

Build & Renovate

Roofing · Restoration · Garage Door · Exteriors · General Contracting · Home Building

Six trades, one publication. Every item is something that moves a number on your P&L, changes what you must do by law, or changes what parts and labor cost you.

IN THIS ISSUE	ROOFING Cal/OSHA cited three roofing contractors a combined \$282,420 for the same fatal fall on one Los Angeles County job site, each held separately responsible.	RESTORATION No Atlantic hurricane had formed by August 19, and NOAA still puts a 75 percent chance on a below-normal season with two to six hurricanes.	GARAGE DOOR Hot-rolled coil reached \$1,160 a short ton in August, and a typical 16-by-8 residential garage door carries roughly 225 pounds of steel.	 Read it online This issue, and every one before it
	EXTERIORS The 252 largest replacement contractors completed 16.9 percent fewer jobs last year while raising the average project to \$16,374, and have cut 2026 growth forecasts from 9 to 4 percent.	GENERAL CONTRACTING Commerce took comments through August 27 on adding trailers, cranes, welding-machine parts and electrical cable to the Section 232 metals tariffs at 25 percent.	HOME BUILDING The 2027 IECC is final — no appeals were filed against the residential or commercial provisions — and is set to publish December 1, 2026.	
	BACKGROUND SIGNAL The invoice fraud that reads your email first			

MONEY · EVERY TRADE IN THIS ISSUE

New-home demand broke in July: housing starts fell 12.4 percent, new-home sales fell 10.5 percent, and unsold new houses reached 9.6 months of supply.

The Census Bureau reported on August 18, 2026 that privately owned housing starts ran at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,239,000 in July, down 12.4 percent from June's revised 1,415,000 and 13.5 percent below July 2025. Single-family starts were 808,000. Completions fell harder over the year: 1,212,000, down 9.1 percent from June and 16.8 percent from a year earlier. Permits were the one series that rose, up 5.0 percent to 1,443,000. Builders are still pulling paper on ground they have not broken.

On August 25 Census reported new single-family home sales at a 607,000 annual rate for July, down 10.5 percent from June's 678,000 and 6.3 percent below July 2025. There were 488,000 new houses for sale at month end — 9.6 months of supply at the July pace, up from 8.5 months in June. The median new-home price was \$393,800, down 2.3 percent from June and 0.9 percent from a year ago. Builders are discounting into a market that is not clearing.

Builders had already said so. The NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index published August 17 read 35 in August, up one point and still far below the break-even 50. Current sales conditions were 39, future sales expectations 43, prospective buyer traffic 23. Thirty-five percent of builders cut prices in August, by an average of 6 percent, and 63 percent used some form of sales incentive. Regional three-month averages: Northeast 44, Midwest 45, South 31, West 27.

Monthly New Residential Construction, July 2026 — U.S. Census Bureau, released August 18, 2026 · Monthly New Residential Sales, July 2026 — U.S. Census Bureau, released August 25, 2026 · Affordability Pressures Keep Builder Confidence Low — NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index, August 17, 2026 · Construction Input Costs Climb 7.1 Percent Between July 2025 and July 2026 — AGC of America, August 17, 2026

Costs did not fall with demand. AGC's analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data, released August 17, put the producer price index for construction inputs 7.1 percent above July 2025, with liquid asphalt up 45.2 percent, diesel up 44.2 percent, aluminum mill shapes up 40.5 percent and steel mill products up 22.5 percent. Construction wages rose 5.2 percent against 3.2 percent across the private sector. Falling volume against rising input cost is a margin problem, not a demand dip you can wait out.

What to do about it: Re-forecast the fourth quarter off July, not June — starts, sales and completions all moved the same direction at once, which is more than noise. If you build or supply spec homes, weigh standing inventory against 9.6 months of supply before you commit to another slab. Call your three largest customers this week and ask what they have under contract for October through December, in units rather than in optimism. Reprice every open bid older than 60 days against the July input numbers, and put a materials-escalation clause and a 15-to-30-day quote expiry on anything carrying metal, asphalt or fuel exposure. If your crews are sized for spring volume, decide now whether to carry them through winter or shed hours; the expensive version of that decision is the one made in November.

