

## **Who is an owner builder and what are they doing?**

An owner builder is an individual or family taking charge of the remodel or new construction of their home. In America, owner builders are defined primarily by their willingness to become personally committed to coordination and control for designing and building of their residential project.

This personal commitment may take many forms; however, the most distinguishing feature of an owner builder is taking legal responsibility for hiring the team of professionals to efficiently and effectively complete their project. Saving money and gaining sweat equity is best achieved by assuming legal responsibility. This leadership role is the defining characteristic of an owner builder.

Essentially, an owner builder acts as the project manager for their personal residence, which may include new work, alterations, or maintenance and repairs. As project manager, ownerbuilders often enlist the services of a consultant, lender, realtor, site supervisor, building inspector, architect, engineer, trade contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers. For good counsel, the services of an attorney and accountant will also be valuable during project management. As the individual or family commissions each phase of work, the owner builder takes charge of the administration and organization of the project by managing participants in the building community in order to achieve the desired end result whether it be to remodel their existing home or building a new home. This experience becomes very emotionally exciting and financially rewarding.

The history of home building in America is truly an owner builder story. From New England, the Middle States, the South, and the West, hand-made components, useful house forms, and local materials reflect community identity and owner builder traditions. The availability of labor and materials in the neighborhood combined with authentic American craft has been the hallmark of home building or remodeling for over three centuries.

Today, it is no different. What defines the individual or family as being an owner builder is their personal commitment to coordination and control of their work, legal responsibility for leading and hiring the team of professionals, and dedication to management of the residential designing and building process.