

# Bear Creek Lumber TIMBERLINE

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P.O. Box 669 Winthrop, WA 98862  
[www.bearcreeklumber.com](http://www.bearcreeklumber.com)

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## Customer Pictures Dan Troxel/Decks By Dan Kansas City, KS

Customer Dan Troxel likes to know where his wood is coming from, so he visits Bear Creek Lumber whenever he can. Recently salesman and staff photographer Merle Kirkley took Dan on a drive through our “backyard”. You can see Dan above pictured with Liberty Bell Mountain in the background.

Dan does world class deck jobs, which have been featured in magazines, such as Deck Builder. He shared these pictures of a recent project with us. The project used premium tight knot Western Red cedar for decks, rail and trim.



Photos and Deck from  
Decks by Dan

## Western Red Cedar Decking

When you take the time and expense to build a deck, you want it to last a long time. You don't want costly repairs and unsightly defects. Western red cedar makes a particularly good decking. It is light weight, easily worked, straight grained, and free of pitch. It goes down flat and stays that way.

### Durability

Durability is the resistance of timber to decay. Decks naturally absorb moisture. Cedar grows in moist climates and naturally produces organic compounds that resist the agents of decay. Called thujiplicins, these ingrown preservatives keep your deck strong and serviceable.

### Stability

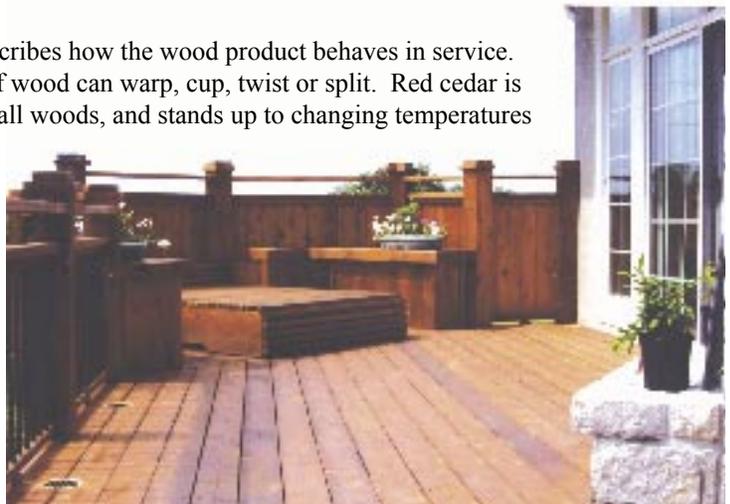
Dimensional stability describes how the wood product behaves in service. Decks from many types of wood can warp, cup, twist or split. Red cedar is one of the most stable of all woods, and stands up to changing temperatures and climatic conditions.

### Preservative treatments

Natural red cedar will last better than pressure treated material and does not have any side issues with lead or arsenic.

Also beware of composites that have low tolerances for temperature change. They are often made with PVC.

These are new “improved” deckings that have no track record for either durability or stability. Red cedar as a decking product has stood the test of time, is a known value for your home and is comparatively priced with any other quality high end product!



## His-Hers-Home

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), an estimated 40 percent of new homes nationwide now include at least one his-and-hers area, more than double the number in 1995. The average new home crept up in size 8 percent between 1997 and 2002, to 2,320 square feet. Over the same period, there were 16 percent more homes with four or more bedrooms. Said NAHB economist Gopal Ahluwalia of all the extra space, "What do you use it for?"

Builders and remodelers across the country say they're putting in his-and-hers features like his-and-hers bathrooms, not to mention home offices, sections in the living room, twin libraries, dual exercise areas and separate kitchen cooking stations. High-end properties, such as Houston's Hann Builders, whose custom homes cost \$1 million on average, are the most likely to feature his-and-hers amenities. In these homes, more than 60 percent of clients now want his-and-hers offices, up from almost none four years ago. But even lesser-priced homes are getting them, too. Building company Toll Brothers, whose homes average \$575,000, is putting in separate vanities, dressing areas and baths in an estimated 40 percent of its new homes, a one-third increase over 2000.