ROOFING

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

Cal/OSHA cited three roofing contractors a combined \$282,420 for the same fatal fall on one Los Angeles County job site, each held separately responsible.

Why it matters: Cal/OSHA on August 3, 2026 cited Atlas Building and Roofing (\$120,300), Atlas Roofing Company (\$113,750) and Roof-Top Construction (\$48,370) after a worker fell 24 feet from a Westchester home on January 9, 2026. Two drew a willful-serious accident-related citation plus three serious and two general violations each; Atlas Building and Roofing already carried 2025 willful-serious and serious

citations and two serious from 2023. All three were held separately responsible: being the sub, or the sub's sub, did not divide the exposure. If you share a roof with another crew, put in writing before work starts who owns anchor points, edge protection and the daily hazard briefing, and keep your own competent-person sign-off.

Cal/OSHA cites three L.A. County roofing contractors \$282,420 following fatal fall — California Department of Industrial Relations, August 3, 2026

MONEY

Owens Corning's roofing EBITDA fell \$16 million year over year in the second quarter on flat pricing, and it expects third-quarter shingle volumes to drop.

Why it matters: Owens Corning's second-quarter results (August 5, 2026) put roofing revenue at about \$1.3 billion, roughly flat year over year, with segment EBITDA down \$16 million on higher inflation and negative price-cost, and pricing flat. Management expects third-quarter volumes to decline: spring price increases pulled demand forward and distributor inventories are heavier than normal. ARMA (July 27) put first-half U.S.

asphalt shingle shipments at 82,968,064 squares, down 4.7 percent from the first half of 2025. The manufacturers who raised list prices this spring are not fully collecting them, and distributors are long. Ask for inventory-position pricing, not the current list sheet, before committing a fall reroof.

Owens Corning Q2 2026 earnings call highlights — August 5, 2026 · U.S. Shingle Shipments Edge Up as Canada Falls 20.8% — Roofing Contractor on ARMA's Q2 2026 report, July 27, 2026

RESTORATION

TWO ITEMS

DEMAND

No Atlantic hurricane had formed by August 19, and NOAA still puts a 75 percent chance on a below-normal season with two to six hurricanes.

Why it matters: NOAA's August 6, 2026 mid-season update held the outlook at 7 to 13 named storms, 2 to 6 hurricanes and 0 to 2 major hurricanes, with a 75 percent chance of a below-normal season, 20 percent near-normal and 5 percent above, on a strengthening El Niño. Two named storms had formed and no hurricane; that was still true on August 19, and 7 of 10 Atlantic seasons record their first hurricane before that date. September is still the peak month, but a restorer who budgeted 2026 on catastrophe response has lost most of the upside. Shift marketing spend and crew capacity to non-catastrophe work — supply-line and appliance failures, sewage, fire, mold — and reset the fourth-quarter revenue plan this week, not in October.

NOAA Updates Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook Ahead Of September Peak — August 6, 2026 · Hurricane-less so far in the Atlantic. How long will it last? — Local 10, August 19, 2026

LABOR

Restoration firms reporting labor shortages run from 42 to 62 percent depending on the estimate, and industry turnover is sitting near 28 percent.

Why it matters: A Restoration & Remediation analysis (August 27, 2026) puts restoration firms reporting labor shortages at roughly 42 percent on the lower estimate and as high as 62 percent, with employee turnover near 28 percent, against 36 percent of small business owners generally reporting openings they cannot fill. Turnover at that rate is a cost line, not a hiring problem: every replacement carries recruiting, IICRC training and the productivity gap of a new technician. It compounds in a light storm year, when a bench you cannot bill meets thinner catastrophe revenue. Price your next ten jobs off your actual loaded labor rate, not last year's, and put a number on what one lost technician costs in recruiting, training and lost hours.

The Changing Workforce Behind Restoration Growth — Restoration & Remediation, August 27, 2026

GARAGE DOOR

TWO ITEMS

SUPPLY

Hot-rolled coil reached \$1,160 a short ton in August, and a typical 16-by-8 residential garage door carries roughly 225 pounds of steel.

