

DESIGN ∞ BUILD MAGAZINE

Issue no. 1



2020
TRENDS

Home
Has New
Meaning
in 2020

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Design Build Magazine
Issue 1

Founded by,
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Note from the Builder

MATTHEW BOWE

Having celebrated our 15th anniversary as a Design Build company this Spring, I have found myself looking back on how far we have come, what it has taken to get here, and the exciting direction we are headed.

The truth is that I started this company much longer than 15 years ago. It began as a childhood dream, kindled by the excitement I experienced as my parents, through hard work and sacrifice, improved and expanded our family home which they still live in today. Those four walls on a quiet street on Long Island contained everything that was important to me in the world, and all the memories made there, both joyful and heartbreaking, made me who I am today.

When I became a builder, I was fueled by a desire to design and build spaces that allow our clients to create that same kind of sanctuary for their own families, and our company continues to fulfill that mission today.

As an extension of that mission, we have expanded our commitment to service during this 15th Anniversary year by launching our “15 for 15” campaign. This campaign of giving is intended to support organizations that address instances of housing instability, food insecurity and domestic violence and

abuse. These are critical needs which we feel are inextricably tied to creating the “Home” environment that we believe every person has a right to experience.

This inaugural magazine speaks to what is trending in 2020, but I hope that many of these trends are here to stay. There is a current of joy that feeds the spirit of design today – what makes you truly happy, what makes you and your family unique, and what makes it possible for you to spend more time doing the things you love. The focus is on simplifying your world so that you can prioritize the things that are most important.

Now, as a result of this unprecedented season of uncertainty and isolation, it seems that people have realized the importance of cultivating a home that feeds the soul and **enriches, rather than hinders, a life of substance and joy.**

Thanks to all our clients, vendors, friends, family, and neighbors. Each year that we continue to build and improve homes in this community is a blessing and we could not be more grateful.

Matt



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15 Years Strong



Sometimes the answer to that ubiquitous childhood question: “What do you want to do when you grow up?” comes sooner rather than later. In Matt Bowe’s case, he knew as a child that building was going to be a huge part of his life.

The son of Irish immigrants, he watched his parents’ hard work and sacrifice make it possible for his childhood home to grow and adapt to his family’s needs. Each transformation brought in a crew of talented craftsmen from whom he learned the basics of what would be his lifelong trade.

All of it appealed to Matt and planted the seed that grew into his desire to create for other families the same magical experience and the same quality of life improvements that had so strongly affected him as a boy. The path was set which would eventually lead him to form Matthew Bowe Design Build.

Matt’s 30 years of homebuilding experience began with a Building Construction Technology degree from Purdue University. As his professional experience grew, so did the desire to establish his own firm on his own terms.

Over the last 15 years in Loudoun County, his commitment to our community has reached far beyond the expanding business opportunities. Matt’s dedication to the physical and spiritual health of his community has given root to a unique philosophy of homebuilding that permeates everything he does: What can we do to make a real difference? Is there a way to do what has been done, better?

The direct result of the care and dedication of these craftsmen brought to life the vision his parents had of a home that could meet the evolving needs of their family.



“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.”



To this end, he is deeply involved in many charitable organizations whose missions he values as integral to a thriving community:

“I am a soldier on the ground contributing what I can. My involvement is a spiritual response that flows from a recognition of the immense blessings in my life,” Matt says. “Really, I am doubly blessed in that I get to build awesome, high-end projects for clients who ask us to deliver their dream home, and through my charitable pursuits experience life-changing projects that serve those in need.”

His philanthropic efforts have gone hand-in-hand with the rapid expansion of his business. From the first residential projects undertaken under the banner of Matthew Bowe Design Build, relationships were forged over carefully designed plans for a client’s new home or a remodel in one of the historic properties in the heart of Loudoun County.

Eventually his unique design philosophy and his strong commitment to integrity and follow-through led to larger commercial projects such as the expansion of the Goodstone Inn, in Middleburg, Virginia, a project that was the epitome of the rigorous project planning and management that characterizes the work of Matthew Bowe Design Build.

His professionalism, along with the cultivation of life-long relationships have enabled Matthew Bowe Design Build to grow into one of the most trusted and respected building and construction companies in the area. None of this would have been possible without that incalculable investment in human relationships that are the foundation of Matt’s business.

