

ACADIANA BUILDER

A photograph of two men standing on a green lawn in front of a two-story house. The man on the left is wearing a plaid shirt, blue jeans, and a baseball cap. The man on the right is wearing a light blue checkered shirt and blue jeans. The house has a brown roof, a covered porch with wooden columns, and an American flag flying on the porch. The sky is blue with some clouds.

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Publisher's Note

One of the privileges of serving as LHBA Past Associate VP is I was able to join our LHBA delegates in Washington D.C. for the NAHB Legislative Conference. It was surreal sitting in the audience waiting for Vice President Mike Pence to address the audience filled with builders and associates from across the country, anxious for our day on the hill. Each state was scheduled to visit its own Senators and Representatives to discuss important legislation that

impacts our industry. Suddenly a wave of shock moved through the crowd as we heard House Majority Whip, Steve Scalise had been shot less than an hour before. LHBA attendees were scheduled to meet with Representative Scalise at noon that day. We did go to the hill; hearts heavy with concern for him and the 3 others that were victims of such a needless crime. Representative Scalise has continued to undergo several surgeries and extended hospitalization. Please continue to pray for him and his complete recovery.

It is my pleasure to feature Louisiana Classics Home Builders. Earl Lattier and his son, Earl Jr. have been building in Acadiana for the last 25 years. The Lattier's focus from the beginning has been on building quality, custom homes for their customers.

Enjoy!
April Becquet



AHBA Vice President Doug Trahan, Associate Vice President April Becquet, President Mark Gallagher, and Board of Directors Member Pam Weaver

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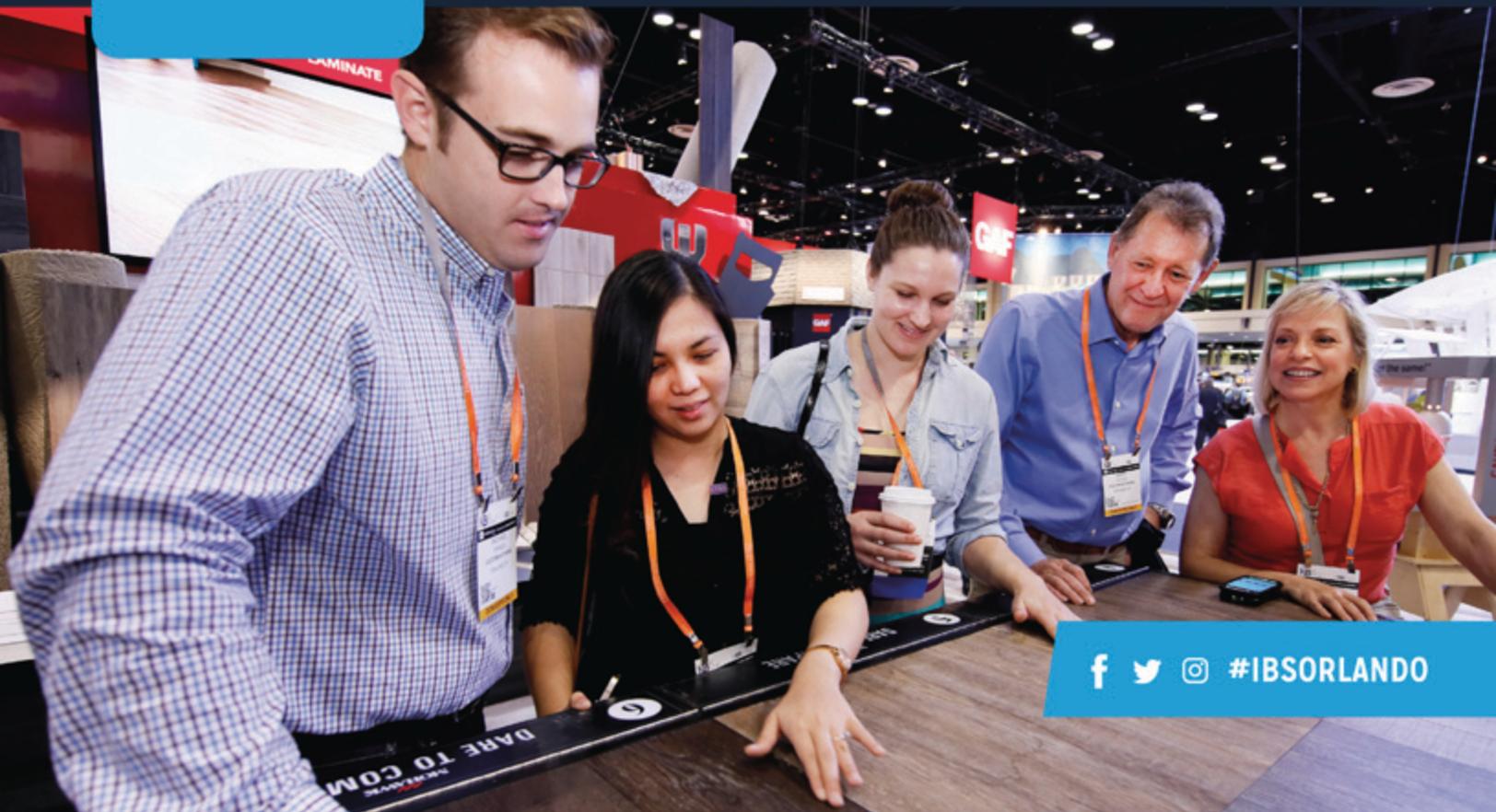
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Louisiana Classics Home Builders Celebrates 25 Years of Building