Why it matters: Nucor raised its consumer spot price for hot-rolled coil to \$1,160 a short ton on August 10, 2026, one of a run; Steel Market Update's August 4 assessment averaged HRC at \$1,180. Industry estimates put steel and aluminum at 40 to 60 percent of a garage door's manufacturing cost, with roughly 225 pounds of steel in a typical 16-by-8 residential door, so coil moves do not stay absorbed. Price letters follow coil by about a quarter, so this year's announced increases reflect spring coil, not August coil. Shorten quote validity on door-only jobs to 30 days, ask each manufacturer rep in writing when the next price letter lands and its effective date, and stop honoring last quarter's proposals.

Nucor increases spot HR price by \$5/ton — Steel Market Update, August 10, 2026 · The 50% Steel Tariff and Garage Door Prices — steel content and per-door weight estimates, June 28, 2026

DEMAND

Completions, not starts, govern new-construction door installs — and July completions fell 16.8 percent from a year earlier, further than starts did.

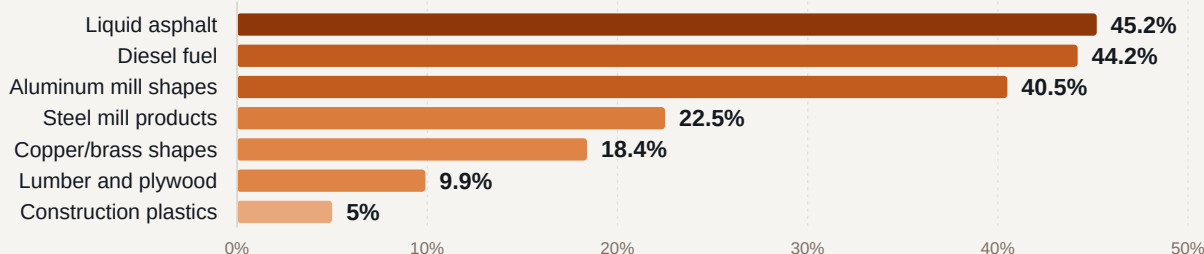
Why it matters: The Census Bureau put July housing completions at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,212,000 on August 18, 2026, down 9.1 percent from June's 1,333,000 and 16.8 percent below July 2025's 1,456,000. Single-family completions were 878,000. A garage door goes on at completion, not at groundbreaking, so completions set a dealer's builder volume, and they fell further year over year than starts, down 13.5 percent. Permits rose 5.0 percent to 1,443,000, so the pipeline is not empty; the near-term install calendar is. Dealers leaning on two or three production builders carry the exposure; replacement and service work is the offset. Call each builder account this week for its October-to-December completion schedule in units.

Monthly New Residential Construction, July 2026 — U.S. Census Bureau, released August 18, 2026

INFOGRAPHIC 1 / INPUT COSTS

Construction input costs rose 7.1 percent in the year to July, but four materials rose two to six times that fast.

Twelve-month percent change in producer prices, July 2025 to July 2026, AGC of America analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data, released August 17, 2026.



Energy and metals carried the increase; wood and plastics did not. An aluminum-framed window, a steel stud wall or an asphalt roof absorbed four to six times the 7.1 percent average. Vinyl siding, housewrap and dimensional lumber are the comparatively cheap scopes this fall. Construction wages rose 5.2 percent over the same twelve months, against 3.2 percent private-sector. Source: [Construction Input Costs Climb 7.1 Percent Between July 2025 and July 2026 — AGC of America, August 17, 2026](#)

EXTERIORS

TWO ITEMS

DEMAND

The 252 largest replacement contractors completed 16.9 percent fewer jobs last year while raising the average project to \$16,374, and have cut 2026 growth forecasts from 9 to 4 percent.

Why it matters: Qualified Remodeler's Top 500 replacement analysis (August 13, 2026): 252 firms, \$16.26 billion in 2025 revenue. Job count fell 16.9 percent, 1.77 million projects to 1.47 million, while average project value rose 6.0 percent to \$16,374: fewer, bigger jobs. Windows fell from 29.0 to 27.2 percent of the mix, roofing rose from 12.1 to 17.9, baths entered the top three, siding fell out. Median cost per issued lead was \$396, 39 percent of firms over \$500, 18 percent over \$1,000; marketing 12.1 percent of remodeling revenue. They cut their 2026 growth projection from 9 to 4 percent between the first and second quarters. Measure your cost per lead and close rate this month: at \$396 a lead, a two-point close-rate slip is the margin.

