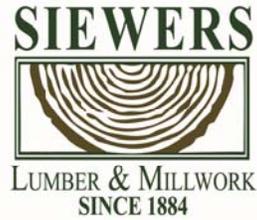


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“Preserving the Past while Building the Future.”



Celebrating 129 Years of Service

A note from the Siewers Family...

On the Horizon at Siewers

We wanted to thank all of you that joined us for our Founder’s Day Cookout in May. We celebrated our 129th Anniversary and wanted to thank all of you for helping us achieve another anniversary! We hope you are having a great summer and are able to get in a little down time to share with family and friends.

We are gearing up for our Architectural Products Show on Thursday, September 19th. This year, in addition to our normal show, dinner and door prizes, we will be having a great speaker. We are very excited to announce that we will be having Craig Webb speak at the show this year. Craig Webb is Editor-In-Chief of Remodeling and ProSales Magazines. Mr. Webb wants to build a program for the evening based on what YOU most WANT to know as well as what YOU most NEED to know. So if you have any suggestions, please let us know and we will pass the information on to Mr. Webb.

Thank you for your continued support and business. We are always here for your suggestions and to meet your needs! Enjoy your summer!

-The Siewers Family

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Economic News

New Home Sales Rise in Richmond

In the Richmond market in January, closings of new homes rose year-over-year, moving up after a decline in December 2012. New home closings saw a 15.4% jump from a year earlier to 98. This followed a 31.0% decline year-over-year in December.

As a percentage of overall housing closings, new home closings made up 9.4% of overall housing closings. A year ago, new home closings accounted for 8.5%. After dropping in December from a year earlier, closings of new and existing homes rose year-over-year in January. Article from in the Hanley Wood Builder (hwlm@bldr-media.com)

Employers: Get Ready for Health Care Changes Now

Major health care changes start January 1, when most people are required to have coverage or pay a penalty for ignoring the federal mandate.

If you're an employer, don't dawdle over your company's health care plan for 2014. Key deadlines loom, and a slew of decisions must be made to make sure that you and your employees are ready for this brave new world of health care. The first decision to make: Will you provide health care coverage as a benefit to employees and their families?

If you are a small firm, you don't have to offer health care to employees under the law, though many small companies will to attract and retain employees. The Affordable Health Care Act defines a small business as one with fewer than 50 employees working 30 hours or more a week. For companies that employ a lot of seasonal workers or people whose hours vary considerably from week to week, there's some flexibility in calculating whether those workers count as full-timers, laid out in [proposed rules from the IRS](#).

Small firms that choose to offer health plans can buy coverage either through their state exchange, which will start enrollments on October 1, or elsewhere.

Some businesses may contemplate shifting work away from full-timers to more part-timers in order to squeak in under the size limit and avoid the mandate to provide health insurance coverage. Consider that two 20-hour-a-week workers may not be as efficient as a single full-timer. Also, part-timers are more likely to leave for other jobs with better hours and benefits.

For companies required to provide health plans, another penalty looms if coverage is deemed subpar. In that case, the employer incurs a \$3,000 fine for each employee who winds up buying a federally subsidized policy through the state health exchange instead of taking the company's offering. To avoid that hit, employer policies must pay at least 60% of benefit costs, and the share of the premium paid by worker can't top 9.5% of the workers annual income, as determined by his or her W-2 statement for the previous year. The 9.5 cap applies only to the employee's share of the premium for self-only coverage under the employer's lowest-cost plan. So, a company can require a higher share of the

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premium be paid by workers whose plans cover a spouse or dependents and still be deemed to fall within the standard.

The first deadline is July 31. By that time, any firm, large or small, which offers insurance, must pay an annual fee of \$1 for each of the average number of folks covered in 2012. The money will fund grants for research into the effectiveness of medical treatments and that particular fee will cease in 2018.

A larger annual fee, however – around \$63 a head – will be levied starting at the end of 2014 on all firms that offer insurance.

By October 1, all employers must tell workers about the insurance exchanges, whether or not the employer offers insurance coverage. The Department of Labor has developed model notices that can be used by employers.

