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Visit Us In The Methow

Longtime readers have heard it all before: there isn't a prettier place to visit than the Methow Valley. While it is probably too far away for many of you to imagine, quite honestly, you won't find another vacation spot quite like this (and you get to visit your favorite lumber company, too!)

What's so special about the Methow? First of all, it's remote, located deep in the North Cascade mountains. One of the least populated parts of the U.S., the valley hugs a series



of tributaries of the Columbia River. The valley is surrounded by hills, covered in sagebrush, which blend into thick forests that give way to snow-capped peaks. The state's largest mule deer herd populates the valley, along with cougars, bears, bobcats, lynx and coyotes. Wildlife viewing is tremendous. Each season brings its own bonus: spring (late April to June) is a time of wildflowers and apple blossoms; summer is hot and green, with access to river rafting and hiking into the wilderness areas which ring the valley; fall is a time of golden aspens and blue skies, great for mountain biking; winter is powder white and snow filled with every snow sport available. Lodging in the valley ranges from 5-star resorts to bed and breakfast places. Many small inns offer access to the community sport trail that runs 2000 km. through the valley and surrounding foothills. Trails for everything from hiking, walking, horseback riding, mountain biking to ATV trails are offered. Snowboarding, Nordic and Alpine skiing and snowmobiling are available in winter.



The downside is that the Methow Valley is not close to any major airports. In the summer, you can opt to drive over the spectacular North Cascades Highway, which runs from the westside of the state to the central region. Be prepared if you take that route. For 90 miles you will be driving through a national park without any services. The drive crosses two mountain passes and includes a profusion of waterfalls and lakes. You can expect a good four and one half (or more) drive from Seattle or Spokane. A smaller regional airport is located at Wenatchee, about 2 hours south of the Methow, with car rental services available.

There are a few big weekends during the summer and winter months which include a high profile rhythm and blues festival, and a country western music festival in July. In May, the town of Winthrop celebrates its heritage with a mountain man's campout, complete with mule trains, a BBQ contest and a teepee encampment. In August, there is a fiddlers contest and a chamber music festival as well.

Call Ahead For A Weekend Visit!

Bear Creek Lumber is not open on Saturdays and Sundays but we can arrange for a salesman to meet you at the lumberyard if your travel plans are of a limited duration. Please call in advance if you plan to visit over a weekend period. If you would like to stay in the valley, we can recommend a variety of places based on your preferences (in town, resort-like or back country inn). If you are planning on buying lumber and looking for a different kind of vacation, maybe you should come to the Methow this summer. You could have a great time!

Link With Us!

Contact our webmaster, Omaste, if you would like to link your website to ours. We have a place on our website for such links and would be happy to work with you!

Customer Feedback

Dear Mr. Bannick,

Enclosed is a picture of our new home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. All of the exterior cedar, including over 1000 sq.ft of yellow cedar decking, came from Bear Creek Lumber.

We discovered your mill via the Internet in 1997 while living in Alaska. My wife and I knew we were going to build our dream house in Delaware while in Anchorage and started looking for the best of the best in cedar.

We started a dialogue with Merle Kirkley via the net, then visited your mill in July 1998 and spent four hours with Merle. We left the mill and said "Merle is the right guy and he will do us right".

Almost two years later I can tell you unequivocally that we did so right in deciding to deal with Merle. He was absolutely superb-the best. Honest, fair, devoted to our project and extremely knowledgeable of your entire product line. We even accepted Merle's advice and had the cedar treated with Cabot's Bleach.

The cedar arrived right on time and there was zero freight damage. Truly amazing for over 18,000 lbs. Your packing department merits three cheers!

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the extraordinary phone courtesy of Debbie. I talked to her on countless occasions and she was always so bubbly, upbeat about her job and providing me with great customer support. Based on many other companies I have dealt with in building our dream house, Debbie is a first round DRAFT pick!!

Enclosed are a few "Delaware" goodies for Merle and Debbie. Please let them know how much we appreciate doing business with the best cedar mill in the whole USA. And Cindy and I truly believe that. Mr. Bannick, you have two wonderful team "stars" in Merle and Debbie. You are very fortunate.

From the Delaware seashore,
Jon S.and Cindy Stolson



Moisture Control

Moisture is the number one enemy of builders everywhere, regardless of whether it is causing paint peeling, staining, drywall disintegration or wood rot.

Moisture can be caused by a variety of sources, from condensation on the inside of a home (see list at right), from the outside or from the ground. Control is a matter of following proper construction techniques or common sense: Reduce interior humidity with exhaust fans. Opening windows for short periods of time also can help.

Eliminate outside leaks by installing the proper flashing, repairing rusted or damaged flashing and caulking of cracks to prevent moisture from entering homes through leaks.

You can protect against ground moisture with proper drainage, elimination of possible water pools under the house and making provisions for crawl space ventilation. Polyurethane sheets, rolled out on the ground and lapped about six inches at the joints form an effective vapor barrier in the crawl space.

Controlling moisture in an existing building can involve the installation of air vents in the crawl space and attic where ventilation was not originally provided or is inadequate.

To prevent paint blisters and peeling, contact a local dealer who is familiar with which paints work best for your climate. Some act as a natural vapor barrier. He would also be familiar with the amount of ventilation that is commonly recommended for your climate. Before you paint, it is essential that the painting surface is dry and clean. It is advisable that new wood siding has been back-and face primed first. Before repainting a home, any peeled or blistered paint should be removed. Leaks in roofs, gutters and flashing should be repaired. Loose boards should be renailed. Weathering checks and cracks should be filled with putty and windows reglazed where necessary. When bare wood is exposed, it should be primed again. Before the finish coat is applied, all nail holes should be filled; caulking should also be applied around doors and windows.

