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**TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS THAT CAN LESSEN THE STRESS
 OF A REMODELING PROJECT**

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry's Greater Chicagoland Chapter (NARIGC) offers homeowners access to ethical and reliable remodeling contractors and quality services. NARIGC encourages homeowners to work with their contractor to ensure smooth sailing during remodeling work.

The homeowner's role in the remodeling process doesn't end once a reputable professional has been hired. Simple steps initiated by the homeowner will lessen the stress of a remodeling project over the next few days, weeks or months. NARIGC suggests the following tips to create a positive experience for the homeowner and the contractor.

PLAN AHEAD	
No Water or Power	Know in advance if and when workers plan to shut off your power and water. You can avoid food spoilage in the refrigerator/freezer. Also, be prepared by having a supply of bottled water on hand. Make temporary arrangements with a neighbor or friend when "nature calls".
Make Alternate Plans	Plan for the work area to be unusable for the duration of the project. Make alternate arrangements for cooking, bathing or whatever the room is used for.
Create a Phase List of Procedures	Meet with the contractor and create a list of work that will be done. Try to incorporate a chronological timeline so you'll know what phase of the project you can expect next.
Make an Extra Key or Create a Temporary Security Code	Depending on your schedule, there may be a need to share keys or opener/security codes with the contractor or workers. Keep track of any keys given out. If you give an opener or security door code, create a temporary code while the work is in progress. Once the work is complete, return to your regular code. Don't forget to ask who will take responsibility for any mishaps.
Create Space	Make adequate room for tools, equipment, materials and workers. Ask your Contractor where and how much space will be needed for material storage or additional workspace prior to use, and clear out that area before it is needed. Also clear any pathways between storage and work areas.
BATTEN DOWN YOUR BELONGINGS	
Clean Out the Work Area	Clean the work area and remove all items from walls, shelves, cabinets and closets.
Cover Furniture and Carpeting	Your contractor will take the necessary steps to protect and cover the work area, but remodeling leaves more dirt and dust throughout the house than you may expect. You may want to cover furniture in other areas of the house, especially in rooms adjacent to work being performed.
Dryclean Drapes, Rugs and Upholstery	Use remodeling time as a perfect excuse to have curtains, rugs and upholstery cleaned. Otherwise, remove drapes, throw rugs and upholstered furniture as practical and place them in an area away from the work being performed.
Store Breakables	Accidents happen. Box away knick-knacks and personal mementos from the construction zone as well as adjacent rooms and any area that might be a pathway to/from the work area or storage of materials for safe keeping. If furniture in the work area is to be moved, pack contents in boxes and remove them from the work area. This protects contents from loss and breakage, and also prevents the homeowner having to dust or clean each knick-knack after the work is complete

MATERIALS	
Don't Plan to "Buy as You Go"	Your contractor will give you product selection deadlines or ask you to select all materials before the job even starts. The reason for this is that some items may have longer delivery times and Contractors typically want to ensure that the items needed are onsite before they are ready to install them. You can cut down on last-minute stressful decisions as well as material availability delays by selecting all materials with your contractor in advance.
Is That the Right Color?	Double-check all materials when they arrive onsite for color, size and style. Before workers start drilling, gluing, nailing, painting, etc. make sure the product you ordered matches the product that was delivered to your home – and don't just trust the box it came in. Open it! Since products are usually delivered before they are needed, contact the Contractor immediately if there is a discrepancy. Once materials are installed, there's no turning back (or at least it can be very expensive to have to do so and will cause project delays).
I Want to Purchase Materials Myself.	You may think you are saving money by purchasing materials yourself. Some contractors will not allow this, or will allow it on a limited basis. Here's why: Contractors typically work with trusted brands and suppliers that maintain a certain level of quality, standards and dependability who stand behind their products. When a consumer purchases their own materials, this cuts the contractor out from any recourse they may have for product defectiveness, delivery availability, etc. and can cause delays in projects. The money you think you might be saving up front, may end up costing homeowners money and stress in the long run.
Does My Contractor Just Throw Out my Old Materials?	Most contractors discard materials they remove from your home; however, there are several resources that allow you to recycle any useable materials. You can keep them for use in your garage, attic or another room in your home; sell them; or donate them to a worthy cause. We recommend donating useable building materials to Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, with several locations in Chicagoland (www.habitat.org/restores). Make sure to speak with your contractor prior to demolition and express that you are going to reuse or donate your materials.
STAY OUT OF THE CONSTRUCTION AREA	
Safety First!	Keep children and pets away from the work area AT ALL TIMES. Even if workers are not present, there may be hazards that will cause injury.
Maintain Schedule	As tempting as it is, adults should not enter the work area at any time unless given the "all clear". When you enter, make sure workers are on a break or they have finished for the day. If workers are working, ask if this is a good time to enter the area. This is important for maintaining construction schedules as well as safety for the homeowner and workers.
BE HOSPITABLE	
Basic Human Relations	Realize that workers are going to be a part of your lives for a period of time. Win cooperation from workers and the contractor with mutual respect and honesty.
Refreshments	It's a nice gesture for hard work. An unexpected pot of coffee or a cold glass of lemonade will always get a "thank you".
Give Compliments	Nothing makes anyone work harder than a sincere word of appreciation and gratitude. Everyone is right to complain when there is a problem, but if you like what you see, tell them that, too!
Be Cool and Calm	Take a deep breath, step back and trust his or her skills. Time-clocking workers only builds resentment and tension. Be flexible if you want to save a penny or speed up the work process.
EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED	
No one can prepare for the unseen incidents that may transpire during remodeling projects. Tearing down a wall may uncover a problem that demands plan revisions. Remember, late deliveries, inclement weather and wrong parts are not necessarily related to the contractor. The relationship you establish with your contractor can greatly improve the overall remodeling experience.	