have once started out as a guest bedroom can be redecorated to serve as a hobby room or library. This allows home owners to stay in their homes longer as it continues to serve their needs throughout life's stages.

President's Message



“The boomer generation is more active than generations past, has a more sophisticated style and wants options and choices in their homes.”

Cluster Mail Box Unit Delivery Has Hit Northwest Florida

By CLAIRE WORSHTIL

Editor's Note: Recently the United States Postal Service informed developers that it will not provide door to door mail delivery to their subdivisions. These subdivisions have gone through the development review process, approved by local governments, and have homeowners living there. This is a costly retrofit and the HBA is working with local governments to appeal to the regional USPS offices. Moving forward, if you are planning to develop a subdivision, you need to communicate with the USPS and county planning departments.

Traditional mail delivery service has been in the form of “curbside delivery” for single-family homes in the United States. Since the late 19th century, urban and suburban attached and detached homes were served first by mail delivery personnel on walking routes and, increasingly after World War II, by truck route. While door delivery to individual homes is still common in many parts of urban and suburban America, predominantly in older single family communities, the most common form of delivery in suburban America is via a curbside mail receptacle, often accessed directly by mail truck. By contrast, multi-family communities, such as condominiums and garden apartments, have traditionally been serviced by a shared Cluster Box Unit (CBU), either located interior to the building or at a common accessible site.

However, the last 20 years has seen an extraordinary growth in new single-family subdivisions, many of which adopted many characteristics of a multi-family community, including a mix of detached and attached units, shared amenities, commonly maintained open space, and restricted access points such as a gated community. Coinciding with this trend, the United States Postal Service has seen reduced revenues due to competition with private express carriers, innovations in communication such as the internet and email as well as dramatically oscillating fuel prices. These competitive pressures have caused the Postal Service to reduce curbside delivery as a cost-cutting measure.

How is the United States Postal Service structured?

The United States Postal Service is an independent branch of the executive office of the U.S. Government and is governed by the nine-member Board of Governors appointed by the President of the United States. The only Congressional oversight is via the fact that the board member appointees are confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The Board of Governors is not to be confused with the Postal Regulatory Commission, which is an independent oversight Commission whose members are also appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) research has determined that the United States Postal Service is a highly

decentralized operational system with very little centralized policy dictating the day-to-day operations of the service, with the exception of the Postal Operations Manual, which will be discussed further in this article.

Federal Requirements Relating to Mail Delivery Services

The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) can adjust the mail classification schedule and establish rates and fees for postal services. It produces the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule to define how first-class or standard mail, periodicals, packages, and other special services are categorized and what fees will be charged for each. The PRC also provides procedures for complaints, appeals and settlement of disputes over mail-related activity.

In contrast, the U.S. Postal Service regulates service standards for the classes of mail—for instance, how long it will take for a first class letter or a periodical to be delivered from Point A to Point B. Among other things, it has the power to inspect mail for unlawful activity; to establish or discontinue local post offices; and to manufacture and distribute postage — the types of things one might expect the U.S. Postal Service to do. It publishes the Domestic Mail Manual, which provides information to the public about the size and options for mailing particular types of mail, and those provisions are incorporated by reference into the federal regulations. Finally, the U.S. Postal Service has developed a Postal Operations Manual which provides federal direction to regional managers and local postmasters on how to manage post office operations, including delivery of mail.

Effective April 5, 2012, the Postal Service revised Postal Operations Manual (POM) subchapters 61, 63, 64, and 65 in selected subsections to provide updated and revised information and procedures regarding modes of delivery and delivery equipment.

The revised procedures apply to new deliveries added to the delivery network; however, the revisions also provide updated language on centralized delivery equipment that may apply to current delivery points as well. It is important to note that Postal Service representatives are still required to meet with builders and developers early in the process to ensure the best choices are made and to assess if the mode of delivery directed to be put in place conforms to the policies of the Postal Service. There are no changes in the current modes of delivery available as an option for the Postal Service in establishing necessary and adequate services.

