

The Handyman Herald

News, views, & ideas from John of All Trades

Spring 2007

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We're here to help!

Our Contact Info:

Phone:
248.840.0045

Tell us where you live, what you need done, and any symptoms of the problem. Or if you're looking for a quote on a larger project, let us know. We'll call you back ASAP.

E-mail us your questions @
Help@JohnofAllTrades.com

Growing up while our community grows

"Can we talk?"

If you hear that phrase in a conversation, said with a certain tone, you know it is time to cut the chit-chat and get into something serious.

In the repair business, you can always feel the apprehension coming when it's time to prepare a bill, give an estimate, or talk about cost. When I'm on the other side of the fence and having someone do a job for me, I feel the exact same way.

We've all heard the horror stories of how people were billed for different jobs. We've all watched the Problem Solvers on TV go searching for the roof guy who stole the senior citizen's life savings. We always wonder how repair people come up with a price. Was it fair? Is he honest? Did he really charge me the right amount?



From the John

John Larabell

So, today, I say, "Can we talk." I know that's what you are thinking. Let me be straight up and up front with you. Let me tell you how I charge my clients. By putting that up front, you'll have an idea of how much a project may cost. It's kinda like taking one of those price guns they have at the supermarket, and putting a sticker right on my forehead. Run me through the scanner, and you'll see how much I'm going to cost.

First, let's start off by saying, I provide a free estimate. If you have a big job that needs to be done, I'll come out and meet with you and provide you with an analysis of what I think the job should cost.

Secondly, I'll put my rates right here in print. I charge \$40 per hour plus a service charge of \$30. Multiplying this out, you have a charge of \$70 for the first hour, \$110 for two hours of work, \$150 for three hours of work up to \$430 for 10 hours of work. You get the idea.

If you have a small job that doesn't even take an hour, it would be flat \$50 fee for a half-hour or less.

These rates are for man hours.

I just like to be clear about that too. If two people were at your house for one hour of work, you would be charged for two hours of labor. It might seem obvious to some people about this fact but I like to make sure I spell everything out so there are no hard feelings when a job is complete.

If we are doing a job like a roof, installing a patio or windows, we'll give you a full estimate that includes time and materials. In that case, we really need to come out to your home and look things over before we can tell you what a project will cost. We also need to factor in material costs. If we are purchasing materials for your job, we charge the price we paid for them, plus 30%. This helps cover our costs like gas and transportation, as well as warranty work.

What we can't put a price on of course is our quality. We promise you the following things:

- High quality
- Honest work for honest pay
- Timely attention
- Willingness to listen and understand your concerns.

Your checklist to getting your house in order: How can we help?

People call the *John of All Trades* office all the time and ask the same question: "Can you _____?"

Look through this list and perhaps we can help with some of your home needs. If you don't see something you were hoping to have done — fear not. Give us a call at 248.840.0045. There's a good chance we can help.

Plumbing

- Sinks repaired or replaced
- Toilet repaired or replaced
- Sewer cleaning
- Pipe replacement (galvanized or copper)
- Installation of new bathroom in basement or upstairs
- Faucet Replacement
- Caulking toilets & tubs

Masonry Work

- Brick Repair
- Porch Repair
- Chimney Repair
- Tuck pointing
- Repair or install concrete



Outdoor Services

- Snow removal
- Landscaping
- Flower planting
- Full fertilizing programs
- Spring/Fall Cleanup
- Clean gutters
- Lawn Sprinklers
- Roofs (replaced or repaired)
- Gutter replacement or repair
- Nightscaping
- Roof de-icer installation
- Window replacement
- Siding
- Caulking
- Outdoor lighting
- Garage door installation
- Automatic garage door opener installation



Carpentry Work

- Door installation
- Install moldings
- Install bathroom vanities
- Install kitchen cabinets
- Backsplashes
- Pergo or hardwood floors installation

Finishing

- Painting
- Caulking
- Drywall
- Drywall repair
- Plaster repair
- Tile installation

Electrical

- Back-up generator hook-ups
- Service Changeover (fuses to circuit breakers or replacing an old panel)
- Rewiring of your entire house
- Ceiling fans installed
- Space heaters installed
- Adding lights, circuits, or outlets
- Installing recess lighting/track lights
- Adding power in garage
- Troubleshooting electrical problems
- Troubleshooting phone problems
- Phone line repair
- Phone jack installation

Fully Insured.

**We proudly accept
MasterCard & Visa.**



QUESTIONS? ASK THE HANDYMAN — JOHN OF ALL TRADES

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION THAT YOU'D LIKE *JOHN OF ALL TRADES* TO ADDRESS IN A FUTURE ISSUE? EMAIL US AT HELP@JOHNOFALLTRADES.COM AND ASK YOUR QUESTION.

WE'LL RESEARCH THE ANSWER AND HOPE TO PROVIDE TIPS TO FELLOW READERS IN AN UPCOMING EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER.



Ceiling Fans: Not just for summer anymore

Think that ceiling fans would help keep your house cooler for the upcoming summer? You bet. Think they could help keep your house warmer in the winter too? You betcha.

