



# J. Francis Company LLC

## GENERAL CONTRACTING AND REMODELING

1410 High Street • Pittsburgh, PA 15212 • phone: 412.322.6407 • fax: 412.322.6425

### newsletter

## Super Trivia Challenge

### Here's your Chance at a \$20 Gift Card!

Trivia is a fun feature of the newsletter. The first correct answer emailed to [jean@jfcollc.com](mailto:jean@jfcollc.com) will be the proud winner of a \$20 Gift Card of your choice.

**Question:** Memorial Day originated with another name. What is it?

**Answer:**

- a) Decoration Day
- b) Honor Day
- c) Remembrance Day
- d) Soldier's Day

### In this issue...

[Company Update](#)

[Feature Project](#)

[Team Update](#)

[What's New in '09](#)

[Aging In Place Update](#)

[Super Trivia Challenge](#)

[Thanks for the Kind Words](#)

[Remodeling Tips](#)

[Core Values](#)

[What Kind of Work Does](#)

[J.Francis Company Do?](#)

[Referral Rewards Program](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Links](#)

## Thanks for the Kind Words

*"As a newly acquired property, this building posed a unique situation as it was originally a residential house that needed*

## May 2009

### Greetings!

With summer rapidly approaching, now is the time to plan your home improvement/remodeling projects! Interested in learning more about the federal tax credit for energy efficiency for homeowners? Read about it in the Company Update. We love hearing from you!

## Company Update

### **Energy Efficiency Federal Tax Credits Help Homeowners with Home Improvements!**

The energy efficiency federal tax credit in the Economic Recovery Act of 2009 is a maximum of \$1500. The focus of the energy efficiency tax credits is for windows, insulation, skylights, and HVAC of a primary residence. There were zero tax credits for these home improvements in 2008 & only \$500 in 2007. The tax credits are available for home improvements that have been "placed in service" between January 1, 2009 & December 31, 2010. There's still a tremendous amount of interest in remodeling since the housing inventory in our area is running 20-40 years old on average & up. With new home construction down significantly, people are staying in their homes and remodeling.

[Click here for further information](#)

## Feature Project

### Finished View

*updated into office space. From the beginning, J. Francis Company was a pleasure to work with. John McCloskey was exceptional in offering resourceful suggestions that kept us within our budget as well as creative solutions to some of the distinctive problems we faced. Throughout the renovation, John was always just a phone call away and took the time to see that the job progressed as scheduled. The employees working for him were very cooperative and took pride in their work. Anytime I stopped to check on the job, they were always glad to take a minute to walk me through and show me their progress. I would definitely recommend J. Francis Company. Thank you!"*

**Written by the Customer for the Featured Project**

## Aging In Place Update

**Aging in Place means living in one's home independently regardless of age or ability.**

### **How big is Aging in Place?**

- 89% of people 50+ wish to remain in their own homes indefinitely (AARP).
- 75% of remodelers have seen an increase in requests for aging in place work (NAHB).
- 60% of remodelers already perform aging in place work (NAHB).
- Over half of all 55+ households rate their current home a 9 or 10 out of 10 (American Housing Survey).
- The aging population is the number two issue to



**Finished View**



**Before View**

affect the remodeling industry over the next five years, only behind the availability of skilled labor (NAHB).

### What should my home contain if I want to age-in-place?

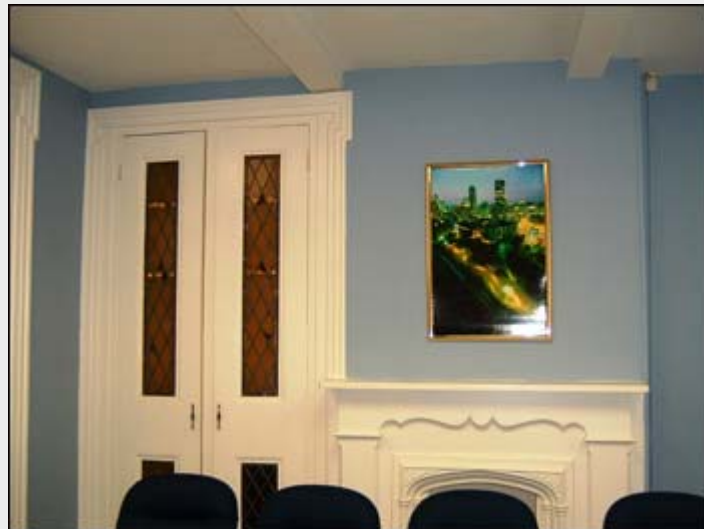
- A master bedroom and bath on the first floor.
- A low or no-threshold entrance to the home with an overhang.
- Lever-style door handles.
- No change in levels on the main floor.
- Bright lighting in all areas, especially places like stairways.
- A low-maintenance exterior.
- Non-slip flooring at the main entryway.
- An open floor plan, especially in the kitchen/dining area.
- Handrails at all steps.