Types of Delivery Services

The USPS allows for three types of delivery options: to the door, curb line boxes, or CBU. For new residential delivery, cluster mailboxes are now the default. The federal government grants discretion to the regional managers and local postmasters to determine if a form of delivery option other than CBU will be available to new development.

New homes or businesses built within a block of existing homes or businesses receive the same type of service as older homes or businesses subject to postmaster approval and after consideration of Postal Service operational efficiencies.

Establishment of New Service

When new development replaces more than one block, delivery methods must comply with mode of delivery options for establishment and extension of delivery service. "Establishment" refers to the initiation of city delivery service in a community through a post office that does not currently provide it. "Extension" refers to the expansion of city delivery service to any area that is not currently receiving delivery service but that is within the delivery limits of a post office from which the city delivery service is already provided. All establishments or extensions of delivery service must have final approval of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, or a designee.

For all establishments and extensions, the options for delivery service are to the door, curbside boxes, or CBU. In establishing or extending city delivery service, a combination of delivery methods is considered to provide adequate service to all residential and business sections of the community. If a customer chooses not to erect a curbside box because of a local, city, county, or state ordinance prohibiting the installation of mailboxes at the curb, the delivery options in establishments and extensions are central delivery service and post office box or general delivery service.

Establishment of city delivery service has several essential requirements, such as street signs, house numbers, paved streets, right-of-ways and turnouts, satisfactory walkways, installed mail receptacles or door slots, and a certain minimum postal population. One of these basic requirements is that at least 50 percent of the building lots in the area to be served are improved with houses or business places. However, many developers and home owners would like to have postal delivery service established in a subdivision prior to reaching the 50 percent occupancy mark. Thus, the 50 percent rule may be waived if: (1) there is a reasonable expectation that the requirements can be met within 12 months, and CBUs are to be used for delivery.

Standards for CBUs

The U.S. Postal Service at the federal level directs that CBUs may be approved for use at one or more central delivery points within a residential housing community. The local postal manager must approve the mailbox sites and type of equipment. However, boxes must be safely located so that customers are not required to travel an unreasonable distance to obtain their mail and to provide sufficient access to mailbox locations. Normally, within one block of the residence is considered appropriate. If local postmasters are demanding more spread-out CBUs such that travel to the

box is unreasonable, then this federal guidance is a good place to start. Again, the federal government grants discretion to the regional managers and local postmasters to authorize a delivery method other than CBU.

RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPERS

Talking with Your Regional Manager or Postmaster

As was mentioned previously, the United States Postal Service is a highly decentralized organization and much of the policy decision making will derive from your regional postmaster, with guidance from such centralized policy as the Postal Operations Manual. It is therefore critical to establish a relationship with this office. It is also important for the regional postmaster to understand the difference between single-family community with amenities, common areas and maintenance and residential subdivisions that do not provide these services and the

challenges CBUs pose for this kind of development.

The problem for developers is that when they take advantage of the 50 percent rule waiver mentioned previously in order to get service to the first home buyers, the CBUs become the permanent method of service for the entire community. Discussing



Cluster Mail Box Unit Delivery Has Hit Northwest Florida

from page 7

these issues with your regional Postmaster during the design phase of development can hopefully plan for a clear transition to a delivery service that is most appropriate for the community being developed.

US Postal Delivery Union Supports Curbside Delivery

One interesting point is that the US Postal Delivery Union supports maintaining the operation of curbside delivery service. Additional information regarding this union may be found at their website located at: www.npmhu.org

REASONS AGAINST CBU DELIVERY

Security

Issues such as lighting and crime should be raised as a concern. Any remote or isolated location that may expose a resident to criminal activity could be a dangerous liability. Curbside delivery reduces these risks by providing mail at or very near a person's residence.

Access

Other considerations that should be brought up are access for the elderly and persons with disabilities. For those who cannot drive to a CBU and pick up their mail, the lack of curbside delivery could be a major inconvenience, if not creating a dangerous situation.

