

## Expert Tips, News and Happenings from Chicago's Home Improvement Community

COMPILED BY KATHY KIDWELL



Photography by Rich Malec, courtesy of College of DuPage

THE GROUNDBREAKING for Pioneer Prairie. Pictured left to right: COD student Dave Chell, Associate Professor of Architecture Jane Ostergaard, Sarah Brachle of DuPage Habitat for Humanity, Calvin Butler of Commonwealth Edison, Instructor of Architecture Mark Pearson, and COD student Guillermo Lara.

Prairie. A project that began in March 2009, the subdivision is expected to be completed in 2012, allowing hundreds of students to participate in and learn from a case study on green-building techniques, with guidance from the experts at [Commonwealth Edison](#). The class is called Sustainable Design Initiative. To learn more, visit [www.cod.edu](#) or [www.dupagehabitat.org](#).

### College Students Create Affordable Green Homes

The DuPage Habitat for Humanity organization has teamed up with College of DuPage's (COD) architecture and construction-management students to design and build 11 affordable, energy-efficient homes in West Chicago, creating a subdivision called Pioneer

### Expert Q&A

**Q:** I want to repaint my home's interior to create a healthier environment. Which paints should I use?

**A:** A new Illinois law took effect on July 1, 2009, mandating the use of only low-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints in the state. Essentially, the intent of this regulation is to eliminate the use of paints with unhealthy components in order to improve indoor-air quality. This means people who definitely prefer low-VOC paints should be sure to hire a qualified painter that specifically uses low- or no-VOC paints. If you have a specific concern, contact one of the major paint companies (Sherwin-Williams, Benjamin Moore or Pittsburgh Paints) to find out what exactly to look for on the paint-can label to ensure it has low or no VOCs.



—Lenore Weiss Baigelman, AIA, LEED AP, Full Circle Architects LLC, Northbrook

### Chicago Home Improvement Hosts Speed Networking Event

Home-improvement professionals of all kinds are invited to Ferguson in Downers Grove the evening of Wednesday, Jan. 13 for drinks, hors d'oeuvres and good company as Sherry Schultz, publisher of *Chicago Home Improvement* magazine, hosts an industry networking event. The event will allow all types of home-improvement pros—from landscapers to interior designers, remodelers, gutter installers, window and door experts and more—to meet with each other for a few minutes at a time and discuss how they can help build business for themselves and one another. The "speed" format will maximize time and efficiency, making the most out of the evening. To RSVP for the event, contact Sherry Schultz by calling (630) 801-7788 or e-mailing [sschultz@chihomeimprovement.com](mailto:sschultz@chihomeimprovement.com). 

Editorial Resources begin on page 20.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING This Month

**Sunday, Jan. 3**  
Winter Farmers' Market  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Chicago Botanic Garden  
1000 Lake Cook Road  
Glencoe, IL 60022  
(847) 835-5440  
[www.chicagobotanic.org](http://www.chicagobotanic.org)

**Friday-Sunday, Jan. 15-17**  
The Home Building and Remodeling Expo  
4-9 p.m. Fri.; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun.  
The Lake County Fairgrounds  
1060 Peterson Road  
Grayslake, IL 60030  
(630) 915-2078  
[www.homeshowevent.com](http://www.homeshowevent.com)

**Friday-Sunday, Jan. 22-24**  
The Hoffman Estates Home Improvement & Remodeling Expo  
4-9 p.m. Fri.; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun.  
Prairie Stone Sports and Wellness Center  
5050 Sedge Blvd.  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192  
(630) 915-2078  
[www.homeshowevent.com](http://www.homeshowevent.com)

**Friday-Sunday, Jan. 29-31**  
The Home Improvement Showcase Expo  
5-9 p.m. Fri.; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun.  
Libertyville Sports Complex  
1950 N. Highway 45  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
(630) 953-2500  
[www.freehomeshow.com](http://www.freehomeshow.com)