Painting should always be done during dry, warm weather. Painting in temperatures below 40° should be avoided. Three or four days drying time should be allowed so that paint is thoroughly dry in order to hold the next coat.

Source: Western Wood Product Association

Indoor Moisture Sources

Source	Est. Release(pints.)
<u>Occupant generated</u>	
Aquariums	Variable evaporative loss
Bathing	
Tub	0.12
Shower	0.52 per 5 min..
Clothes washing	virtually 0 per load
Clothes drying	
Vented outside	virtually 0 per load
Vented inside or line dry	4.7-6.2 per load
Cooking (four persons)	
Breakfast	0.35 (plus 0.58 if gas range)
Lunch	0.53(plus 0.68 if gas range)
Dinner	1.22 (plus 1.58 if gas range)
Dishwashing	
Breakfast	0.21
Lunch	0.16
Dinner	0.68
Firewood stored inside	400-800 per 6 mos.
Floor mopping	0.03 per sq. ft.
Gas range	0.37 per day
House plants (5-7)	0.86-0.96 per day
Humidifier	Up to 120 per day
Pets	Fraction of human weight
Respiration/Perspiration	0.44 per hour
per person	
Refrigerator defrost	1.0 per day
Sauna, steambath	up to 2.7 per hour
<u>Naturally Occurring</u>	
Combustions	
Gas fired appliance	up to 6,720+ per year
exhaust backdrafting	
Desorption of building	
materials-new	10+ per day
seasonal	6.3-16.9 per day
Soil migration	up to 105 per day

Source: Cold Climate Housing Info. Center St. Paul , Minnesota

INDUSTRY NEWS

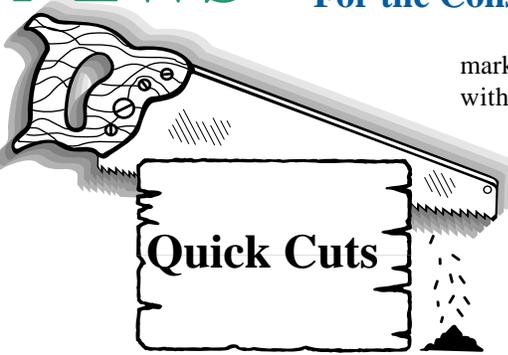
Skills Assessment Tests For the Construction Industry

January housing starts confounded the experts by outperforming even the best guesstimates of the industry. The 1.5% gain in the seasonally-adjusted annual rate was mostly due to multi-family unit starts. Single family starts were down 2.1%. Residential building permits continued to be strongest in the South in 1999. The hottest markets were in Atlanta, GA and Phoenix, AZ. Charlotte, NC saw a 20% rise in permits while Tampa, FL saw a 23% rise last year.

The Northeast is seeing a rise in construction starts based on the increase of activity in the high tech sector of the economy. Computer and Internet firms are being drawn to New England because of the trained labor pool coming out of colleges and universities in that region.

An on-line contractor referral service has received funding this year that will help make it an available tool for contractors looking to broaden their outreach. National contractors.com is designed to provide a site for home buyers to go to on the Web where they can find reputable builders in their areas. A pre-screening process will qualify builders according to the amount of time they have been in business, licensing, insurance and types of construction experience each firm offers. The site will list contractors in all fifty states. And while the site will emphasize builders who work on projects up to \$100 million, projects and contractors involved in jobs as small as \$10,000 are also going to be represented. Submitting a request for bids on the site will be free of charge.

A new study predicts 100% increase in imports of lumber products from Europe and the Southern Hemisphere over the next five years. The study, called "Wood Markets 2000" was commissioned by R.E. Taylor & Associates. Overall wood supply shortages are not expected in the next ten years because of a strong global inventory of timber resources, but regional shortages may increase in areas where growth has spurred strong demand.



to help small and medium size employers figure out the true labor value of a worker, the National Center for Construction and Education Research (NCCER) is working with Associated Builders and Contractors and other industry associations to create a standardized process to assess the skill level of craft workers.

The groundwork for the program was laid by the Industrial Skills Assessment Council, based in the states of Texas, Louisiana and Alabama, which have already adopted their own assessment program for industrial contractors. This program tests for worker knowledge and skills, provides documentation of craft skills for workers and their employers, and prescribes training to enhance and expand workers capabilities.

The push for nationwide standards is at the urging of employers who are mandated to comply with OSHA's Process Safety management regulation. Contractors or chapters of trade organizations interested in becoming accredited with the NCCER as a training sponsor will be able to administer skill evaluation tests, but first must meet certain criteria. For more information, contact the NCCER by writing NCCER, P.O. Box 141104, Gainesville, FL 32614-1104 or visit their website at www.nccer.org, or call (352) 334-0920.

Beware Of Buying or Developing Farmland

Nationwide, a trend is growing faster than corn in the field: small farmers selling off their cropland for housing developments. A Natural Resource Inventory published by the Department of Agriculture said that due mostly to high taxes, farmers are selling land in prime real estate markets. Over 3.2 million acres have been converted between 1992 and 1997. There is a hidden downside to buying up this land. Years of chemical spraying have poisoned many of these acres, and water tables as well as soils are heavily contaminated. Replacing both the soils and making the water potable is a high expense for the developer or homebuyer and has turned some new developments into Superfund Cleanup sites. Agricultural poisons can take years to reach groundwater but are difficult to remove.



New Information on Hardwood Flooring

A new 10-brochure series on hardwood topics has been designed for architects, builders, interior designers and remodelers.

Produced by the Hardwood Council, it covers such topics as installing built-in units, millwork, hardwood tub surrounds, and hardwood flooring over a concrete slab or radiant heat system. To request the free printed matter, call (412) 281-4980 or visit the council's website www.hardwoodcouncil.com.

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