

The Brillo Pad

Apr/May/June 2009
Second Quarter Issue



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Building Contractor Registration

As of July 1, 2009, no person or entity may engage or offer to engage in construction business in Wisconsin unless they hold a Building Contractor Registration (BCR) issued by the Safety and Buildings Division of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. According to the Department of Commerce, the BCR is to identify building contractor businesses working in Wisconsin and to provide more information to contractors. Identifying contractor businesses helps local and state agencies have a better chance making sure the businesses are following the same rules in terms of employees, taxes, permits, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance. BCR works against unfair competition. Furthermore, providing more information on codes, code changes, employer regulations, education, and business responsibilities helps contractors provide better service and helps consumers get better results.

For consumers, dealing with a business holding the building contractor registration lets them know that state and local officials have some record of that contractor. It is a layer of effort that a fly-by-night contractor may not wish to deal with. Contractor registration helps identify itinerant workers in times of disaster hiring. Contractors who have the registration have more opportunity to keep track of code requirements and have more information on their business requirements concerning safety practices. Information on legal responsibilities is also provided to those building contractors that are registered.

There is plenty of information about this new rule posted at <http://commerce.wi.gov>. Click on the Building Contractors Online Registration link on the right hand side for more information on:

- How to check the status of a license
- Right to Cure brochure
- Three Day Right to Cancel law
- And more

As always, we encourage all of our clients to do their homework on any remodeler, contractor or handyman you hire. According to the BBB, home improvement project complaints were number four on the list and fly-by-night contractors were listed as the number three scam in 2008.

For the record, our BCR number is 9267.



Proud Distributor
of:



Featured Project

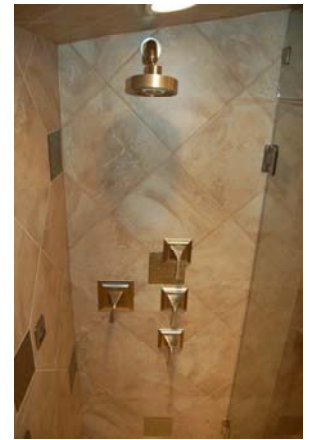
This quarter's featured project won a Gold Award in the Bathroom over \$60,000 category. This project was also awarded the M Magazine Reader's Choice Award.

The client wanted to create a spa-like bathroom and have laundry quarters on the 2nd floor. To accomplish this, floor-to-ceiling porcelain tile was applied, 6x6 decorative glass tile was clipped into the wall tile, slabs of natural stone were used for a bench seat and in the threshold of the shower, body sprays and a steamer were included in the shower, high end materials were used throughout and an existing linen closet was converted into a laundry closet with a stackable, front loading washer and dryer.

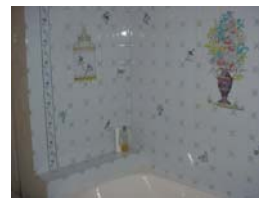
A full, detailed description of the project is posted on our website at www.brillohomeimprovements.com. Click on the OUR AWARDS link on top and select the 2008 M Magazine Reader's Choice Award.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER

Referral Program

Over 90% of our new business is traced back to a word-of-mouth referral. Previous clients, family, friends, sub-contractors, all of you play a large and important part in our business.

As a way to thank you, we developed a small referral program in 2008. To date, over 40 referral gifts have been mailed; some for multiple referrals.

The program is pretty simple. All you have to do is tell whomever you are referring to us to tell us that you sent them. Once they call us and we document the call, you will receive free movie passes and a free popcorn voucher from Marcus Theatres. Should your referral contract their project with us, you're eligible to receive another gift (based on the scope of the work), generally a dining gift certificate or Usinger's gift box. So please...keep the referrals coming and THANK YOU for trusting us with your referrals! Some recent gift recipients:

Armin M.	Dave Z.	Jim Y.	Dino S.
Ellyn M.	Ron F.	Isabel & Michael C.	Dave F.
Brian W.	Diane K.	John & Julie C.	Fred L.
Phyllis P.	Paul & Karen R.	Bill & Terri M.	Jeannie M.

We are always looking for new suggestions for referral gifts. Please email Maggie at brillo@brillohomeimprovements.com with your ideas.

Upcoming Shows

19th Annual Milwaukee NARI Fall Home & Remodeling Show

The theme of this fall's Milwaukee NARI show is "Harvest Great Ideas for Your Home." Although show details are still being finalized, attendees can look forward to over 200 exhibitors, a Relaxation Station, Seminars and Cooking Demonstrations, and National Talent including Matt Locke of HGTV's "Design Star" and Nikki Cascone of Bravo's "Top Chef". Also included will be an Interior Design Contest Room Display and Children's Coloring Contest. For up-to-the-minute show information, please visit www.milwaukeevari.org.

The Show runs from Friday, September 18th through Sunday, September 20th, at the Wisconsin Exposition Center at State Fair Park, 8200 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis. Hours are 11am to 9pm on Friday, 10am to 9pm on Saturday and 10am to 5pm on Sunday.

We will, again, have a limited number of courtesy tickets available on a first come, first serve basis. If you are interested, please call Maggie at (414) 442-2230 to reserve a pair. While there, make sure you stop by our booth and say hi.



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2009 Federal Tax Incentives for Home Improvement

As you probably know the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 made significant changes to the energy efficiency tax credits. The highlights of these changes are:

- Tax credits previously effective only for 2009 have been extended to 2010.
- The tax credit percentage has been raised from 10% to 30%.
- The tax credits that were for a specific dollar amount have been converted to 30% of the cost.
- The maximum credit has been raised from \$500 to \$1,500 for 2009 AND 2010, however some improvements are not subject to the \$1,500 maximum credit and are in effect through 2016.
- Tax credits are only available for home improvements "placed in service" from January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010 at the taxpayer's PRIMARY residence.
- Not all Energy Star labeled products qualify for tax credit. Consult with your tax advisor or visit www.energystar.gov.

Contact the Editor

We welcome your suggestions, comments, questions and story ideas.
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