

# My House Design/Build a one-stop-shop for all your renovation needs

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“It was very important to this couple that the newly designed home work not just for themselves but work when the kids and grandkids come over, which they do all the time. This is a close-knit family.”

First the team upgraded the plant. The original heating system was electric, which was changed over to forced air along with a heat pump. This allowed the family to have heat and air conditioning efficiently at low cost. Energy-efficient gas fireplaces were installed and a lot of care was taken to include build-green concepts into the home.

The ceiling was insulated from the top by taking off the existing roof, insulated using foam which created a higher R value, and then a new roof was installed. This kept the interior cedar ceiling, which first attracted the home owners to the house, intact. Removing the roof allowed the team to install pot lighting, which had a huge impact on the finished space.

“We changed all the windows and doors; they are all high-efficiency, EnergyStar rated. All the windows have a type of glass which keeps the heat inside in the winter and the heat out in the summer,” Huguét says. “We added energy-efficient skylights to add more light. Because we took everything down to the studs, we were able to insulate all the walls and insulate the crawlspace. The hot water is an on-demand system which is also very efficient.”

An addition was added to the front of the house to give more space to the great room and the ability to create a covered entrance-way but care was taken to make it seamless. This addition is only six feet long but really made a difference to both the great room and the look of the exterior.

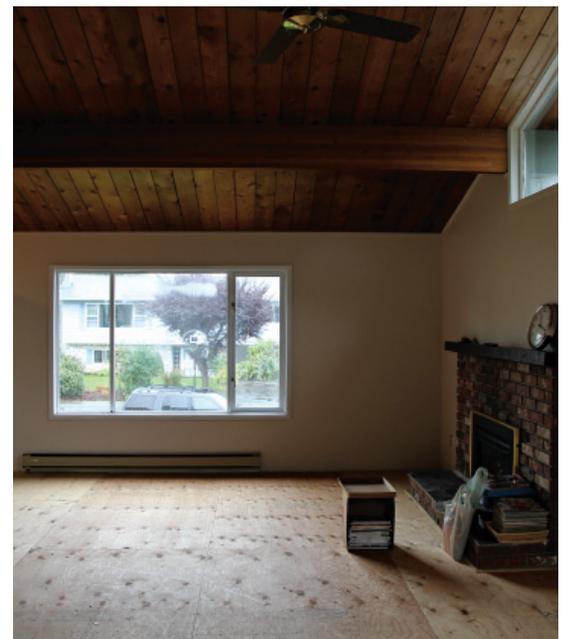
There are three bedrooms upstairs; the

house is a split level, with an en-suite for the master and a walk-in closet. Downstairs there is a room which could be a bedroom but is used as a hair salon, a laundry room and another full bathroom. The gem of the downstairs is a wonderful family room/media room with a fireplace, a library area and a big television.

“Before we start any renovation, including this one, we do a full energy audit to show the homeowner where they are losing energy,” says Huguét. “Another reason is we want the homeowners to qualify for both federal and provincial grants. Once the renovation is complete we do another audit which will show the difference in efficiency. This client received \$3,000 in grant incentives.”

My House Design is pretty well one-stop-shopping; 85 per cent of every project is done in-house from design to permits to build to interior design. There is a great advantage to this, as all of the colleagues are constantly in touch with each other regarding ordering materials, scheduling and the multitude of details which go into what is a complicated process. There are no delays waiting for an outside trade to complete their part of the build.

The before and after photos show what an amazing home was created for this wonderful family; a home they will certainly enjoy for many years to come.



**A Delta home got an incredible upgrade from the people at My House Design/Build. Changes include energy-efficient gas fireplaces and pot lights in the cedar ceiling.**

*Submitted photos. After photos by Keith Henderson*



# Furnace safety important

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with his brother in A.D.W. Mainland Heat & Air Conditioning, is an expert on heating and cooling. Twenty-seven years of experience means there is not a lot Williams doesn't know.

The first step depends on how old your furnace is. If it's less than 10 years old, “(you) can take a chance and turn the furnace on because they have a lot of the newer technology and they don't use much service,” Williams says. “If the furnace is over 10 years old (you) should get a licensed gas fitter to come in for a full service check.”

He says they should check several things before giving you the go-ahead.

“They should check the heat exchanger, the motor, the amperage draw, a clocking to make sure it's burning correctly and they should test with a monometer to see if the pressure going to the burner is correct,” Williams says. “The biggest thing is to check for cracks in the heat exchanger because over time metal expands and contracts with heat and eventually it breaks.”

The biggest problem with a cracked heat

exchanger is that it can release carbon monoxide into the house.

“I would say out of twenty furnaces over 20 years old, five of them will have cracks,” Williams says. “If your family suffers from chronic flu-like symptoms or constant tiredness while at home and they feel better when they are away from the home, check the carbon monoxide levels in the home immediately; your family may be being poisoned.”

Williams also says a furnace over 20 years old is only 50 per cent efficient. One has to think about replacing the unit if \$50 out of every \$100 you send to the natural gas provider is literally not providing any comfort to the family. “Right now the federal government has a grant program called EcoEnergy and the provincial government's program LiveSmart,” Williams says. “Just by changing your old furnace to a high efficiency (one) you will get \$1,390 back ... The average cost of putting in a high efficiency furnace is \$4,700 so you are only looking at around \$3,300. If you are now losing 50 per cent on the dollar with your old furnace it doesn't take long to pay for a new safe, efficient one.”



**Alex Williams from A.D.W. Mainland Heat & Air Conditioning says there are several things to check before turning on your furnace for the first time if it's more than 10 years old.**

*Rob Newell photos*

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