Home Improvement | Replacement: Growth at a Price — Qualified Remodeler Top 500, August 13, 2026

MONEY

Aluminum mill shapes cost 40.5 percent more than a year ago and steel mill products 22.5 percent, while construction plastics rose only 5.0 percent.

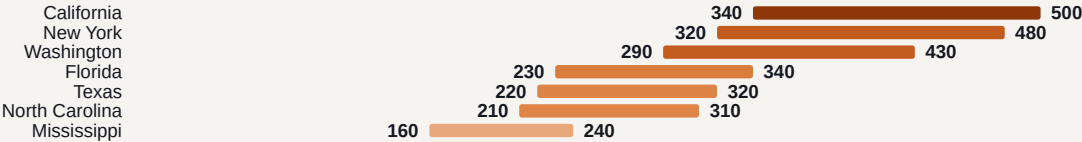
Why it matters: AGC's analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics producer prices (August 17, 2026) puts twelve-month increases through July at 40.5 percent for aluminum mill shapes, 22.5 percent for steel mill products and 18.4 for copper and brass mill shapes, against 9.9 percent for lumber and plywood and 5.0 for construction plastics. Overall input costs rose 7.1 percent. That is a materials-selection fact: aluminum-frame windows, gutter coil, metal roofing, soffit, fascia and trim sit on the 40 percent line, vinyl frames, siding and housewrap near the 5 percent line. Quote vinyl and aluminum side by side on every replacement bid this fall and show the customer the difference, and re-price any aluminum-heavy scope you bid before June.

Construction Input Costs Climb 7.1 Percent Between July 2025 and July 2026 — AGC of America, August 17, 2026

INFOGRAPHIC 2 / BUILD COST SPREAD

Mid-range new construction runs from \$160 to \$500 a square foot depending on which state you build in.

Mid-range construction cost per square foot, low to high, by state, 2026 build-cost guide updated May 25, 2026.



The same mid-range house costs roughly twice as much per square foot in California as in Mississippi, and the band inside a single state is still \$100 to \$160 wide. A national cost-per-foot number is close to useless in a bid conversation. The band that matters is your state's, and where in it your finish level sits — quote from your own last five closed jobs. Source: [Home Building Cost Per Square Foot by State \(2026 Data\)](#)

GENERAL CONTRACTING

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

Commerce took comments through August 27 on adding trailers, cranes, welding-machine parts and electrical cable to the Section 232 metals tariffs at 25 percent.

Why it matters: The Bureau of Industry and Security proposed 14 additions to the Section 232 steel, aluminum and copper derivative lists (Federal Register, August 6, 2026); comments closed August 27. They include trailers and semi-trailers, tanker and agricultural trailers, self-propelled cranes and lifting frames, welding machine parts, electric conductor cable, fire extinguishers, floor safes, heat exchanger and hydraulic engine and motor parts. Most would carry 25 percent, agricultural equipment 15 percent, filled steel containers 50 percent. No effective date is published, and none will exist until an inclusion notice issues. If a trailer or lift purchase is planned for the fourth quarter, ask the dealer now whether the unit is imported.

Request for Public Comments on the Proposed Implementation of Duties on Additional Aluminum, Steel, and Copper Derivative Articles Under Section 232 — Federal Register, August 6, 2026 · BIS seeks comments on proposed Section 232 tariffs on additional derivative articles — KPMG, August 5, 2026

DEMAND

Home Depot's comparable sales rose 1.7 percent on 0.8 percent fewer transactions, and Lowe's rose 0.2 percent with Pro growing and DIY under pressure.