### What are some techniques Certified Aging in Place (CAPS)-trained professionals use?

- Lighting from multiple directions - reduces glare and shadows.
- Light sockets with more than one bulb - redundancy in case one bulb burns out.
- Stacking closets for a future elevator shaft.
- Contrasting colors for depth perception - use a different color counter (or edging around the counter) than the floor, staining the edge of the stairs a darker color than the rest of the steps.
- Convenience shelf at an



**Finished View**



**Before View**

entry way to place your grocery bag while getting your keys.

J. Francis Company can assist you in making your bathroom and kitchen safer. After a careful analysis and assessment of your needs, J. Francis Company's Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist is available to meet with you.

J. Francis Company, LLC would like to help you and your parents or other senior family members live with less worry and stress. J. Francis Company, LLC.

---

## Remodeling Tips

### **Remodeling Green: Promoting Healthy Indoor Air**

One of the most important aspects of building green may be improving the quality of indoor air. What could be more important to your health than the air you breathe? Achieving healthy indoor air depends on a broad approach to renovations and remodeling. In order to optimize an indoor environment, the building needs to be insulated and sealed against moisture and air along with the appropriate heating, cooling and ventilating equipment. Remodeling projects vary in the scope of work and whether they are large enough to address all of these air quality factors. We will look at various aspects of a building that effect the inside air quality.

There are practices and products we offer as an eco-friendly remodeling contractor that can improve indoor air quality. With the customer's



**Finished View**



**Finished View**

agreement, we will use various interior finishes that contain low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or no VOCs at all. The market for low- and no-VOC products is expanding all the time, making it easy to find suitable alternatives to conventional products. We will continue to work with our trade partners and suppliers to offer the best selection of materials and finishes that meet our customer's expectations, from style and durability to enhance your health and comfort.

Here are a few of the ways we deal with VOCs in the businesses and homes we remodel/renovate:

**Paints:** These are the most commonly used examples of low and no-VOC technology. Paints are a prevailing finish product in every house and most businesses, covering the walls and ceilings of every room. They also are completely exposed to the indoor air and the building's occupants. By state and federal regulations, manufacturers have effectively reduced or eliminated VOCs from their formulations while maintaining the durability, application, and color retention properties of the paint.

**Particleboard:** Particleboard has been used for decades in the manufacture of kitchen and bathroom cabinet boxes, as underlayment for countertops and floors, and as backing for wood paneling, to name just a few. However, particleboard (and certain wood composite panels) can emit VOCs from the glues and resins used to make it. We work with our suppliers to identify products and manufacturers that have switched to wood composite



**Before View**



## **University Office Space Remodel**

### **Scope of Work:**

This 100+ year old building was converted from residential to commercial use office space. The building was completed renovated for building code compliance including demolition, new electrical, drywall, finished carpentry, flooring, and painting. The finished result is a charming, welcoming, bright space where the employees enjoy coming to work to be in their office space! The basement was redesigned for use and comfort.

---

panels emitting no or low VOCs or to alternative products, such as solid-wood or non-wood panel products that do not contain such chemicals at all.

**Flooring:** Like paints, various floor finishes are in direct contact with a building's occupants. Carpets and pads, wood flooring, VCT, and the adhesives used for installation have traditionally contained chemicals that emit VOCs. These products have been reformulated without that exposure, resulting in cleaner and healthier indoor air quality.

Windows, doors, and skylights play an important role in any home's appearance and overall performance. In a "green" remodeling project, they are critical elements in a range of integrated design and construction approaches that help reduce a home's energy use and operating costs while increasing indoor air quality.

## Our Core Values

- Caring
- Competence
- Integrity
- Respect
- Timeliness

J. Francis Company, LLC approaches business with our core values as a guide.

## What Kind of Work Does J. Francis Company Do?

Our Typical Remodeling/Renovation Work Includes:

- Additions
- Bathrooms

## Team Update

Ed Bittner: estimator/designer for J. Francis Company, LLC has worked in construction for 16 years. His favorite type of work to do is finish carpentry from a well designed plan using quality materials. "Since joining J. Francis Company, LLC, I embrace a professional level of construction management with an emphasis on customer service." Ed is married to Gina and has a 13 yr old son Christopher, 4 yr old daughter Emily, a dog & a cat. Ed is an avid outdoorsman, enjoying scouting, fishing & sports in his leisure time as well as art & history.

## What's New in '09

### **A Message from J. Francis Company General Manager...**

#### **Customers/Potential Customers Often Ask... "Can I Buy My Own Materials?"**

I am often asked the question, "I can purchase product x for less money than the material allowance you have given me - so can I buy it and have your guys install it?" or "I found it for less on the internet - what gives?" Let's assume product x is a name brand toilet. The answer is "Yes" but what happens if something goes wrong with the product? What happens if when we open the box, the toilet is damaged or we are missing a part? The customer typically does not see or know the "little things" that occur during a remodeling project. The kitchen faucet that comes out of the box with a scratch on it. The toilet that gets installed and leaks, so we take it up and discover a hairline crack in the base. Or the box of tile that has six of ten pieces cracked. We are going to present you with the information to discourage you from supplying your own materials for a remodeling project.



As a professional remodeler, J. Francis Company has established relationships with suppliers. When issues with products occur, all that is needed is a phone call to that supplier. The supplier, wanting to take care of a long-time customer, takes care of the issue with us. The Lead Carpenter stays on the job- site, working, rather than going into panic mode to find a replacement product.

