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HOME IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY INCREASES DURING COVID-19
Research Show 57 Percent of Homeowners Find Time for Home Improvement Projects

ATLANTA and MEMPHIS, Tenn. (July 23, 2020) – According the latest U.S. Census Bureau report, home centers, hardware stores, garden centers and building materials suppliers realized a year-over-year sales increase of 22.6 percent, leading all retail categories except for online purchases. This continues a trend with retailers serving the home improvement market that suggests homeowners are doing projects during the pandemic. Recent research from Consumer Specialists and the Home Projects Council examines why 57 percent of homeowners put an emphasis on home improvement during the first three months of COVID-19.

“Even with people at home more than usual, we were surprised at just how many ways COVID-19 has impacted home improvement activity,” said Fred Miller, president of Consumer Specialists. “In terms of consumer attitudes and behavior, there has never been a single force that has so significantly shaped the home improvement market. Through this research, businesses involved in home improvement can better understand the current dynamic and make appropriate adjustments to success in this environment.”

A Consumer Specialists survey of more than 600 homeowners conducted in June revealed that 57 percent of homeowners did a home improvement project from March to May. On average, those homeowners spent \$1,750 making home improvements and sited time as the primary reason driving their efforts.

- “Have more time” (66.9%) is the top reason homeowners are doing more projects because of COVID-19
- Nearly 50% of homeowners credit “time at home made me more aware of things that needed doing” as a reason for doing more projects

A comparison between the Consumer Specialists survey and a 2019 Home Projects Council survey of more than 1,000 homeowners provides a clean year-over-year home improvement snapshot. With the Home Projects Council survey as a benchmark, home

improvement project intent during the next year is actually up slightly despite the pandemic. The Internet easily remains the preferred home improvement project resource, but at 63.5 percent, homeowners are turning to online tools at a 12 percent greater rate than in 2019.

“Homeowners have turned to the internet for project ideas and instruction for years, but that seems to be amplified these days,” said Frank Owens, senior vice president at The QUIKRETE® Companies and Home Projects Council member. “We’ve averaged about ten million views of our QUIKRETE® how-to project videos in the past several months, which is about 2.5 times more than the same time last year. That’s a clear indication that homeowners are focused on outdoor projects like concrete patios and fire pits so families unable to travel or take a vacation can get the most out of their backyard.”

“Doing and dreaming” is how home improvement expert and Home Projects Council member Tom Kraeutler describes projects started by homeowners over the last few months. On his nationally syndicated radio show and podcast The Money Pit, listeners admit to dusting off their “to-do” lists and completing projects they’d put off for years as well as planning future projects. “We’ve seen a huge increase in the number of calls, emails and social media posts from consumers asking us for help with projects. March alone was up over 112 percent from the previous year,” said Kraeutler.

According to the research, landscaping property is the home improvement project that made the biggest jump in interest among homeowners from 2019 to 2020. For the entire Consumer Specialists survey, “How COVID-19 Is Reshaping The Home Improvement Market,” visit www.ConsumerSpecialists.com. To learn more about the Home Projects Council and its home improvement resources, visit [Facebook](#).

Home Projects Council Members

- Mark Powers – This Old House, senior technical editor
- Tom Kraeutler – The Money Pit Home Improvement Show, host
- Danny Lipford – Today’s Homeowner with Danny Lipford, host
- Jill Sell – Ohio Magazine and Design Build Magazine, home improvement columnist
- Ben Uyeda – HomeMade Modern, ZeroEnergy Design and Free Green, founder
- Stacey Moncrieff – National Association of Realtors, vice president, business-to-business communications
- Steve Kleber – National Remodeling Foundation, president
- Fred Miller – Consumer Specialists, president
- Ethan Hagan – One Project Closer, blogger
- Frank Owens – The QUIKRETE® Companies, vice president marketing
- Kathy Granger – Keystone Hardscapes®, director of marketing
- Reeve Haldeman – Custom Building Products®, vice president marketing

Consumer Specialists

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Consumer Specialists is a research and consulting firm specializing in home improvement related industries. With over 30 years of experience in the industry, the firm brings a wealth of knowledge to help understand current conditions, changes that have happened and implications for the future.

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