By Kathy Bowen Stolz - Photography by Virtual Showcase

Celebrating 25 years in business, the Lattiers of Louisiana Classics Home Builders look back on their years of building with pride.

“We began with building one spec house, and business has really grown from there,” said Earl Lattier, Sr., who started the company in 1992 with his late wife Paulette and son Earl Lattier, Jr., after years of working in the oil fields. They focused on building quality homes from the beginning. “We do quality work, not quantity. We base our reputation on it,” Earl, Sr., said.

And having that reputation for building quality products pays off regularly. Not only do their clients refer the Lattiers to their friends and families, but also some of their clients come back as repeat customers. It’s not unusual for Louisiana Classics to build a first home and then a second or third for clients. Sometimes the clients are upgrading

and expanding their homes, and other times the clients are downsizing after their children leave home.

The Louisiana Classics’ team builds 12-14 houses each year, with 5-7 of those under construction at any given time. While most of those homes are pre-sold custom homes, the company also builds one or two spec homes at the same time “just to keep our name out in the public,” Earl, Sr., said.

In addition to Earl, Sr., and Earl, Jr., the company team includes architect David Hamer, and bookkeeper/design assistant Germaine Lattier, the second wife of Earl, Sr., whom he married in 2008.

Their homes average \$250,000 - \$300,000 these days, a step above the average cost of a starter home in the Lafayette area, Earl, Sr., said. But he said the company

still likes building starter homes for young families in the \$200,000 range.

“We build any style of home the customer wants. Whether it is a big or small house, the challenge for us is to please the customer from start to finish. We work with them and make recommendations to fit their needs and budget. If there is something we can do to make it better, then we do it,” the senior Lattier said.

All of Louisiana Classics’ homes are “truly customized” for individual homebuyers. “Customers come to me and tell me what they want. I set up a meeting with my architect, and from their ideas we design their desired home,” Earl, Sr. said. The Acadian and Southern Traditional styles remain local favorites.

One homebuyer requested an extremely open floor plan, which created its own challenges. “There was no wasted square footage in the house, which caused the framing to be a unique challenge.” The company used antique beams to bear the load of the structure while creating a design element at the same time.

But the most challenging house during his 25 years of building is a plantation home fashioned in the style of a Hayes Town design that the Laittiers built for the Nauman family. “The Naumans’ house was full of obstacles because

Continued on Page 12





Is Your AC Company Asking the Right Questions?

By Robert (Bobby) Parks, mrm- Healthy Homes of Louisiana, llc

During a recent conference call with approximately 25-30 builders around the US, a conversation arose concerning how to control the relative humidity in buildings. With me, an a/c guy on the call, of course I immediately went into proper ac sizing. After what seemed like only a few seconds of explaining to the group all the variables that go into properly sizing an a/c unit for a building, one of the builders stopped me and made a profound statement. “Bobby, he said, builders don’t want to know how to properly size an air conditioner BUT... they do want to know that their a/c guy does!”

With this in mind, how does a builder know that his a/c guy is doing thing correctly? To start with, is he asking you the right questions? A building is a complex puzzle with many pieces so let’s look at how each piece affects the building.