However, if you, the customer have supplied the product, and that product is defective, this could happen. Typically, you are working, or taking care of the kids, or some other priority, when you are notified that the product you supplied (the toilet for instance) is defective in some way. You must

- Basement Remodeling
- Classroom Improvements
- Demolition
- Drywall and Plasterwork
- Electrical
- Finished Carpentry
- Flooring
- Gut and Rehab
- Kitchens
- Mechanicals
- Office Build-Outs
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Roofing
- Rough and Trim Carpentry
- Siding
- Space Reconfigurations
- Tenant Build-Outs
- Windows
- Wood and Metal Framing
- and Much More !!

## Referral Rewards Program

### *Could You Use \$100.00??*

- For every referral you send our way that becomes a customer, you will receive your choice of: a \$100 gift certificate to the store or restaurant of your choice or a \$100 donation to the charity of your choice in your name.
- By referring your friends, clients & co-workers to us for remodeling & renovation projects, you've helped our business grow. Offering these special rewards is our way of saying thanks. To take advantage of our Referral Reward Program, just email to [jean@jfcollc.com](mailto:jean@jfcollc.com) or fax to 412.322.6425 the following contact information: your name &

now drop what you are doing, find the receipt, come get the defective product, take it back to the place of purchase, interact with a sales person who may or may not be qualified or authorized to solve your problem, exchange or purchase a new product, and deliver it back to the house for installation. Perhaps you saved on the product by not paying our markup. Has the cost been worth the trouble?

Here is a different version. We installed the toilet that you supplied. The project gets completed and 6 months down the road, there is a problem. You call us and we come to check out the problem. We find that the toilet is defective in some way. We advise you to get a new toilet and when you have it, we will come back and change it out. You must purchase a new toilet, and once replaced, just forget about taking the defective unit back to the "big box" store. So in reality, you have spent twice the money on the product. It's an inconvenience for you and us that costs both you and us money. If we had "supplied and installed" the toilet, it would have just gotten taken care of. In the end, when JFCo supplies the product, we warranty the material and the labor for one year.

Yes, professional remodelers add mark-up to materials. It will seem that materials will cost more than if you supply them. Yet you receive a team of people who will take responsibility for preventing problems from arising, a team of people who will take responsibility for resolving issues, and your project will move forward with less stress for you.

David Myers  
Vice-President / General Manager

## Company Update

### **Energy Efficiency Federal Tax Credits Help Homeowners with Home Improvements!**

There is specific documentation that the homeowner must have from the manufacturer that states that the particular product they purchased meets the criteria. This is called the "Manufacturer Certification Statement." Not all Energy Star products meet this criterion. A lot of manufacturers are scrambling because they don't have products to meet these requirements. Be very careful of a contractor that tells you (without proof) that the product meets the requirements and that the IRS is not going to check. If the homeowners are audited on the tax credit, they will have to provide the letter for verification that the products met the standards.

In summary, there are two standards put into the requirements for the homeowner's tax credit to be applied that are above & beyond Energy Star:

phone number, the name, address & phone number of the person you are referring. We will follow up on every referral.

## Contact Us

### ***Our Mission Statement...***

*"J. Francis Company, LLC exists to provide our customers with competent general contracting services. We emphasize integrity, respect and timeliness in all our relationships. Our goal is sustained growth and profitability by continually exceeding expectations."*

### **Contact us:**

John McCloskey, President:  
[john@jfcollc.com](mailto:john@jfcollc.com)

Dave Myers, Vice  
President/General Manager:  
[dave@jfcollc.com](mailto:dave@jfcollc.com)

Jean M. Krak, Business  
Development Manager:  
[jean@jfcollc.com](mailto:jean@jfcollc.com)

Ed Bittner, Estimator/Sales:  
[ed@jfcollc.com](mailto:ed@jfcollc.com)

Jeremy Kishlock, Production  
Manager:  
[jeremy@jfcollc.com](mailto:jeremy@jfcollc.com)

Toni Shar, Office  
Manager/Comptroller:  
[toni@jfcollc.com](mailto:toni@jfcollc.com)

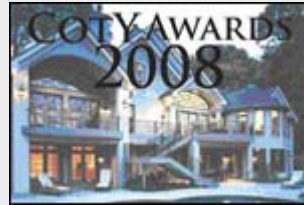
Nicole McCaffrey, Administrative  
Assistant:  
[nicole@jfcollc.com](mailto:nicole@jfcollc.com)

J. Francis Company, LLC  
General Contractor  
1410 High Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15212  
412.322.6407 office  
412.322.6425 fax  
[jfcollc.com](http://jfcollc.com)  
PA 6154

1. the solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) and
2. the U Factor, both need to be .30

Check out the web site with all the details:

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?  
c=products.pr\\_tax\\_credits](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits)



Jean M. Krak  
J. Francis Company, LLC

email: [jean@jfcollc.com](mailto:jean@jfcollc.com)  
phone: 412.322.6407  
web: <http://www.jfcollc.com>

## Links