Maintenance

Builders and developers should raise the concern that maintenance of the structure over time will be critical not only to maintain the aesthetic quality of the residential subdivision, but also the viability of the unit and any accompanying structure. In subdivisions that lack a homeowners association, it may be unclear whose responsibility it will be to maintain the structure and the surrounding ground.

Inappropriate Development

Often times, communities designed with amenities or centered near an amenities center (such as a clubhouse, pool, or some other civic space) can more easily provide for safe locations for CBUs within a single-family community.

Although, these kinds of single-family communities, which are often maintained by a common HOA, have increased in recent decades, a large number of new single-family communities are still developed as a subdivision of homes with no homeowners association and little or no common space or common maintenance provided. For these communities, providing CBUs may prove more difficult.

If you would like to speak directly to an NAHB staff member on this issue, please contact Claire Worshtil in Land Use and Design at 1 (800) 368-5242 ext. 8309.

Claire Worshtil is the Senior Program Manager, Land Use, at National Association of Home Builders in Washington, D.C.



The No. 1 Barrier to Higher-Quality Leads

Any builder will agree that the strongest leads almost always come from referrals. But it's the successful builders who know how to engage their clients in a way that keeps those high-quality leads flowing in.

What's their secret? The builders who maintain strong referral streams:

- Deliver on quality,
- Request or incentivize referrals, and above all,
- Focus on communication.

Even if you feel confident that you've already got the first two covered, the final piece of the puzzle – communication – is where most builders admit to falling short.

"It's impossible to over-communicate," said Beverly Koehn, a customer care management consultant from San Antonio, Texas. "It's a scary ride for [the clients because] they are investing a significant amount of money into your services. There are times you'll be so involved in a project, that you'll forget about the client's need to stay informed."

And unless you're running a one-person operation, consistent communication involves keeping the whole build team on the same page. Anyone who might be in direct contact with the client needs to have the most up-to-date information so that when the client

asks a question, the answer is always the same no matter who is answering.

"We live and die by referrals, so it's critical for us to keep the client informed consistently," says Joey Hardy, project manager and superintendent for Brannen Design and Construction in Fort Collins, Colo.

"But it's not just about keeping our current clients updated. It also means addressing the needs of our previous clients of jobs we recently finished," Hardy said. "It's demanding, especially since so much of it is [done by] texting. There's always the expectation that you need to respond immediately. But that's part of the job."

Though technology seems to have completely taken over all forms of communication, Rick Storlie, president of New Home Sales Coach, suggests builders make an effort to get as much face time with the client as possible.

"Especially during those times when the bricks and nails aren't moving, the client may start to assume there are problems or delays," Storlie said. "They won't care how busy you are or how many other projects you have. They need assurance that things are constantly moving forward."

To help ensure the project continues to move smoothly and the client stays happy, Storlie said builders should never hesitate to ask clarifying questions. Making assumptions about what the client knows, wants or expects can be a costly mistake that leads the project in the wrong direction.

Even beyond the texts, phone calls and face-to-face interactions, there are still more aspects of communication to keep an eye on:

Website

To the prospective client, a builder's value is created online (and then later confirmed onsite). Your website should have fresh content that's relevant to your target audience.

- Update the content at least once every 1-2 weeks.
- Use only professional photos of your previous work.
- Include details about your general service area.
- Don't hesitate to showcase some of your floor plans.
- Ditch the "Testimonials" page (typically less trafficked) and instead, distribute customer testimonials throughout the other pages to reinforce the quality of your work.