As a community, we only grow and succeed when we serve our neighbors. Matthew Bowe Design Build is looking to the future with hope and optimism and many more years of walking county roads together.





Home Has New Meaning in 2020

BY GLORIA ROSE

I think that we can all agree that “Home” has a new meaning in 2020. No longer is it just a place to crash at night only to leave for work again in the mornings, interspersed with occasional weekend cook-outs. We are living in and utilizing every corner of our space and figuring out how to make it work best for us because we know that how we live in our home matters.

The trend-outlook for 2020 predicted a continued shift away from traditional floorplans with boxlike layouts and separate rooms with designated functions towards sleek, simple, and modern open floorplans with vaulted ceilings and wide hallways. As everyone knows, trends in home design are ever evolving.

Now, as we are taking Zoom calls from the kitchen island, our bedrooms, or even the bathrooms, we have realized that while we desire a bright, airy, open feel in a floorplan, we also require a house that allows for separation of space and activity. It has become necessary for the kids to have a quiet room to focus and finish homework while one parent videoconferences for work and the other makes dinner. For many years, the kitchen has been the multipurpose backbone of the house, at once offering a place to

prepare food, to serve food, to gather with friends and family, and more. It's time to take a page out of the multi-functional book and apply it to the rest of the home. A Home Office can become a Homework Room can become a place to host Family Movie Night depending on the time of day!

Trends continue with higher ceilings, dramatic light fixtures that are more like pieces of art, and modern takes on decorative touches like painted coffered ceilings with contrasting trim. Clean, classic, comfortable-but-still edgy...these are the driving forces behind design in 2020. As the floorplan becomes more functional, it is vital that the decorative details define the aesthetic. A pop of artsy tile—well placed—may become an integral part of the house's personality.

2020 is likely to see the continuing desire for the finishes and styles we all seem to appreciate these days. Real is in—real natural light with a resurgence in skylights in the main house, hallways and bathrooms, real fibers to remind us of our planet, real green plants to improve our air quality and bear the occasional kaffir lime, and really good composites to confirm our desires around sustainability and minimal maintenance.



The time we have spent at home since March 2020 has given many of us an opportunity to accomplish the DIY projects that have been backlogging for years. Homeowners are making their spaces work for their new, more confined lifestyle by opening up closets, building shelves in pantries, rearranging furniture, and knocking down walls. They are also improving the aesthetics of their environment by using raw edge wood, unfussy window treatments and natural wood (or easy to clean vinyl plank) flooring. Small updates can have a huge impact regardless the size of the house or the room and 2020 will continue to compel us to study our HGTV!

For those fortunate to have a yard or a patio or land, outdoor space can be put to precious use with potted herbs, tomato cages, or even a raised bed victory garden. The farm-to-table movement has been adapted in the home and entrepreneurial new homesteaders are serving their families yard-to-table spring salads. Money that may have been set aside for an escape to the beach is now being reallocated to create an outdoor living retreat complete with new patio set and firepit where the family can step out to get fresh air and enjoy the evenings.



The trend of Smart Connectivity throughout the house is no longer simply desired, but actually required; whether urban, suburban or country. The internet is the lifeblood that allows an income to be produced and a school quiz to be taken at the same time. It brings to us our kids' teachers, our board meetings, our Yoga instructors and spin coaches, not to mention our favorite shows and movies and social media outlets that allow us to connect with friends and family that we aren't able to see in person. We will continue to see more wall space and counter space adapted to allow viewing and interacting with the internet throughout the house so that we can connect on demand.

At the root of the 2020 design trends is a home that is tailored to all the unique functions of an individual family. When the Real Estate market fell off the cliff in 2008, many people were left reeling from the fact that their “nest egg” was vastly diminished. There were lost jobs, housing foreclosures, and a surplus of fear about how it would ever be possible to recover. Families found themselves downsizing to smaller spaces and “making-do” with what they had. We found acceptance, and rebuilding, and ultimately recovery.

Now, in the face of a pandemic, the response has been somewhat different. While many are feeling the effects financially, the focus is not on what we are being forced to give up, but rather what we have gained. We have retreated to our homes, the same ones we downsized to twelve years ago, and we have built our lives back up between those walls. We are baking banana bread, rolling out our yoga mats, adopting new four-legged friends, and building tent-forts with our kids. Our homes have become our schools, our boardrooms, our restaurants, our refuge. We are thankful for the houses that are serving as our sanctuaries, and we are aware of how lucky we are to have a roof over our heads. We may not like our current circumstances but, like the trends in home design, we are ever evolving to meet our individual desires and adapt to our collective needs.