Figure 1 is a look at an approximately 1,800 square foot home built to the 2009 IECC

minimum code which Louisiana is currently operating under. This is a conventionally insulated home with Low E windows, R30 attic and R6 ducts located in the attic space. It has brick cladding with R13 wall insulation and is facing in the worst-case orientation... and this is just a few things you need to know about this home. Let’s break it down starting with the weakest point.

The windows

Many times the window information is the hardest for me to get from a builder and it really shouldn’t be. Every window comes with a white sticker with the information I need. The most important number for us, in the south, is the Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) and with glazing (fancy word for windows) accounting for 28.7% of the cooling load, I need to get it right! This number tells us just how good the window is and the lower the number, the better the window. The Uo Factor is also needed

but effects us, again... in the south, slightly less than the SHGC.

Next, let’s talk ductwork

What dummy would ever decide to take the coldest air in the building and then circulate it through the hottest cavity of the building (somewhere between 3-5 times an hour). Surely not someone who understands thermodynamics (hot moves to cold and the greater the difference between the two, the faster it moves) because that’s among the worst things we could do when trying to cool a home. However, 80% or more of the homes being built today are designed this way. Notice that this is the second largest heat gain in the cooling load at 27.7%, almost as much as the windows. This is why foam insulation, on the bottom of the roof decking (encapsulated attics) is more energy efficient, it brings the ductwork inside the thermal barrier of the home and the ducts are no longer circulating air through a 150 plus degree attic.

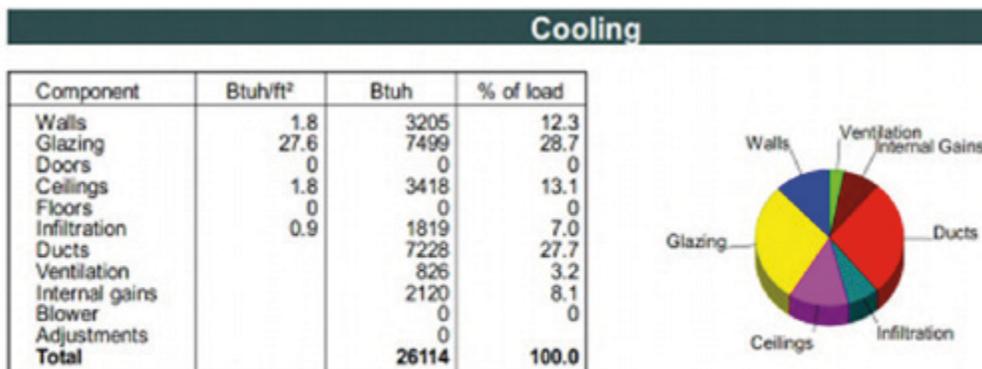


Figure 1. Manual J load calculation which shows where the heat is entering the 1,800 sq. ft. home built to 2009 IECC minimum code.



Figure 2

Other ways of achieving similar results would be to upgrade the duct insulation to R8 instead of R6 and using a radiant barrier roof decking. In many cases, mainly smaller homes, the results are very similar to spray foam at a much lower cost. But, you have to do the calculations to know for sure!

In the previous example home used in Figure 1, if we increase the duct from R6 to R8, use a radiant barrier roof decking and decrease the SHGC from .40 (2009 IECC) down to .25 (2015 IECC) minimum, we can eliminate approximately 22% of the sensible cooling load and 1/2 ton of a/c size. This equates to a more comfortable home and a lower light bill by decreasing the duct load by almost 40% and the window load by 26%.

The wall, ceiling and other The importance of these areas should not be overlooked however not nearly as critical as the previously discussed items. In this building, the windows and ducts originally accounted for 56.4% of the cooling load while all other components combined make up the remaining 43.6%. Questions like what direction is the home facing? Are the walls brick or vinyl siding, 2x4 or 2x6 and what R value of insulation will be used are very important? Although relatively smaller items individually, they add up quickly.

Just how important is using the proper size a/c?

As we construct our building tighter and insulate better, getting the a/c size correct is the single most important thing we do to control indoor humidity. Elevated indoor humidity is one of the largest contributors to poor indoor air

quality, lower thermostat settings and higher light bills.

To demonstrate this importance, we have monitored the actual ambient conditions inside the living areas of many homes. Figure 3 below is an illustration of one such case. The Manual J load calculations for this home indicated a cooling load of 2.8 ton (which means that a 3 ton would be the appropriate size).

However, the a/c guy thinking bigger is better of course, installed a 4 ton system. The humidity was remaining consistently above 60%Rh. Within only days of replacing the 4 ton with a properly sized 3 ton, the humidity dropped into the desired zone of <60%.