Even in winter, a ceiling fan can improve comfort. Most fans have a switch that allows you to reverse the motor and operate the ceiling fan at a low speed in the clockwise direction. This produces a gentle updraft, which forces warm air near the ceiling down into occupied space. For the summer, fans cool people by creating a wind-chill effect against their skin. So there's no reason to leave the fan on when nobody is in the room.

To install a ceiling fan... give *John of All Trades* a call.



THE HIT LIST

The Spring Checklist: Make sure you're ready for summer by doing the following odd jobs.

CONSIDER THIS:

Spring is all about preparation. You're getting the yard ready, preparing for graduation parties, planting flowers... you're always preparing. Here's a handy checklist of projects that you should have done — or should do — before the Fourth of July. If you need help with any of these, call John of All Trades for a free quote to see if we can get you ready for the lazy, crazy days of summer.



#1 CLEAN WINDOWS & REPAIR SCREENS

#2 CHECK ATTIC FAN



#3 UNCLOG AND SECURE GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

#4 CLEAN AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEM

5 TEST SUMP PUMP

6 CHANGE BATTERIES IN SMOKE DETECTORS AND CARBON MONOXIDE MONITORS



7 CHANGE FURNACE FILTERS



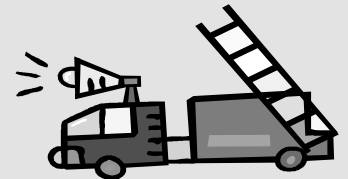
8 CLEAN DECK

Be prepared for emergencies

Communication is key for a family in case an emergency strikes. Make sure you have a plan to deal with what your

entire family should do in case of an emergency. Get together with your family members and outline evacuation plans and evacuation routes and communication plans to stay connected during an emergency. Practice makes perfect.

Routinely revisit these skills to stay sharp.



John of All Trades

Save \$10 or \$50

\$10 OFF ANY JOB \$50 OR MORE; \$50 OFF ANY JOB \$300 OR MORE

Indoors or Outdoors — we do it all

Tel: 248.840.0045

Expiration Date: 7/31/07

Enjoy Summer Outdoors
John of All Trades

\$100 off

PATIOS AND DECKS

Make your yard the yard of your dreams

Expires: 7/31/07

Your leaky basement foundation:

Many fixes — one right way of doing it

If you are researching ways to keep your basement dry, you'll run into many options.

In ways, the choices can be overwhelming. There's so much to consider — reading and research can lead you to wonder what you should do. The costs for various fixes can vary significantly.

I believe that there is a right way of protecting your home, basement, and foundation, when cracks develop and moisture and water starts entering into your house. The biggest drawback to doing it this way is price.

Before going too far, search to make sure you can't solve the problem yourself. Is there a good grade to your landscaping, sloping downward from the house? Are the gutters shooting water away from the house? If you answered yes, then continue reading for more options.

A popular way to fix the problem is to use a company that specializes in

Pros and Cons of Exterior versus Interior Fixes

Exterior Fix

- No Sump Pump Required
- No Electric Required
- Dry Basement Walls
- Rubber membrane on exterior foundation wall to eliminate mold
- Rubber membrane reduces radon and soil gas from entering home
- Reduced or eliminated water level in sump pump.
- Peace of mind

Interior Drain

- Requires one or more sump pumps
- Required Electric power during a storm
- Water pours through your damp basement walls
- No membrane is possible to keep foundation wall dry or to prevent radon gas from entering through the walls
- Sump pit always wet and flowing.
- Constant checking of a sump pump during a storm.

indoor basement waterproofing. I won't get into naming names, but there are a few companies out there that offer this service and the price seems quite reasonable when compared to other options.

Basically, these companies are simply hiding the problems that you called them about (in my humble opinion.) They place a plastic wall up inside and seal off the wall that is creating this problem. If you look at it, it looks like the problem is solved. However, behind their wall, you still have water coming inside your original walls and piling up. This can lead to mold, which knows no bounds. It also can lead to foundation issues.



A major reason why this is more expensive than the other way is that we run into the natural obstacles

found in people's yards near a house: landscaping, air-conditioners, driveways, etc. If you have a leak that is away from cement or a heavily landscaped part, then your price would be significantly cheaper. Remember, if only one part of your

wall is leaking, that is the only area that is essential to fix.

Let *John of All Trades* take a look at your basement foundation issues. Call the number below and we'll stop by for a free estimate on how we can solve your problem — and solve it the right way.

"HOME FOR SALE" GIFT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

We're offering Gift Certificates to people selling their home that are transferable to the new owner. It allows you to counter that they can receive \$250, \$500 or \$1000 in home repairs from the hometown handyman to make any upgrades they desire once they move in.

In such a competitive market, it could be a factor that helps you sell your home and it may ward off some of the nit picky complaints that always come with every home inspection.

Contact *John of All Trades* to order your certificate and offer it when you show your house.

You really want to stop water before it enters your four walls. That is the only way that you can make sure you are not breathing anything hazardous or having a problem with your foundation.

John of All Trades has done numerous jobs where we have fixed this problem. We go in on the outside, digging up around the foundation to get to the root of the problem. After we dig it out, we fix the cracks, coat the wall with tar and cover it with a membrane to prevent future leaks.

John of All Trades

Phone: 248.840.0045

Email: help@JohnofAllTrades.com



Visit us on the
Internet @
www.JohnofAllTrades.com