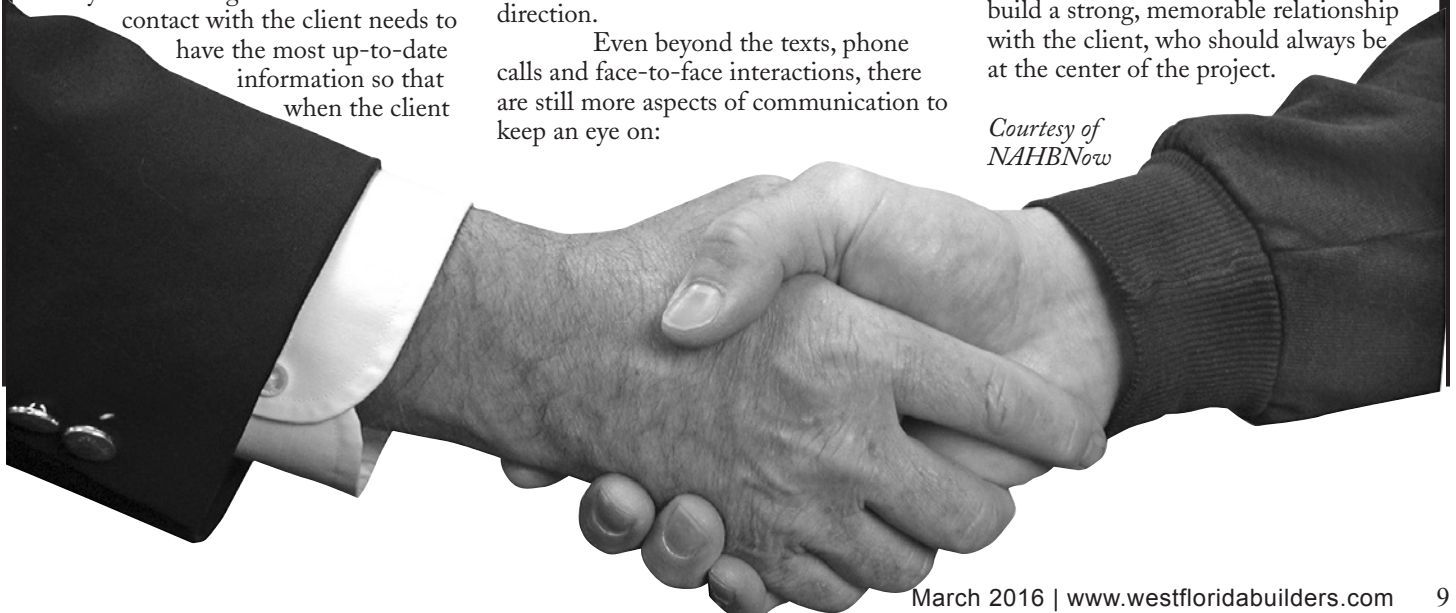
Emails

The emails you send to your prospective, current and previous clients can be effective relationship-building tools, but only if used appropriately.

- Emails should be used to educate and advise, not to sell your services.
- Respond to an initial inquiry as quickly as possible (automated, we'll-get-back-to-you emails don't count). Waiting more than 24-48 hours to respond is often too late.
- Try to limit emails to one or two a week per client (but sometimes more often during the initial phases).
- Add purpose to each message by including a call to action – the "ask" at the end of each email, along with a link to a page on your website with additional information.

Improved communication may be the ticket to increasing the quality of your leads. The goal is not to simply complete a transaction; it's to build a strong, memorable relationship with the client, who should always be at the center of the project.

*Courtesy of
NAHBNow*





HBA of West Florida Spring Golf Classic Golfers Registration Form

April 7, 2016 StoneBrook Golf Club

Registration: 11:30 a.m.

Shotgun: 12:30 p.m.

Limited to 128 Players

4 - Person Scramble

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- Your marketing materials can be included in "Goodie Bags"
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Deadline to Register is March 28, 2016

Please print the name of each player and their handicap in the spaces provided. Registration will be by player name. If changes occur please notify HBA prior to event.

Submit form with payment information prior to March 28th.

If you need an invoice for payment purposes, please contact Vicki Pelletier at Vicki@hbawf.com or 850-476-0318.

Players Names, Handicap and Email

Name: _____

Handicap (Required/ Max 30) _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Handicap (Required/ Max 30) _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Handicap (Required/ Max 30) _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Handicap (Required/Max 30) _____

Email: _____

Company Name: _____ Need receipt? ☐ emailed ☐ mailed

Contact Name : _____ Email or Telephone: _____

Charge my (Visa, Mastercard or AmEx) in the amount of \$ _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration: _____ CVV Code _____

Signature: _____ Will mail or drop off check.