Construction Financing in the Wake of the 2020 Pandemic: KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

BY MARK FERGUSON

As the financial markets and mortgage industry continue to maneuver in the wake of 2020's unanticipated pandemic, homeowners or potential homebuyers that are in the market for a construction loan may be feeling uncertain about the availability of financing. We'd like to offer a little insight as to what is happening around the country compared to right here in Northern Virginia, and how it affects the lending market (in a good way!) for our area.

Nationally, many of the larger national banks are no longer providing construction financing to consumers, due primarily to markets that have "shelter in place" orders where construction is not considered an essential business. As such, if active projects stall, or new projects can't get underway, then lending halts. Lending institutions rely on the performance of these loans and construction to complete in order to provide loans.

In contrast, Loudoun County considers construction to be essential to its economy and so we are seeing new opportunities for construction and renovation every day. Many of the local area's custom home projects are financed by smaller community lenders and banks like MVB, whose sole focus is providing financing solutions for their immediate service area. By lending in a concentrated area, a local construction loan provider has both a pulse on the trends of the market and a greater likelihood of providing financial solutions catered to the specific needs of the clients they intend to serve.

With home resale inventory lower than normal in a spring market, many homeowners in Loudoun are considering staying in place and building new or renovating their current home. As such, it is critical that there are resources for financing. We feel confident that families that are considering building a new home or renovating their existing

one should feel secure about their ability to do so and obtain financing for the project.

What's your next step? Consult an expert. Custom construction requires custom financing solutions, so make sure you talk to a construction lender, not just a lender who offers construction financing. What's the difference? Many of the national lenders who offer construction loans have guidelines "inside the box," which simply means the inability to structure options to mirror the needs of the client. Every construction project is different which often requires some flexibility as it relates to loan to value, down payment, draw schedules, etc. Your financial partner, and particularly their expertise in construction financing, is just as important as your builder.



All it takes is a helping hand

Tree of Life Ministries has a simple Purpose – 'to reach out to the poor and needy in our community with the love of Jesus Christ.' Impacting 20,000 annually and supported by the local Christian church network, our activity is structured around 5 Branches.



Extending a **HAND UP** and not a **HANDOUT**
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This Old House Made New



For some people, the realization of the American Dream means crossing the threshold of a newly constructed four-bedroom home in a new, neatly planned community. But if we have learned anything from HGTV shows like “Property Brothers” and “Fixer Upper,” it’s that your future dream home might actually be a diamond in the rough. It might be the mid-century ranch with a cramped floorplan that’s located on a gorgeous lot in your favorite part of town. It might be a Civil War-era farmhouse with a chippy blue linoleum floor and a cooking hearth that’s just begging to be restored. It might even be your current home, the one that drives you crazy, but you can’t imagine leaving because you’ve already made friends with the neighbors, and your vegetable garden is finally producing!



Remodeling either your current home or a new-to-you older home is a great option for those who want to maintain charm without sacrificing contemporary style and conveniences. It is an opportunity to overhaul the space to improve functionality while accentuating the unique features of a well-loved home. In many cases, remodeling a few essential spaces can make such a drastic difference that you could be living a dream-home life far sooner than you ever expected.



THERE IS A RIGHT WAY TO RENOVATE

Busy schedules mean that active professionals don’t want to undertake extensive DIY projects, and rightfully so. You have likely heard or experienced that DIY renovations frequently mean living amongst chaos and lingering half-done projects, which can feel overwhelming and insurmountable. If you would rather spend your Saturdays sipping Virginia wine with your friends than stuck in an endless loop of Home Improvement Store, YouTube, Oops, I Forgot Something, Repeat, than hiring a team of professionals to redesign and construct your home is the right way to renovate for you.

Custom remodeling offers many of the benefits of new construction, like personalized and functional space and tasteful style upgrades, while preserving that which makes each home unique. Deciding to remodel your current home or house-hunting for a home in need of renovation can help you to avoid settling for a new home that lacks character, charm, and the amenities of your desired location.

