

It's a **NEW YEAR...**

BY LAURA LE

So...2015! What does this year have in store for you? Some of us will be considering renovating our homes. Maybe updating the kitchen or re-doing the bathroom is part of your future. It is extremely important to do ones due diligence when it comes to hiring a contractor to complete whatever project it is you are considering.

The process of renovating is very lengthy and should not be rushed. First, the decision is made, now the contractor must be found. Asking friends, family and co-workers can be a great way to start. Reputable trades-people can be very difficult to find and ones that are available exactly when you need them are an even rarer breed. If you are considering hiring someone

to handle a renovation please do it with lots of time to spare. The old adage "if they are good, they are busy" is one hundred percent accurate when it comes to construction.

I work with a contractor who has 6 jobs lined up waiting for him right now; Les Popovics of Mountview Ltd. is honest with all potential clients by telling them he will get to their job as soon as he is able to and does not ever rush one job to get to another. Every one of my clients that has hired him has been completely happy and recommends him to everyone. Les says to make sure any contractor you are considering carries liability insurance as well as a business license. Do not be afraid to ask for proof of these documents. Better Business Bureau accreditation is also a must. A contract written with the details and scope of work to be completed and itemized with a finishing schedule that specifies all work done and materials installed. The contract should quote the total cost of the work and the pay schedule as well. The pay schedule is different depending on the scope of the job but 20% should always be held back until completion and any deficiencies are dealt with. All changes and corrections should be handled in

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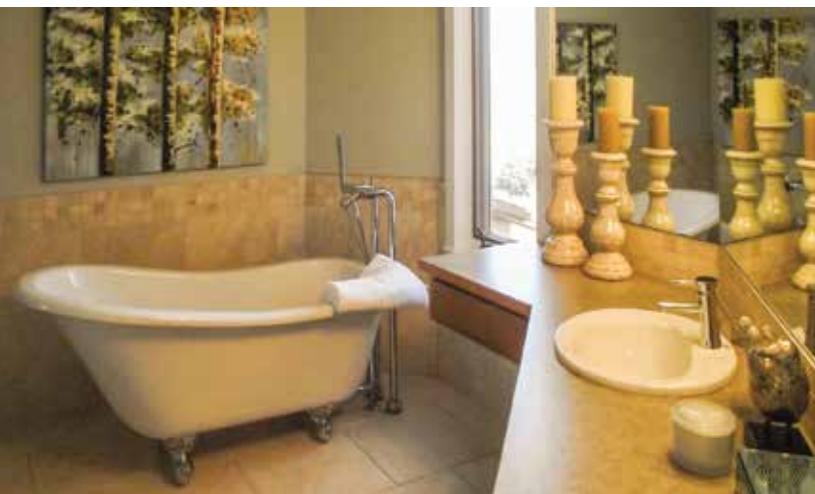


writing to protect both the homeowner and the contractor. If there are other trades involved in the project and there are concerns, you can request a statutory declaration from each trade stating they have been paid by your contractor in order to release final payment or that they were paid at each stage. This could prevent contractor from not paying the outside trades after the homeowner has paid the contractor. This also prevents an outside trade from placing a lien on the property or suing the homeowner for payment.

A second option when looking for a contractor is hiring an interior design professional. Many designers work with contractors that can be recommended to a homeowner. Having a designer and a contractor work together on a project is very beneficial in creating a smoother, more cohesive end result whether it is the paint colour or lighting, plumbing fixtures or furniture. A team effort between homeowner, contractor and designer will create a beautiful space.

Here's a piece of advice that is perhaps the most important thing to be said about renovating. It usually takes longer and costs more than the initial quote; this is not because the contractor is trying to squeeze more money out of you. It is because their job is full of unknowns, they do not know what is behind the wall until they tear out the drywall and find knob and tube wiring or the tile selected by the homeowner is coming from overseas and it feels like it is coming via a canoe. This business has so many variables exactly like this and we are at the mercy of outside suppliers.





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Renovating is a job that requires extreme patience and understanding. A good contractor does not want to disappoint a client because it is a business completely driven by referrals. A happy client can mean multiple jobs to them and they know it. The end result of a renovation is a more beautiful space that is custom made just for you...enjoy it!



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Laura Le has owned Creative Enhancement for about seven years. Laura completed courses with Accredited Staging Professionals (ASP), Canadian Staging Professionals (CSP) and Canadian ReDesign Association (CRDA). Creative Enhancement has been a member of the BBB since 2005. Call 403.807.8591 or email laurale@shaw.ca and visit creativeenhancement.ca