HBA of West Florida - 4400 Bayou Blvd., Suite #45 - Pensacola, FL 32503 (850) 476-0318

MEMBERSHIP HAPPENINGS

Pensacola Energy hosted the Home Builders Association for the February Membership and Networking Meeting. Longtime HBA supporters Don Suarez and Jill Grove of Pensacola Energy and their team of professionals welcomed a great crowd and provided delicious food from Nancy Haute Affairs.



*Becky French and Vicki Kitchens
with Sears Commercial Sales*



*Larry Crosby and Janice Caple
of Pensacola Energy.*



Bill Daniel and Ron Robinson of Mobile Lumber with Eva Marsach of SERVPRO of West Pensacola at the February Membership and Networking at Pensacola Energy.



HBA's Vicki Pelletier, Robert Belford of AVS Systems, Jason Millar and Joel Millar of Finish Touch Construction.



The Membership Committee is working hard to bring you a worthwhile April Membership Drive by partnering with Valpak of the Gulf Coast. From left, Nathen Spitsbergen of CORT; Blain Flynn of Flynn Built—Flynn Building Specialist; Eva Marsach of SERVPRO of West Pensacola; Ron Robinson of Mobile Lumber, Membership Chair Shelia Billingham of Fairway Independent Mortgage Corp.; Cheryl Maniscalco of VALPAK of the Gulf Coast; Tanya Underwood of Emerald Coast Granite, Tile & Glass and HBA Director of Marketing & Communications Vicki Pelletier.



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Parade Dates: May 7 - 15, 2016

Please PRINT all requested information legibly

Company Name:		
Builder Name:		Builder Cell Phone:
POH Contact Name:		Contact Email:
Contact Phone :	Cell:	Fax:
Company Address:		
Company Phone:	Fax:	Web:
Required: State Certification or Registration Number:		
Required: Builder's Signature:		

Entry Pricing		Fee calculation:	
First Home	\$1200	Number of Entries: _____	Total Entry Fees: \$ _____
Second Home	\$900	Number of Signs: _____	Total Signs fees: \$ _____
Third Home	\$600	Total Amount Due (All Entry & Sign fees): \$ _____	
Fourth Home	\$600	Entry / Sign Notes:	
Five + Homes	\$500		

Parade of Homes Sign: You *MUST* have an Official Parade of Homes Sign for each entry. These large signs (ordered by HBA) are \$40 each. *Please add \$40 to each entry as needed.*

Entry Deadline: Wednesday, March 28, 2016

If you need an invoice for payment purposes please contact Vicki Pelletier at Vicki@hbawf.com.

Charge my (Visa / MC / AmEx) in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ entries and _____ signs.

Card Number: _____ CVV Code: _____ EXP: _____

Signature: _____ Will mail* or drop off payment.

**(If mailing payment, please be sure entry arrives before deadline!)*

Submit application, entry form for each home and full payment by entry deadline to:



POH Contact: Vicki Pelletier
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E: vicki@hbawf.com
www.westfloridabuilders.com

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Total number of entries being submitted: _____ **Submission Date:** _____



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Thomas Westerheim, of Westerheim Properties, 2016 HBA President.

"As an HBA member, this is the perfect opportunity to market your business while helping your HBA with the Membership Drive. I strongly encourage you to do your part by providing a membership perk and I thank you for your willingness to be involved,"

Sheila Billingham, of Fairway Independent Mortgage, 2016 HBA Membership Chair.



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U.S. Supreme Court Stays EPA's Clean Power Plan

In a highly unusual move, the U.S. Supreme Court, in February, halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan Rule, which requires states to reduce carbon dioxide emission from power plants located within their borders.

While the rule is supposed to focus on power plants, EPA's emission reduction requirements are so stringent that states will have to use a variety of mechanisms to meet them.

Because EPA has encouraged states to use building energy efficiency, including the imposition of building codes, as a way to comply with these targets, NAHB has been engaged on this rule from the beginning, filing comments that significantly improved EPA's treatment of energy efficiency in the final rule.