Summary

If you're a/c company is not discussing where the ducts are to be located and what R value will be used. If they are not requiring

you to provide the Uo and SHGC of the windows, then they are not doing the calculation. If they are not asking questions like, what direction is the front door facing and what are the insulation levels being used throughout the structure, then they are not doing the calculations.

So... Mr./Ms. Builder, please be patient and help us lowly a/c guys out. Please don't get irritated because we are asking so many questions. We're just trying to do you a good job by doing ours correctly.



For more information contact Bobby Parks at Healthy Homes of Louisiana, LLC PO Box 3127 West Monroe, Louisiana 71294 or email bobby@parksair.com

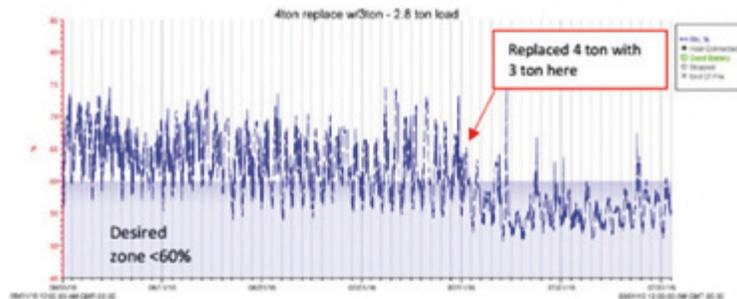


Figure 3. Indoor humidity levels with oversized ac (4ton) and after unit was replaced with proper size (3 ton)

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Louisiana Legislative News

New Subcontractor Licensing Classification Rule Enforcement to Begin **Oct. 1**

LA State Licensing Board for Contractors. The Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors has instated a new rule adding six types of subcontractors who must be licensed. The new requirement applies to subcontractors who bid or perform work that exceeds \$7,500.00, including labor and materials.

The new specialty classifications are:

- Residential pile driving
- Residential framing
- Residential roofing
- Residential masonry/stucco
- Residential swimming pools
- Residential foundations.

As the general contractor, builders will be responsible for making sure that their affected subs obtain required licenses.

House Bill 440/675 requires the contractor to provide the contractor's license number, classification and evidence of insurance to the contracting party for whom the work is to be performed.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor - Act 231

Effective: August 1st, 2017

House Bill 389 authorizes

the office of conservation of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to regulate pipeline utilities and facilities.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor - Act 218



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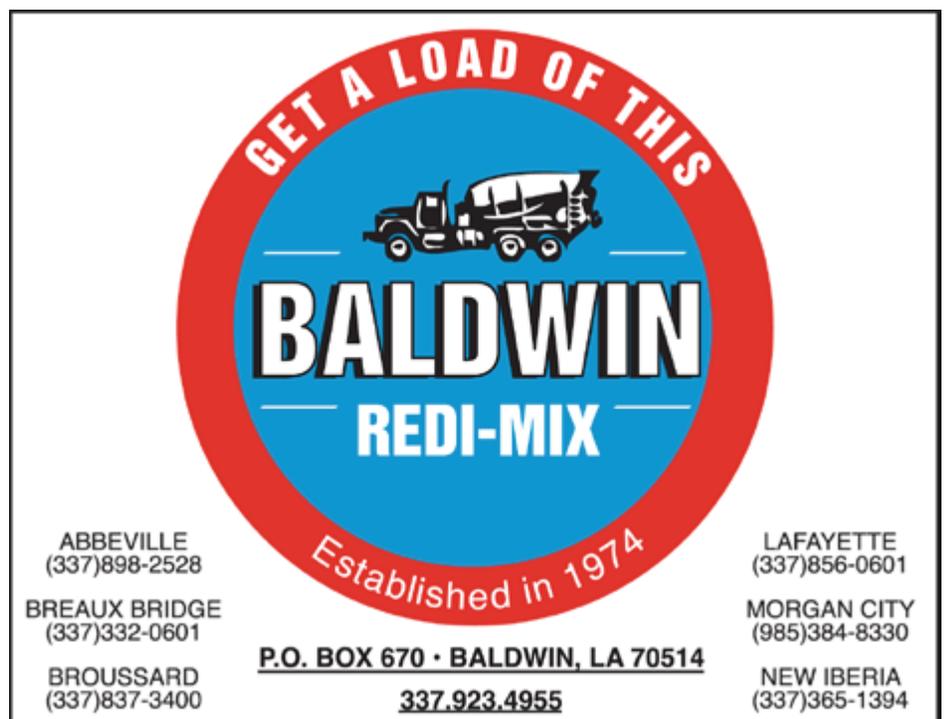
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Home Buying a Strong Boost to Overall Economy, NAHB Study Shows

A new consumer spending analysis from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) highlights another reason why home building helps drive a healthy economy: In their first year of ownership, new home buyers spend about \$10,601 on appliances, furnishings and home improvement projects – 2.6 times as much as other home owners in a typical year.