If you are looking to remodel a home that you currently live in, you have the added benefit of knowing exactly what works for you and your family and what doesn’t so that you can target your design to improve the areas that will make the biggest difference in your quality of life. If you are planning to purchase a home in need of remodeling, a team of design experts is even more essential to help you identify a house’s “trouble areas” and offer experience-based solutions.

YOUR DREAM IS POSSIBLE NOW

The reality is that extensive remodeling is complicated. There are so many moving parts and pieces to consider that you may be inclined to avoid the whole mess and “learn to live with it.” But we want you to love your home! If you have a vision in mind but aren’t sure exactly how to bring it to life, a team of professionals is absolutely necessary to help you identify:

- What you love about your current home or location
- How to redesign the space within the confines of an existing home
- Which alterations are going to make the biggest difference for your family
- The stylish finishes that suit your personality

At Matthew Bowe Design Build, we design to your taste and explore every product selection, detail, and finish to ensure that you get everything you want in your home while relieving you of the burden of figuring out how to accomplish it all. Ultimately, hiring a professional home builder and design team reduces the stress that busy professionals and families associate with major renovations while providing confidence that the job will be completed the first time and correctly.

The bottom line? Don’t be afraid of a little fixer-upper! We’d love to do the dirty work so that you can get into a space you truly love as soon as possible.



Downsizing on the Path to Your Dreams



The practice of minimalism is getting a lot of attention lately, but many of our clients may feel overwhelmed by thinking about what they might have to give up in order to achieve a minimalist home and lifestyle. Instead, we prefer to think of the goal as simplifying, and we encourage our clients to start by identifying the items and areas of their home they can't live without.

Perhaps surprisingly, downsizing, or simplifying, doesn't have to mean making drastic cuts to your square footage or sacrificing lifestyle. On the contrary, downsizing is about making thoughtful decisions to give yourself more freedom and less clutter, while holding onto the things you value most.



SIMPLIFYING FOR A BETTER LIFE

Many people who have lived in, or are currently living in, one of the beautiful-but-enormous homes that can be found in the Northern Virginia area, have discovered that the extra space doesn't always mean extra functionality, extra convenience, or extra enjoyment. They may find themselves cleaning and maintaining rooms that they don't use, clattering around spaces that are too large, and feeling like the house is just "too much."

Downsizing, or maybe more accurately "right-sizing," is about trimming the excesses and getting down to the essentials. If you never find yourself sitting in your formal living room, maybe your "right-size" house doesn't need one. Instead, the perfect house for you might have a screened porch for sipping your morning coffee and enjoying the Virginia horse-country views. Or perhaps you don't feel cozy in a two-story vaulted great room. That second-floor space could become a guest room so that your grandkids can come visit! This process is about identifying what you need to live an enriched life in a space you love.

PURPOSEFUL DESIGN

A knowledgeable and experienced team of design and construction professionals is crucial at every stage of the process to ensure you have the perfect mix of function, luxury, and charm. Your team can help you identify your priorities by starting with your must-haves and then adding your dream-home features to create a plan that is tailored to maximize your enjoyment and minimize wasted space.

In the end, you can be sure that a Matthew Bowe Design Build house is one in which every square foot has been purposefully crafted around your lifestyle so that when you cross that threshold, you feel right at home.



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The Beauty is *in the Details*



2020 TRENDS FOR HOMEOWNERS



When our clients come to us to build a new home or remodel an existing house, they ultimately want well-appointed rooms that suit their lifestyle while creating an environment that feels like home. The tricky part is that the details that make a house stylish and functional are unique for each person. While a home that suits a growing family will account for the moving pieces of their lives, an empty nester's dream home typically looks and functions much differently. Regardless of the exterior charm - whether it is Colonial, Craftsman, Mid-Century, or Contemporary - every detail of the design must suit your needs without sacrificing your taste.

Working with a team of professionals can help you narrow in on your must-haves and how the finishes and materials available today and the current design trends can help you to live better in your space and create an environment that is an extension of you.



MINIMAL MAINTENANCE

The homeowners of 2020 do not want to spend their weekends struggling to maintain their home and property. They are conscious of the maintenance required for each of the materials they select in their homes. An experienced design-build team is aware of the latest and greatest options available to clients - like the new iterations of composite decking that look more like real wood but never have to be stained and have a 30 year warranty, or gutter systems that virtually clean themselves (link to Nordic Steel video). In 2020 and beyond we are going to continue to see homeowners electing to install materials that make their lives easier on a day-to-day basis.