However, because incentives remain for states to use energy efficiency to meet these onerous requirements, NAHB, along with

many other parties, filed a petition for review with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit challenging the rule.

The states and some industry groups asked the D.C. Circuit to halt implementation of the rule while it is being litigated. The court refused, and these groups then asked the U.S. Supreme Court to delay the rule.

The Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, granted these groups' requests. States will now be relieved of taking action immediately to try and meet the rule's deadlines, and can instead hold off until after the courts have decided whether the rule is legal, which likewise provides relief for impacted industries as well, including NAHB's members.



EPA Makes Changes to Lead-Safe Re-certification Process

Remodelers who are certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to work on homes that may contain lead paint under the Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) rule now have the option to complete refresher training online, according to an EPA announcement.

However, EPA re-certifications obtained via an online refresher course will be valid for only three years – versus five years for hands-on training courses – and can only be exercised every other re-certification cycle.

“As a longtime advocate for a simplified re-certification process, NAHB Remodelers appreciates that EPA's changes provide some flexibility, but the limited and convoluted parameters of the online training option are unnecessarily complicated and could affect the number of renovators who opt to become re-certified,” said NAHB Remodelers Chair Tim Shigley, CGR, CAPS, CGP, GMB, GMR, a remodeler from Wichita, Kan.

“Whether they choose to refresh their training online or in person, with the March 31 re-certification deadline looming for over 100,000 remodelers, and thousands more later in 2016 and 2017, remodelers are left with precious little time to meet their re-certification obligations.” Additionally, certified renovators who were grandfathered in under a HUD or EPA lead-based paint training course before the RRP rule was adopted must attend a refresher course with a hands-on component. The rule also made several streamlining and clarifying changes to RRP provisions that apply to training providers. EPA's changes only apply to those states where EPA administers the program.

The 14 states that administer their own programs will have to take legislative or regulatory action to adopt the

online refresher course option.

The White House Office of Management and Budget released the final rule to EPA on Jan. 21.

Courtesy of NAHBNow

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More than a dozen state attorneys general sent a letter to the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) urging the agency to reject a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) proposal that would undermine long-standing protections for confidential attorney-client communications and place undue burdens on small businesses.

DOL wants to narrow the exemption under the “persuader” rule for what union-related communications between employers and attorneys remain confidential.

Current law requires employers and legal consultants to report any arrangements to persuade employees regarding the right to organize or bargain collectively. There is also an “advice exemption” that says employers are not subject to reporting requirements as long as their lawyer or consultant just gives advice to the employer and does not communicate directly with employees.

STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL CALL ON OMB TO REJECT PROPOSED ‘PERSUADER’ RULE

DOL’s proposal, set to take effect in March, would significantly narrow the advice exemption by requiring employers to file publicly available reports to the government detailing these private exchanges.

NAHB believes the proposal will:

- Eviscerate current attorney-client privilege by forcing employers to file reports to the government when they engage in private labor counsel with outside consultants and lawyers.
- Have significant monetary

and legal implications for home building firms.

Spearheaded by Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange and encouraged by NAHB, the letter to OMB stated that this proposed rule would “have a chilling effect on attorney-client confidentiality and employers’ fundamental right to counsel.” The letter further urged OMB to “reject the proposed rule as drafted” and to reaffirm the longstanding interpretation of the advice exemption that has been effectively administered for more than 50 years under the Labor Management and Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959.

For more information, contact Suzanne Beall at 800-368-5242 x8407.