If you are self-employed, you can purchase insurance through a state exchange. And you may be eligible for a subsidy from the government to help pay for it. Government subsidies are available for those with annual incomes up to 400% of the U.S. poverty level. For a family of four, that translates to \$94,200.

Individuals whose workplaces don't offer insurance at all or offer only coverage that falls short of the minimum standards, are also eligible for federal subsidies.

Story from the www.kiplinger.com.

Contractor News

Big Changes for Employers: Mandatory New I-9 Form

The U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) has issued a new version of the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Form dated 3/8/13. Employers are strongly encouraged to start using the new form immediately. All employers were required to use the new I-9 by May 7, 2013 for new hires. Old versions are now unacceptable after that date. There is also a new Handbook for Employers (M-274). The new I-9 form should be used on a going-forward basis and does not need to be completed for existing employees.

The new I-9 form and Employer handbook are available only at www.uscis.gov or by calling USCIS at 800-375-5283.

2 Sentences That Engage Customers

1. "Our clients hire us to provide (*benefits to the client*)"
2. "They hire us, rather than somebody else, because (*something unique that the competition doesn't have but the customer values.*)"

Notice that both these sentences position you, the seller, as a catalyst that helps the customer achieve the customer's goals, and then positions your firm as the only catalyst that can do the job right.

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In other words, to engage customers in a conversation about the possibility of hiring you or your firm, make the message about the CUSTOMER rather than about YOU.

Written by Geoffrey James at www.inc.com.

FYI

o·gee (ō'jē')

n. Architecture.

A double curve with the shape of an elongated S.

A molding having the profile of an S-shaped curve.

An arch formed by two S-shaped curves meeting at a point. Also called ogee arch.

[Middle English oggifs, ogeus, pl. of ogif, ogive. See ogive.]

A new article has been posted on by Shawn McCadden:

[Why Some Contractors Can Raise Their Prices But Most Others Can't](#)

Quick Contractor Tip

Hand-screw vise holds odd pieces on drill press

To make a versatile drill-press vise for round or irregular work pieces, start with an inexpensive 10" wood hand screw. Cut a 110 degree notch out of each jaw with a bandsaw. Clamp the hand screw to the drill-press table and you now have a vise that can securely hold a piece up to 8" diameter. *Bill Peck, Stow OH*

How would you like to be published in a future issue of Siewers Newsletter?

Be sure it is a quick tip that can help another contractor and one that is simple to understand ("Even I need to understand it!") It also must be economical to create. Submit your tips to me at laurenf@siewers.com or in person.

Be sure and bring your business card next time you visit Siewers. Just drop it into the glass fish bowl on the counter to enter a monthly drawing.

Good Luck!!!

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Summer Begins 6/21/13



Siewers Lumber & Millwork

**Will be closed Thursday July 4th in observance of
Independence Day.**

We will reopen Friday at 7:30 a.m. the 5th of July.

Save The Date

***2013 Siewers Architectural Products Show*
*September 19th***

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Economy Snap Shot.....

	<u>Unemployment Rate – Entire U.S.</u>	<u>Consumer Confidence (Indexed to value of 100 in 1985)</u>	<u>Total Housing Starts /Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate</u>
May 2013	7.6%	76.2	914,000
Prior Month – April 2013	7.5%	69.0	856,000
Prior Year – May 2012	8.2%	64.4	711,000

	<u>Gallon (\$) Of Gas</u>	<u>Existing Home Sales</u>
May 30, 2013	\$3.61	N/A
Prior Month – April 2013	\$3.52	4,970,000
Prior Year – May 2012	\$3.62	4,530,000

Market Summary

	<u>June 18, 2013</u>	<u>1/01/13</u>	<u>6/01/12</u>
DOW	15,179	13,104	12,393
NASDAQ	3,452	3,019	2,827
S&P 500	1,639	1,426	1,310

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Company Mission

To serve the needs of contractors and do-it-yourselfers.



“Nothing will work unless you do.” Mayo Angelou

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www.siewers.com**

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**Hours:
Monday – Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**If you wish to receive our newsletter each month, forward your email address to
laurenf@siewers.com or call Lauren at 804-358-2103.**

....Next issue July 17th