NAHB economists studied the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey to help quantify the wave of activity – and cash – spent to install new refrigerators, buy couches and make other improvements as new owners personalize their homes.

“While construction jobs are the most obvious impact of new homes on the economy, it’s important to realize that it doesn’t stop there,” said NAHB Chairman Granger MacDonald, a home builder and developer in Kerrville, Texas.

“It’s the architects, the heating technicians, the lumber suppliers. And it’s the mom-and-pop owners at the local furniture or appliance store who are helping these buyers make their house a home,” he said.

During the first two years after closing on the house, a typical buyer of a newly built single-family home tends to spend on average \$4,500 more than a similar non-moving home owner.

A previous NAHB study based on

2004-2007 data collected during the housing boom showed somewhat higher spending by home owners overall. But the tendency of buyers to outspend non-moving owners on appliances, furnishings and home improvements was similar.

In the aggregate, most of the demand for appliances, furnishings and remodeling projects in a given year is generated by non-moving home owners, because they outnumber home buyers by such a wide margin.

But new owners’ impact is noticeable – and vital, MacDonald

said. “The health of housing – and new home buying – is key to the overall state of our economy.”

*Please pass me around the office.
Acadiana Builder makes great reading material for anyone interested in the building market.*



Continued from Page 7

of the style and the way it was built.” Located in the Broussard area, the house was built on a dirt pad six feet off the ground. “We did a post tension foundation on the top of this six-foot, compacted, elevated pad. The prep work for the foundation was a real challenge.”

Another challenge in the Naumans’ house was the floors. The home’s interior contains old, rough-cut, 9- and 10-inch-wide antique heart pine wood floors.

But Louisiana Classics is up to challenges. In a different project, the homeowner requested that the new house incorporate cypress cabinets made from the barn of the homeowner’s great-grandfather. That barn was located in the Maurice area. “They tore down the barn, brought it to our cabinet maker. He straight-lined and planed the cypress to make the cabinets,” Earl, Sr., noted with pride.

Earl, Sr.’s role in the company is to meet with the customers and to work with the budget and pricing of each home. “Everybody has a budget, and after meeting with the homebuyers a few times, I know what that budget is. When we start off, we have, to the best of our knowledge, a construction estimate of what the structure will cost. From previous experience we are able to help the customer stay



**“We do quality work, not quantity.
We base our reputation on it,”**



within their price range.”

Earl, Jr., focuses on working with the subcontractors. “We work closely with the different subcontractors and clients on a daily basis. We stay on top of each job so we don’t lose any time. We plan for the next group of subcontractors to join in and complete their portion of the project,” Earl, Sr., said.

“We’ve used many of the same subcontractors for almost 20 years. It took us about six years to put this group together, and we would put them up against anybody. They work well with us and with our customers,” he stated.

“My son and I go to each building site sometimes three or four times a day. If there’s something we can do to make [a house] better, then we do it. Successful completion of a customer’s dream home is not just the effort of the contractor; it’s the effort of each sub in their specialized field. Our goal is to leave a satisfied customer at the end of every project.

“We pretty much cater to the customers throughout the whole process, especially with the finishing touches,” Earl, Sr. added. One of the things that the Lattiers do to keep

their customers satisfied is to have the homebuyers create a punch list of items that need attention after they've received their certificate of occupancy. After they've been in the house for six to nine months, the Lattiers return, touching up paint and such that may have been damaged during the finish trim process. After the air conditioning draws the humidity from a house, drywall seams may also need to be touched up, he added.

Additionally, "We pride ourselves on the cleanliness of the job site. Cleanliness leads to better safety, and our customers appreciate the effort," Earl, Sr. noted.

Earl, Sr., and Germaine live in a Louisiana Classics' home – in fact, it's the fifth one of the houses that he's built that he's occupied. They use their own home as a showcase for clients. "We meet them all there and walk them through the house to show the quality of work we do." The clients appreciate being able to see the full-size examples of their work, he added.