What inspires the separate but equal trend? Dual incomes and domestic bliss. Anything to avoid conflict!

This is hardly a new concept. The two-sink master bathroom, for example, became a big selling point in new split-levels in the 1970s. But even during much of the 1990s boom, most homes were built assuming spouses would make space for each other on the counter (and in the closet and the home gym). Then, about five years ago, homeowners started asking for their own closets, followed quickly by dressing areas, baths and the like. Amenities don't come cheap. At least to homeowners. A second cooking prep area can add 25 percent to the cost of a kitchen remodel, experts say. Meanwhile, at Toll Brothers' Castle Pointe at Marlboro development in New Jersey, buyers who want his-and-hers bathrooms and closets have to pony up \$14,000 more than they would for a slightly smaller place in which they'd have to share space. Arizona realtor-builder team Sandy and David Jensen design homes with dual garages (hers is always off the kitchen), and say it can boost profits by as much as 5 percent. "It's a great selling point," said Sandy Jensen.

Dueling offices tend not to pay off (not enough people need two, experts say, limiting the pool of buyers). And, said developer David Weekley, who builds planned communities in seven states, in midrange homes, where space and money are finite, "It's a tradeoff: Two closets or a bigger kitchen?" Those who choose the closets, be forewarned, he said: The bigger kitchen will resell better. *from the Chicago Sun-Times*



## What's Cooking?

### Kitchen Remodels Boost Economy

American homeowners are expected to spend \$214 billion this year on remodeling, to a large extent putting their money where their mouths are: In the kitchen.

"The kitchen is the living room today, the focal point for the house. Kitchens bring families together, for eating, for entertainment - - for everything," said Mark Brick, president of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). The remodeling business is booming and kitchen jobs are its leading edge, said Gwen Biasi, marketing and communications coordinator at NARI headquarters in Des Plaines, Ill. Kitchens account for about 20% to 25% of all spending, "the most expensive room to remodel because of all the appliances and materials used," she said. The \$131.5 billion spent in 2001 on home improvements, coupled with \$34.3 billion spent on maintenance and repairs and \$48.2 billion on rental properties, "was instrumental in preventing the economy from falling deeper into recession," the Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies reported this spring.

## Women Are Most Likely Internet House Hunters

Women are taking the mouse in hand and leading the way in online home hunting. The typical buyer who uses the Internet in the search for a newly constructed home, is a woman aged 26 to 35, who uses the Web anywhere from one to three hours a week to find information on home builders, and their offerings, a survey shows.

American Home Guides, which operates house-hunting Web sites covering 28 states and Puerto Rico, surveyed nearly 5,500 of its users in June and July to determine their home-searching patterns. More than 60 percent of the respondents were women, and of those, nearly three-quarters were younger than 45. Of the men surveyed, 59 percent were younger than 45.

"These results clearly dispel the dated stereotypes of women being uncomfortable with computers and technology," said Barry Lynn, president and founder of American Home Guides. "Young women, in particular, who have come of age during the digital revolution, seem especially at ease using the Internet to find new homes."

For women online, the Internet has become the top tool in the new-home search. Nearly one-third spend more than three hours a week researching new homes on the Web. Among the different sources of new home information available to all buyers, the Internet dominated a field that included newspapers, television and radio, magazines, driving around and real estate agents: 73 percent said the Internet was the source they used the most, followed by driving around at just 8 percent. He said the result is consistent with a survey by the National Association of Realtors, which found that 57 percent more people reported first learning of the home they bought on the Internet rather than through newspapers.

Other survey results:

- More than 51 percent of Internet home buyers plan to purchase their homes in the next six months.
- Nearly 83 percent plan to purchase their homes in the next 12 months.
- More than 81 percent of respondents with an annual income exceeding \$1 million spend more than an hour a week searching for a new home online.

