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Think Green When Remodeling Your Home



Remodeling your home can increase energy efficiency and help you save money down the road if done properly by a certified professional.

[DIY](#) is a big trend right now but doing it yourself doesn't always save money in the end. When planning to do a house project without the help of a professional, you need to factor in the costs associated with materials, tools, and time.

You may also have further expenses should you need professional intervention to course-correct the project or handle technically advanced elements.

"It's best to leave the big remodeling projects – major room overhauls, electrical work, and energy-efficient appliance installs – to certified remodelers who have the proper training and skills to complete the work safely and efficiently," Ron Cowgill said.

Cowgill is a board member of the National Association for the Remodeling Industry (NARI) of Greater Chicago. He is also the president of the Chicago-based D/R Services Unlimited, which is celebrating its 30th year in business.

"We as remodelers have the opportunity to improve the quality of life, both inside and outside of the homes we work on, by choosing environmentally friendly materials and following green practices that can provide both economic and health benefits to the homeowner and community at large." Cowgill said.



Cowgill is among a group of remodelers who are Green Certified Professionals from the NARI and demonstrate a commitment to incorporating green efforts into their remodeling work.

Going green saves homeowners money

Remodeling can help save money in the long run with projects geared toward lowering energy bills for your household. A professional, certified remodeler can help homeowners make smart decisions about appliances, insulation, and other home updates.



Energy use is driven primarily by the heating, [ventilation](#), air-conditioning systems, and water heater, all of which make up about 60 percent of a typical home's energy budget.



According to [NARI](#), installing a programmable thermostat can save up to one-third of heating and cooling costs, while smaller efforts like sealing leaky ducts and cleaning and changing air filters regularly can make an impact as well.



Additionally, studies have shown that only 20 percent of homes built before 1980 are well-insulated. Improving your home's insulation is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy waste.

Cowgill says green remodeling efforts all come down to the right decisions. "I'm able to put an addition on a home that increases the square footage while still decreasing the homeowners' energy costs," he said, "by choosing high-efficiency furnaces and water heaters, air sealing the home, and using closed-cell foam insulation."

Start your next green home improvement project by selecting a professional, reliable remodeling contractor you've researched to have positive consumer reviews, references you've spoken with, and who you're comfortable with after meeting.

Remember too that the lowest-priced contractor isn't always who you want to work with. Significantly lower bids may reflect lower-quality materials or lesser skill sets. Check with local remodeling business organizations for certified remodelers who demonstrate a commitment to quality and ethical business practices you can trust to bring your vision to reality.



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