GREEN LIVING

Speaking of conscious consumers, the eco-conscious home is continuing to gain traction. Green living can be tough to identify, however, since it may look different to each homeowner. Some homeowners are looking to minimize the chemicals and improve the air-quality in their home, so we are seeing more manufacturers offer low- or no-VOC products to meet those needs. Some homeowners are focused on sustainable resources and minimal waste, so material manufacturers are finding ways to reuse and recycle. Still other homeowners are looking to increase energy efficiency in order to decrease both their carbon footprint and their electric bill! These clients are looking for things like solar power, air-tight insulation, and highly HVAC systems. Overall, the options to "go green" in 2020 are more available than ever, but many of the most important aspects are hidden "behind the scenes" of construction, so it's important to ask your builder what kind of materials they are using and what benefits they offer.

CONNECTIVITY

By this point in 2020 (or in the last 5 years for that matter!), nearly everyone is aware of smart home technology like Alexa or Google Home being able to play music or change channels on command. But did you know that, with the right lights installed in your home, you can actually dim the room and change the color temperature to a cozy warm glow for the evening? How about setting it to happen automatically every night at sunset? You can also preheat your oven from the couch or check how much milk is left in the fridge while you are at the grocery store. Locked out of the house? How about a deadbolt that can be opened with your phone. Messy hands while cooking? You might be interested in an automatic faucet. These are the details that make a home truly special and allow homeowners to achieve the ultimate level of customization.

WHY THE DETAILS MATTER

People come to Matthew Bowe Design Build so that they don't have to sacrifice what they really want for a choice between 2-3 tolerable (if unremarkable) options. We work with homeowners from the very beginning stages to prioritize their needs and ideal finishes in order to develop a plan and solution that checks all the boxes. The beauty is in the details because the details make the difference between a house you live in and a home you love.



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FROM LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

Article by Melinda Gipson
Photography by Alex Erkiletian

It Takes a Villa

WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS LOUDOUN’S AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

If you’re a longtime resident of Purcellville, you “get” our little headline pun. But if not, the next time you’re driving from Round Hill to Purcellville on the East Loudoun Street bypass, cast a glance northward. You can’t miss the iconic sign announcing the Weona Villa motel. The 7-acre erstwhile motel property has been vacant for a dozen years and now sports a home with a giant blue tarp covering a hole in the roof and eight abandoned motel rooms.

Clearly, beauty is in the eye of the beholder—or should we say, of the “visionary.” As has been widely reported, Purcellville-based Tree of Life Ministries Executive Director Paul Smith looked at the site and saw in it a means for addressing the shortfall of affordable housing for the disabled and elderly struggling to stay in Loudoun County as home prices rise. Tree of Life serves this population already in a number of ways, reaching out to the needy with food, life-skills training, shelter, healthcare and other relief as a Christian ministry.

“Because we work with up to 20,000 annually, some of whom are seniors on a fixed income and the disabled, we know the heartache that they face in trying to find housing. We’re passionate about trying to help meet that need,” Paul says. It takes 28 separate ministries, 33 affiliated

Christian churches and more than 500 active volunteers to collectively meet these needs, which is why “community” is one of the ministry’s core values.

“We want to be collaborative,” in devising a solution to the problem, he explains. Which is how Matthew Bowe (MatthewBoweDesignBuild.com), a builder whose business typically consists of designing and building dream homes for wealthy residents of Loudoun County, finds himself standing out in a field of dreams with Paul under a rusty old sign in Round Hill. Paul says he reached out to

Matt to assemble a team to help coordinate design, permitting and construction of the housing the ministry hopes to build on the acreage, which it has optioned to buy. Why Matt? “He has a stellar reputation for building homes in Loudoun, and he has compassion for people in need,” Paul says. “What we hope to build together is something that is sympathetic to the Loudoun landscape. The only difference is that ours will be smaller than his typical client can afford.”

By smaller, the team means 900- to 1,000-squarefoot cottage homes built in clusters of six around courtyards. Each would have a front porch facing its own smaller community of homes, and everyone would be able to meet together at the renovated main house for community gatherings.

With characteristic enthusiasm, Paul is already talking about organizing teams of schoolchildren or scout troops to craft a community garden to supply fresh produce to the residents and of using the community center for for the elderly and disabled adults to meet together.