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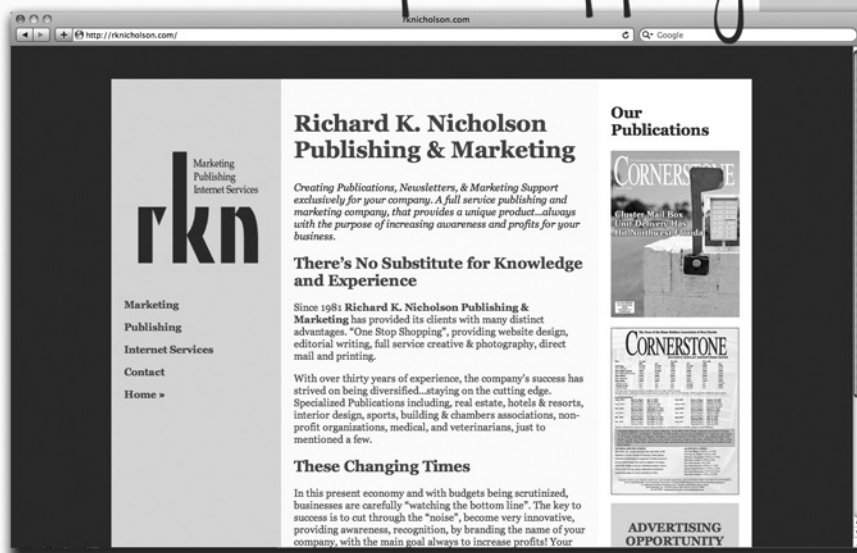
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April 14, 2016

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Don't Be Afraid of Smart Home Technology

The smart-home technology craze began years ago in some parts of the country, but in many other areas, it's only just begun.

If you're just entering this market, or have yet to do so because you think you don't have the know-how, fear not – you don't need to be a technology specialist. But you should

become familiar with what's trending and how you can address your clients' needs before they go to another builder. Product developers are constantly churning out new gizmos, like the thousands that were displayed at the recent Consumer Electronics Show. But only a small number are actually embraced by the general public.

Get a feel for what's really trending
During an education session at this

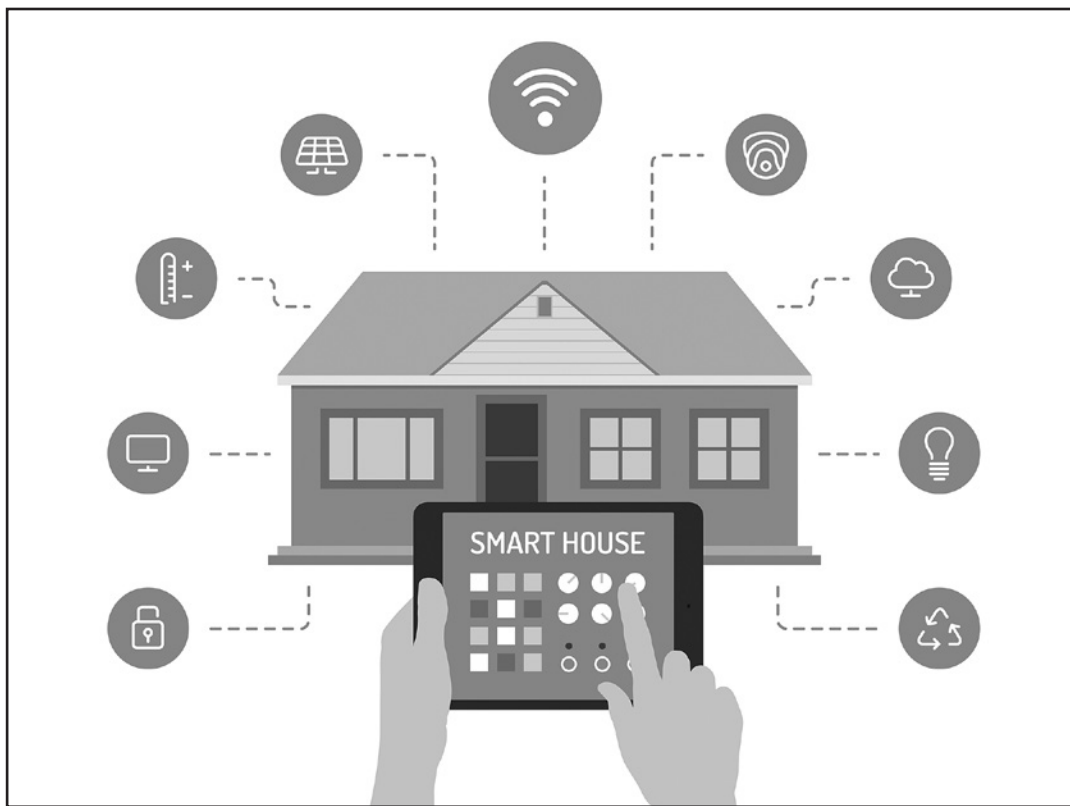
year's International Builders' Show, Greg Haupt, the executive director of Business Networking International and a home-technology integration specialist, listed several smart-home trends that have truly started to take root, including:

- Contemporary comfort with automated thermostats, lighting and security systems that quickly learn the owner's preferences and can be controlled and monitored from anywhere in the world.
- High-tech appliances like refrigerators with internal cameras that allow the owner to remotely check its contents, and an automated compressor that adjusts its speed according to how much food is inside.
- Smart TVs – not simply those that run apps like Netflix and Hulu, but rather, TVs that are integrated to cre-

Haupt suggests partnering with one. It's okay to admit you don't have all the technology answers as long as you partner with or employ someone who does, and who can comfortably interact with the client.

"Having a smart-home technology expert that you can rely on and consult with for certain projects will help boost your business and reputation," Haupt said. "Don't assume that [a tech specialist's] only goal is to up-sell the client. When you find a trustworthy partner whom you can work with consistently, that will better enable you to meet your clients' needs."

Furthermore, he suggests working with contractors who can offer service contracts to the client. This will reduce your liability if (or rather, when) issues arise.



Plan ahead

But before you get too far down the road with a client, it's critical to develop a technology plan as early as possible. Custom A/V and smart-home technology is best integrated when planned for well in advance. Pre-wiring a new home can save the client thousands down the road.

Haupt strongly advises that builders find out which

ate a smart-home hub through which many, if not all of the home's smart features can be controlled.

Many other experts at IBS recommended several more design trends and innovative products builders should consider.

Team up with an expert

Once you know what's hot among consumers, but don't feel confident enough to market yourself as a smart-home specialist,

pieces of technology the client wants and how they want to use them in their home. From there, go through the floor plan room by room and ask how they might want to use the technology in each space.

NAHB has several educational opportunities for industry professionals who want to learn more about integrating design and technology. Go to nabh.org for additional info.

Courtesy of NAHBnow.

HBA

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Many Home Builders Association members are already saving time and money through the NPP program.

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HOW TO REGISTER

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- Complete the registration form.

For more information about the program, feel free to contact NPP:

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Since 2007 many HBA Chapters have partnered with NPP to offer members discount pricing on several products and services. NPP negotiates the rates, and makes them available to HBA members throughout the country. This program is entirely free, and there is no obligation to purchase. To access the savings, register with NPP at www.mynpp.com. Included among the discounts available to participating HBA Chapter members:



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Parade of Homes Kick-Off Party
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Sanders Beach – Corinne Jones
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Sponsorship Opportunities

The Parade of Homes Kick-Off Event is the largest Home Builders Association Membership Meeting of the year. It's an exciting time for the home building industry as Parade of Homes Outstanding Home Award Winners will be announced. Plus, Gary Sluder, of Gene's Floor Covering, will be cooking up a seafood feast complete with seasoned boiled shrimp, corn and new potatoes and more. Over 300 people attended last year.

You will receive the following for your **Parade of Homes Kick-Off Event Sponsorship** (Choose One):



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- Recognition as a sponsor on the Kick-Off Event notices that will be distributed to the HBA membership.
- Recognition on the Kick-Off Party Banner.
- Recognition in the HBA's *Cornerstone* magazine, as a Kick-Off Event sponsor.
- Recognition in the HBA's website and E-mails to members.



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- Showcase your products at the event with a tabletop display or other displays that you deem appropriate.
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Select sponsorship level above and fax to 494-9764 or e-mail: Vicki Pelletier at vicki@hbawf.com. For more information, contact 476-0318. HBA of West Florida, 4400 Bayou Blvd., Suite 45, Pensacola, FL 32503

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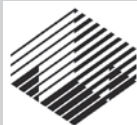
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