

LETTERS



Builders Respond to Architect

To the Editor:

In reply to the letter "Why Architects Can't Trust Contractors" (10/92):

If part of Mr. Findley's job falls in the area of construction management, it is up to him to do the appropriate amount of networking to find contractors suitable for his work.

I can scarcely believe that no trustworthy contractors exist in the densely populated area around McLean, Va. If after 12 years he has not found any, perhaps his prospective clients should look for an architect who has.

In my role as a designer/builder I see the traditional animosity between architect and contractor from both sides. As builders, we too have trouble finding subcontractors that measure up to our standards. However, if we don't find them, we may as well shut down our businesses. This is a challenge we are expected to rise to.

I have nothing but respect for architects. They see in me a skilled and dedicated builder with a good eye for design who has the ability to realize their best ideas or even enhance them.

They can also learn from me about the feasibility and efficiency of different approaches to the actual construction work. The most important thing they can learn from me is how to design buildings that people can actually afford to build.

Any builders or architects who have deep-seated resentment toward the other profession will never realize the benefits of the symbiotic relationship that can exist between these closely allied professions.

Doug Friesen
Duxborough Designs
Duxbury, Mass.

To the Editor:

The comments of Dennis Findley, AIA (Letters, 10/92), concerning the adversarial relationship between architects and contractors, are quite adversarial in themselves. With such a strong opinion going into any working relationship with a contractor, I am surprised that he can get anything done.

I have worked in the technical side of construction for nearly ten years. One thing I have learned is that construction requires time and patience, of which there are no

surpluses in our industry. Everyone wants everything yesterday, but people are human and mistakes happen. Taking the time to be patient when problems come up is always appreciated and the result is usually a "win/win" solution.

It is a shame that Mr. Findley cannot find a builder whom he feels comfortable with, because there are a lot of good ones out there, just as there are a lot of good architects. If there were only a way to get the good ones together...

Doug Parker
A&L Drafting Design
Frederick, Md.

More On Shakes and Shingles

To the Editor:

Congratulations on the fine article "Wood Shakes & Shingles" by Henri de Marne. I have a few additional comments:

There is always a hazard in showing shake and shingle layouts in the same drawing since there is a slight difference. The note in the illustration that "two courses should intervene before joints align" applies only to shingle roofs, not to shake installations. This is because with shakes you have the additional safeguard of the interlaid felts.

As for fire safety, the original fire-retardant treatment for shakes and shingles was an expensive chemical process that did, in fact, double the cost. However, improvements in chemicals and processing have reduced the additional costs to about 25% more for Class C treated shakes and shingles and about 35% more for Class B products.

Finally, you refer to us in the article as the Red Cedar Shingle and Handsplit Shake Bureau. A couple of years ago, we changed our name to the Cedar Shake & Shingle Bureau.

Michael M. Westfall, president
Cedar Shake & Shingle Bureau
Bellevue, Wash.

To the Editor:

Your article "Wood Shakes and Shingles" (10/92) was very enlightening and comprehensive.

I would like to point out that ISK Biotech no longer promotes the use of Cunapsol for treating wood roofs, due to its odor, which some homeowners have found to be unpleasant. Also, in some areas of the country, applicators are not

allowed to apply a pesticide formula to wood roofs.

Our recommendation for protecting the surface of cedar shake and shingle roofs is a product we have been marketing for three years, called Sta Brite R. Sta Brite R is a pigmented concentrate available in cedar brown and weathering gray colors. It is diluted with up to nine parts water, and then sprayed onto a roof surface that has been properly cleaned and repaired.

Mike Ward
ISK Biotech
Memphis, Tenn.

To the Editor:

The common problem of moss, mildew, and fungus on roof shingles has been addressed in two recent articles, "Wood Shakes & Shingles" (10/92), by Henri de Marne, and "Conquering Unsightly Roof Stains" (Q&A, 9/92), by Henry Spies. Mr. Spies suggests that to prevent fungus stains on existing roofs you can try slipping strips of zinc under the shingles.

I would like to let your readers know that such a product is now available. Z-Stop is a roll of zinc that is applied in strips to old or new roofs. It works with any wood or composition shingle. The natural action of rain water time-releases zinc carbonate, a proven fungistat, which then washes down the roof, preventing destructive moss and fungus growth.

Your readers may contact the manufacturer, Wespac, at P.O. Box 46337, Seattle, WA 98146; 206/463-6614.

Robert J. Mitchell
Millbrook Marketing
Westmoreland, N.H.

Beware the Tax Man

To the Editor:

I have reread with interest your article "Sub or Employee?" (10/92). We have subcontractors working for us at various sites, doing such things as painting, cleaning, roofing, etc. All of your readers should be cautioned that the various states, in order to enrich their coffers, are out on a manhunt to make subs employees.

We have recently undergone a State Unemployment Compensation and State Tax audit. The hearing examiner stated, after I presented my case for the individual being a sub, that "we in New Jersey

don't go by the Federal guidelines."

I suggest your readers check the guidelines of the state they work in so that they can change their policies as necessary, depending upon the state's requirements.

I must say that the guidelines you provided in the article at least gave us a fighting chance. The hearing examiner stated that we would have easily prevailed in a federal case.

Keep up the good work!

R. J. Haydinger, president
Apt. Rehabilitation Corporation
Prussia, Pa.

Don't Worry About The Cat

To the Editor:

I love your publication and read it cover to cover when it arrives; keep up the great work!

I'm a one-man business, doing mostly "small list" work. My contacts and proposals are done on weekends while most clients are at home. After all is agreed on, I do the repairs during weekdays — while they are away from home. This means most further contact is by phone or by notes we leave for each other each evening. This situation sometimes generates some comical, quickly-scrawled messages. Here's a recent example:

John,

I've changed the location of the cat. She's in the room off small porch. Sign on door. She may cry, but she's fine. If there is a guy around when you arrive, he is my soon-to-be ex-husband. Please do not discuss your work here with him — it's none of his business. (He will be very pleasant.)

Elizabeth

John J. Bace, Jr.
Natick, Mass.



Keep 'em coming....We welcome letters, but they must be signed and include the writer's address. *The Journal of Light Construction* reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to JLC, RR2, Box 146, Richmond, VT 05477.