“I jumped at the chance to create a small community and meet a housing need that isn’t being met,” Matt says. Such initiative is “trademark Matt,” says Therese Cashen, executive director of Loudoun Habitat for Humanity. “He brings to our board an understanding of home construction, even though he builds totally different houses than we do. He knows the zoning and permitting process and brings all that expertise to our team as well.”

And, she adds, “He’s a man of very deep faith. I think some of Matt’s connection to wanting to give back is because of his faith.” Matt’s willingness to “roll up his sleeves and do something,” has helped Habitat expand the Home Repair program to support disabled veterans and the elderly stay in homes that are sometimes as costly to maintain as to own. Therese says this broader approach has



helped the organization widen its impact. For example, the county recently asked Habitat for assistance to provide a home for a resident of Howardsville who has no water or indoor plumbing. Habitat is partnering with Loudoun County to build a home for this individual and connect another existing home to water and plumbing.

“Water and indoor plumbing are critical to safe and healthy living, and no one in Loudoun County should be without these,” she says. Matt accompanied Therese to help evaluate the situation and immediately launched an effort to explore how Habitat could help.

“The scope of this project isn’t typical,” Therese says, “but the organization’s goal is to grow from helping to provide just one or two homes per year to 20 per year by 2025. That will take millions of dollars and a lot of creativity!” Inevitably, a search for solutions always comes back to the question of who exactly benefits from more affordable housing.

“Some of the people who could be occupying such housing could be our young adult children that are just fresh out of school or people with careers that serve the community but can’t afford to live in it,” Matt says. “Our teachers, law enforcement and fire personnel—they all live out in West Virginia. That seems a shame to me.” The opportunity to live and work in the same place you send your kids to school—“that’s real community,” Matt says. Belief in a secure and stable home life as a foundation for a healthy society is an idea integral to Matt’s own upbringing. A first-generation Irish American, he watched his parents work hard, buy a home, then add onto it as their family grew.

“Our house was full of family; it was full of love. I know I benefited greatly from that stability, and I like doing that for others.” Naturally, he bristles at the notion that he is doing anything special. “I am a soldier on the ground contributing what I can. My involvement is a spiritual response that flows from a recognition of the immense blessings in my life,” Matt says. “Really, I am doubly blessed in that I get to build awesome high-end projects for affluent clients who ask us to deliver their dream home, and I also get to be involved in and experience these life-changing projects that serve those in need.”

What’s next? On Oct. 10, just as we went to press, Round Hill planned to hold a public hearing to help the council decide whether to amend its own comprehensive plan to extend its utility service area for assisted living facilities or other identified housing gaps, such as senior and workforce housing. “Our particular desires are attracting an assisted living facility or creative options for senior or workforce housing,” says Scott Ramsey, Round Hill’s mayor. “We do not want more townhomes or additional traditional single-family residential. Those options already are well-supplied locally.” Amending its plan wouldn’t mean automatically extending utilities to the Weona Villa parcel but would let the town approve extensions on a case-by-case basis.



If the Weona Villa project were approved, it would then submit plans for approval by the county board of supervisors, a year-long process. Construction could begin in the spring of 2021 in phases, starting with renovation on the existing structures. So, as we said, it takes a “Villa.” Opportunities to serve abound. New volunteers for Tree of Life should attend the group’s next Volunteer Introduction Program training on Nov. 14 at the Tree of Life Center, 210 N. 21st St., Unit D, in Purcellville, perhaps to experience the ministry’s Thanksgiving meal for 200 at St. Paul’s Church in Purcellville. And, finally, you can sign up to receive weekly updates on Habitat’s local construction projects at [LoudounHabitat.org/News](https://www.loudounhabitat.org/News).



1. Paul and volunteers at food pantry
2. Habitat provides accessibility
3. Tree of Life renovation project

4. Raising money outside Loudoun Habitat ReStore
5. Habitat brings another family home.
8. One of Habitat’s 50 local homeowners

7. Another Habitat homeowner
8. Loudoun Habitat renovates for a disabled vet



2020 Trends



KITCHEN

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EXTERIORS

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Light Metal.
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Out With the Old, In With the *New*

BY TODD JURKOWSKI

Building the right deck begins with choosing the right materials. In this article, we dive into the advantages of composite decking vs wood—and why this wood alternative is leaving natural wood in the dust.