Earl, Sr., loves the building process, taking a house from start to finish. "I've always wanted to build. I should have been doing this my whole life. I love it."

.....
For more information, visit www.louisianaclassics.com or call 337-456-5533 or email laclassics@cox.net.





Lumber Tariffs Threaten Thousands of U.S. Jobs, Raise Housing Costs

In a move that will raise housing costs and price countless American households out of the housing market, the Commerce Department on June 26 imposed a preliminary 6.87% anti-dumping duty on Canadian lumber imports on top of the 19.88% countervailing duties announced in April.

In an official statement, NAHB Chairman Granger MacDonald said that the combined duties are “basically another tax on American home builders and home buyers that will jeopardize affordable housing in America.”

The 19.88% countervailing duty is intended to compensate for government subsidies that Canadian firms allegedly receive, while the 6.87% anti-dumping duty is intended to bridge a supposed gap between the price that Canadian lumber producers are selling lumber in the U.S. and the “fair market price” determined by the Department of Commerce. Combined, the two duties impose a 26.75% total tariff on Canadian lumber imported into the U.S.

In an Eye on Housing blog post, NAHB senior economist Paul Emrath discusses the impact the duties will have on the housing market and the economy. The analysis shows that the tariffs would boost lumber costs by 8.8% for U.S. consumers and add \$1,700 to the cost of a typical single-family home.

Further, the annual effects of this tariff in 2017 include a loss of:

11,336 full-time U.S. jobs

\$685.5 million in wages and salaries for U.S. workers

\$481.8 million in taxes and other revenue for governments in the U.S.

These losses of wages, jobs and taxes are net losses that take into account the increases in wages, jobs and taxes in the domestic sawmill industry. The reduction in jobs is not limited to the construction industry: Jobs are also lost in businesses that sell and transport

building materials, provide architecture and engineering services, etc.

View further analysis in this Eye on Housing blog post.

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For more information about the program, visit www.HBABuildersRisk.com or contact Helmut Mundt at 855-442-2467 or helmut@hmia.com.

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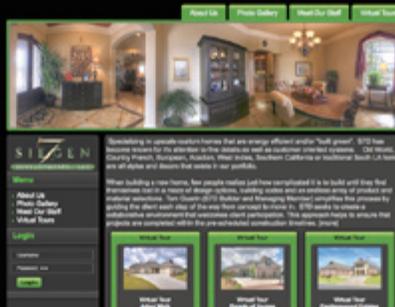
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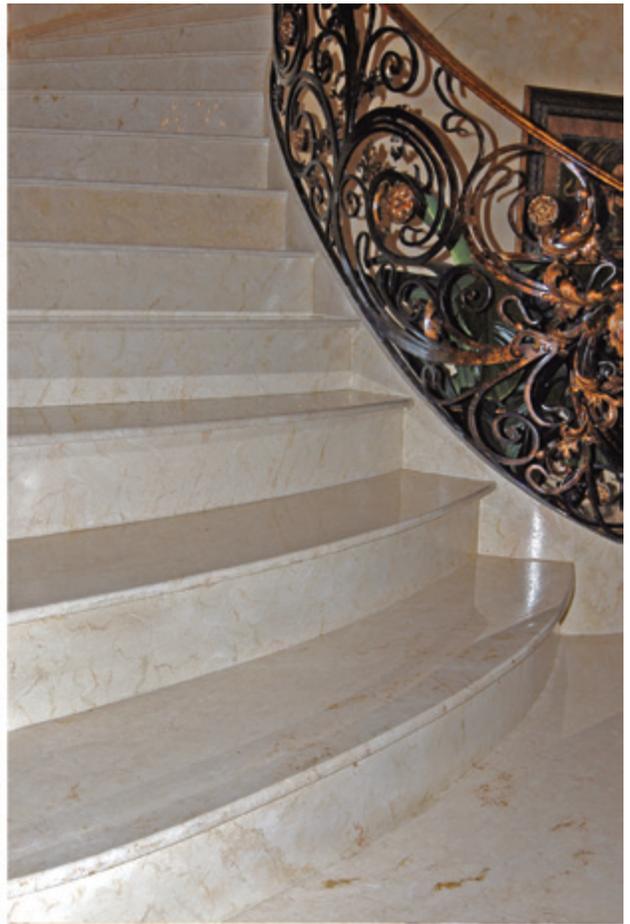
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