

# — COPING WITH CONSTRUCTION —

These hints will help you to make the renovation experience as stress free as possible.

## SAFETY FIRST

Concern for the safety of your family and property is foremost on the mind of both you and our company. Taking positive steps to put safety first can allay fears and bring you peace of mind.

- Keep children out of harm's way. Provide enough supervision in a separate area of the home, and make sure they know not to enter the working area without an adult's permission. If small children are present, discuss the use of physical barricades around the work area to keep out curious little ones.
- Disruption and noise can frighten and upset pets. Make sure to keep pets away from the working areas at all times. Alert us as to your pet's location, as well as your pet's temperament.
- Protect valuables from dust and dirt. Even the cleanest construction site can generate enough dust to damage improperly protected valuables. Make sure to cover VCR's, TVs, computers, stereo equipment, etc.

## MAINTAIN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Remain involved in the project and its scheduling, along with decisions that are being made. Use daily discussions as well as weekly and milestone meetings to discuss concerns honestly and openly. Keep written records so that both you and your Design/Build Manager remember what decisions were made, and when.

If you're concerned about an issue or item, address it with us as soon as possible. Unresolved issues that are ignored or tossed aside can sometimes cause problems later in the process.

## ATTEND MANDATORY MILESTONE MEETINGS

Milestone meetings are critical for evaluating construction progress and making important decisions about the way you'll really be living in the house. They may even be tied into your construction payment schedule.

The agendas for these meetings should be pre-set, and should include issues related to the approach to your project. These meetings will be held at different points in your project's schedule. The topics for these meetings can range from the locations of electrical outlets and light fixtures, to the placement of cabinet handles and drawer pulls.

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### TAKE A MINI-VACATION

Coming home to strangers, dust, and noise can make even the most resolved of homeowners feel stressed.

One way to combat this is to take a mini-vacation. It can be something small, like a weekend at a nearby hotel, or something more extravagant, like a sports or spa package at a resort. Either way, getting away from the hassle and inconvenience of a renovation project can refresh and rejuvenate you for the rest of the project.

Also, during periods of heavy construction, it might even be safer and less distracting to gather the family away from the site. We will let you know if and when that might be a good idea.

### BE FLEXIBLE

Usually, renovating is a compromise between our fantasies for a perfect house and the reality of what we can and cannot do.

A flexible attitude is essential at the beginning phases of a project, when first creating a design for the work. Later, a flexible attitude is still important in dealing with the problems that may arise – problems with materials or supplies, delays in installations or repairs, changes to plans or additional charges.

Be open to new options. A positive outlook can make a stressful process a little more enjoyable.

### TAKE LOTS OF PHOTOS!

Watching a construction project in progress can be a really neat thing, especially when it's your house. It's fascinating to watch how the different pieces all come together to form the finished structure. If you're living in the house during construction, you'll have an even more interesting perspective.

Take a lot of photos of the construction process. You might even want to begin a scrapbook to have a pictorial history of how your new home came to be. (Your family, friends, and neighbors will also ask how your renovation is coming – it might be fun to show them your scrapbook or email photos of the work in progress!) You can also email pictures to your friends – or if you're really computer literate – you can post them on a personal web site.

Once you start living in your beautiful new home, those memories of the construction process will begin to fade away. Keeping a journal during construction is a great way to memorialize this special time in your family's life. Jot down your feelings during the construction, as well as any interesting stories to tell later!

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