Most homeowners’ first thought when building a deck is to start with wood, which has historically dominated the decking market due to its comparatively low price point and accessibility.

This has changed in recent years. In the Northeast United States, for example, a full 50% of decking is now made of composite materials, including capped composite (and capped polymer) decking. This means half of outdoor living spaces in the region are constructed with composite or cellular PVC boards that can stand up to weathering and need little maintenance. This is true not only in the Northeast; in the West, 40% of the decking market falls to the alternative wood segment.

Even if you don’t live in the Northeastern or Western United States, this move away from traditional-natural wood is relevant. Composite decking boasts enduring use and a premium, natural wood-visual that won’t warp, rot, or weather. In the showdown of composite decking vs wood, innovative wood alternatives are winning in regions across the U.S.

THE KNOCK ON WOOD

When comparing composite decking vs wood, durability is one of the biggest differences. The main problem with natural wood is its staying power — or lack thereof. To maintain the boards’ shape and appearance, pressure-treated wood decks require routine maintenance. That maintenance involves regular cleaning, staining, sealing, and even replacing warped and/or weathered boards. That kind of upkeep is not only costly but laborious, often taking away from family and relaxation time. By using innovative technology, composite decking delivers a capped composite board that won’t splinter, crack, rot, or warp, and is always backed by industry-leading warranties.

Traditional wood decks need to be maintained at least every three years and replaced every 10 to 15 years — a labor-intensive (and costly) process. Additional maintenance on a traditional wood deck includes periodic power-washing and staining. When it comes to durability, wood just doesn’t compare to composite decking. Composite deck boards never need sanding, staining, or sealing to maintain their vibrant color. For the removal of dirt, dust, or pollen, composite decks only require spot treatment or a light washing.

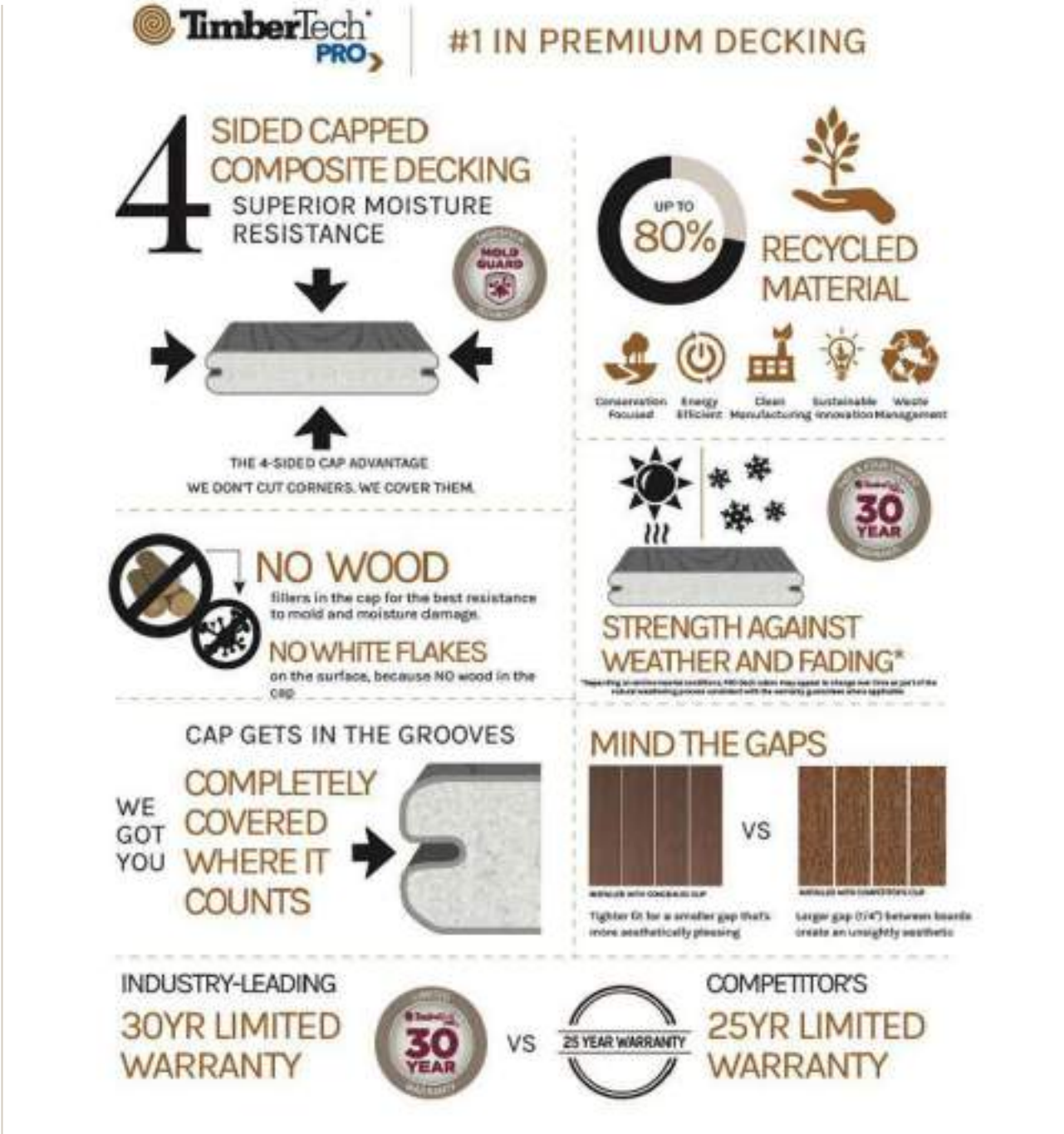
Bottom line: In the long run, pressure-treated wood decks mean more time, money, and attention.