# Industry News

**U.S. home builders in August were at their most optimistic since January 2000** as consumers looked to buy homes before mortgage rates rose even further, a report said Monday. The National Association of Home Builders' housing market index, a measure of builder sentiment about sales and buyer traffic, rose to 71 in August from an upwardly revised 65 in July. Mark Vitner, a senior economist at Wachovia Securities in Charlotte, N.C., says that rising rates will have little impact on home sales and economists say the signs of economic improvement that are pushing rates higher, are also helping stoke demand for housing.

**Housing construction jumped to a 17-year high in July** in spite of rising interest rates. It was an unexpectedly strong showing and one more sign, analysts said, that the long-craved economic rebound may finally be happening.

**Sales of existing homes jumped to a record in July**, a real estate group said Monday, as rising mortgage rates apparently spurred some indecisive potential buyers to jump into the market before rates get too high. July's pace of home sales was the fastest on record, beating the 5.94-million-unit pace set in January 2003 and December 2002. The National Association of Realtors (NAR) showed homes sold at an annual rate of 6.12 million in the month, up 5 percent from June's pace of 5.83 million.



**'03 Fires Devastate Northwest Forests**

Fires, like this one in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, burned down mills in Canada, and closed logging operations throughout the Northwest, adding pressure to lumber prices as log supplies were shut off. Lightning-caused fires didn't go out until fall rains finally came in September. One fire, pictured above, burned over 95 square miles and burned down 240 homes. An August lightning storm in Washington's Methow Valley, that put out the Farewell fire a month ago, started another one (Needle Creek) that threatened 250 homes at one point. The Methow fire smoldered for 2 weeks, then grew slowly until blowing up to over 25,000 acres within three days. Pictured below, the Needle fire crests a ridge. The sound of the oncoming fire coming over the hill was like a jet engine approaching, according to Merle Kirkley, who took the picture as he was evacuating friends from Lost River, the community closest to the fire.



**Bear Creek Lumber**  
**TIMBERLINE**  
P.O. Box 669 Winthrop WA  
(800) 597-7191 Fax (509) 997-2040  
Ela Bannick Editor  
Sage Bannick Feature Writer



## Supply and Demand Spike Lumber Prices

Wholesale costs of lumber have soared this fall driven by the continuing boom in new-home construction, the harsh winter that shortened this year's building season, log shortages and the military's need for wood for U.S. troops' camps in Iraq.

"We are at historical highs," said Sam Sherrill, executive editor at Crow Publications, a Portland publication that tracks prices in wood products. "The demand is real; it's there; it's huge," Sherrill said.

Housing starts have been roaring along at record highs. Home builders broke ground for 1.87 million new units in July. Low interest rates have prompted legions of homeowners to refinance or take out home-equity loans and begin remodeling projects.

The NAHB estimates that 40 percent of U.S. consumption of softwood lumber goes into new homes and 30 percent into remodeling and repair.

The NAHB offers a rule-of-thumb way to "guesstimate" how higher lumber prices will affect housing prices: Including costs that rise in proportion to lumber costs, such as sales taxes, financing, real estate commissions and permit fees, each increase of \$1 per 1,000 board feet in wholesale framing lumber prices increases the cost of a home by \$20.

## Domestic Terrorism: Its Not Just Logging Sites Anymore

An extremist group has broadened its attacks beyond the logging industry, setting afire developments it views as urban sprawl. Builders nationwide are being warned to be on high alert after a recent arson attack by an environmental extremist group targeting residential construction development sites.

The Earth Liberation Front, a Pacific Coast-based group traditionally associated with attacks on commercial logging, has stepped up its efforts to include attacks against urban sprawl. Its most recent arson attack occurred Aug. 1 at a multifamily development under construction in San Diego that resulted in \$50 million in damage. The group, considered a major domestic threat by the FBI, claims responsibility on its Web site for seven attacks so far this year in Michigan, California, Alabama and Pennsylvania.

As a result, the National Association of Home Builders circulated an internal document via e-mail this month urging members to take "appropriate measures and institute precautions as they see fit to ensure security at their job site, especially after hours."

In the e-mail, the national builders group suggests installing security cameras at construction sites, and meeting with law enforcement officials, fire departments and insurance providers to learn how to better protect projects from arson.

*from The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie News (Stuart, FL)*