WHAT ARE CAPPED COMPOSITE BOARDS?

TimberTech’s capped composite decking is made of up to 80% recycled material. The core is a mixed blend of wood fibers and then coated with a protective cap that increases durability and protects against weathering.

When it comes to composite decking vs wood, composite decking showcases much lower long-term costs thanks to its low maintenance and longevity. In terms of an aesthetic showdown, composite decking vs wood translates to impressive results: composite decking offers color-blended collections and elegant wire-brushed finishes for the naturally nuanced look of real wood, as well as monochromatic boards for those who like painted wood-look finishes. From a variety of colors and finishes to varied grain patterns, composite decking captures the natural nuance of wood, without the expensive upkeep.

Check out this breakdown of just some of the many benefits of the TimberTech PRO composite decking collection.





CAPPED COMPOSITE DECKING VS. WOOD: NO CONTEST

Innovative composite decking offers the right elements for enduring beauty and minimal upkeep because you want to spend time outdoors enjoying your deck, not maintaining it. Capped composite and capped polymer deck boards are much less susceptible to the erosion, bleaching, and overall degeneration that traditional wood undergoes when exposed to the great outdoors. Protective polymer capping and innovative materials science combine to keep colors vibrant, moisture out, and structural integrity intact.



COMPOSITE DECKING BENEFITS TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Unlike wood, capped composite and capped polymer boards leverage high-performance recycled materials and innovative technology for protection. Here are some additional ways composite decking manufacturers like TimberTech help keep the planet as beautiful as your outdoor living space:

- Homeowners who choose composite decking over wood, have helped save more than 1 million trees since 2015.
- Approximately 290 million pounds of waste and scrap were diverted from landfills in 2019.
- Composite decking construction reuses 98% of its internal scrap.
- Approximately 54% of all extruded materials are expected to be from recycled material in 2020, up from approximately 44% in 2019.

Coast to coast, more and more homeowners are recognizing the benefits of composite decking over traditional wood. Some outdoor living enthusiasts are drawn to the low maintenance and high value of composite decking; for others, the enduring beauty of the color-rich boards wins them over. When it comes to deciding on the right building material for your backyard escape, composite decking products offer serious advantages – making it hard for traditional wood and other wood alternative products to compete.

BETTER TECH, BETTER DECK™

CAPPED POLYMER DECKING

4-SIDED CAPPED COMPOSITE DECKING

3-SIDED CAPPED COMPOSITE DECKING

Design and technology are at the core of everything we do at TimberTech. We sustainably make our low-maintenance, eco-friendly products better, stronger, smarter, and more beautiful so you have the options to suit your unique style. Choose from a wide variety of colors, wood grains, and widths to create unique designs that impress — all backed by the industry’s best warranties. Imagine the possibilities at [TimberTech.com](https://www.timbertech.com).

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610 East Main Street Purcellville, Virginia 20132