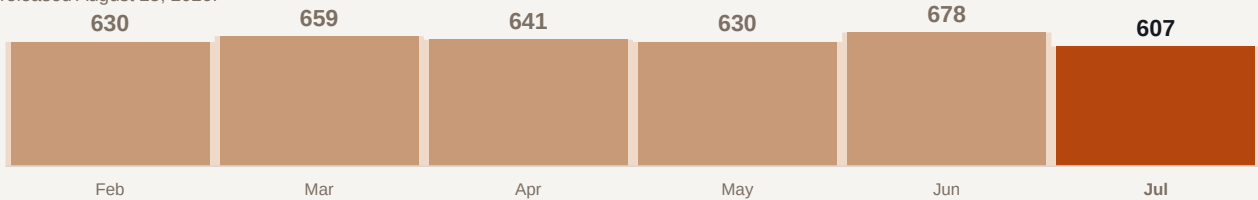
Why it matters: Home Depot reported on August 18, 2026 second-quarter sales of \$47.9 billion, up 5.7 percent, with comparable sales up 1.7 percent, U.S. comps up 1.3 percent, average ticket up 2.8 percent to \$92.50 and transactions down 0.8 percent to 443.2 million; its CFO cited broad-based demand and smaller projects. Lowe's reported on August 19 sales of \$26.0 billion and comps up 0.2 percent, with growth in Pro, online and home services offset by pressure in discretionary DIY. Both held full-year comp guidance at roughly flat. The signal is mix, not volume: money is moving into smaller, more necessary work and through the Pro channel. Build and staff a repair or small-project offer you can sell at \$3,000 to \$10,000.

The Home Depot Announces Second Quarter Fiscal 2026 Results — August 18, 2026 · Lowe's Reports Second Quarter 2026 Sales and Earnings Results — August 19, 2026

INFOGRAPHIC 3 / NEW-HOME SALES

New single-family home sales fell 10.5 percent in July, giving back five months of gains in one.

New one-family houses sold, seasonally adjusted annual rate, thousands of units, U.S. Census Bureau, February through July 2026, released August 25, 2026.



Sales climbed to a 678,000 annual pace in June, the best month of 2026, then dropped to 607,000 in July — below where the series sat in February. Unsold inventory rose to 9.6 months of supply from 8.5, and the median new-home price fell to \$393,800. Builders are discounting into a market that is not absorbing the houses already standing. Source: [Monthly New Residential Sales, July 2026 — U.S. Census Bureau, released August 25, 2026](#)

REGULATION

The 2027 IECC is final — no appeals were filed against the residential or commercial provisions — and is set to publish December 1, 2026.

Why it matters: The 2027 International Energy Conservation Code is locked: trade reporting on August 25 and 27, 2026 confirms no appeals against the residential or commercial provisions, publication anticipated December 1, 2026. On the residential side the envelope backstop tightened across every compliance path, homes with basements or conditioned crawlspaces must keep ductwork in conditioned space, and Energy Rating Index thresholds dropped a point in every climate zone. Both sets should meet or exceed 2024 efficiency levels, though the gains are small. Nothing changes locally until your state or county adopts it, typically one to several years later. The duct rule changes plans, not just specs — put it in front of your designer now.

The 2027 IECC Is Final — Building Enclosure, August 27, 2026 · The 2027 IECC Is Final: Here's What You Need to Know — Energy Efficient Codes Coalition, August 25, 2026

SUPPLY

Five cold-formed steel framing manufacturers set price increases effective August 31 or September 1, with at least one of them at a minimum of 10 percent.

Why it matters: MarinoWARE announced on July 28, 2026 a minimum 10 percent increase on all steel products delivered on or after September 1, citing mill increases, tariffs, freight and demand. ABC Supply Interiors' log shows the rest in the same window: ClarkDietrich, AMICO and Telling Industries effective September 1, CEMCO August 31, Knauf insulation September 1. The whole cold-formed shelf moves at once, so switching suppliers will not dodge it. Delivery date is the trigger, not order date, so will-call material into September can reprice. Pull every job with steel stud, track or joist scope after Labor Day, confirm in writing which price applies to material already ordered, and take delivery before August 31 where you can stage it.

MarinoWARE Price Increase Announcement — July 28, 2026, effective September 1, 2026 · Manufacturer Pricing Updates 2026 — ABC Supply Interiors, metal framing and insulation effective dates

THE BACKGROUND SIGNAL

The fraud that reads your invoices before it sends one

The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center took 24,768 business email compromise reports in 2025, with losses of \$3.05 billion — a record, after dipping to \$2.77 billion in 2024 from \$2.95 billion in 2023. Across all internet crime it logged 1,008,597 complaints and \$20.88 billion in losses. Reported cases only, so read it as a floor.

Business email compromise, not ransomware, is the one that should concern a builder or remodeler. Someone gets into a mailbox, reads until they understand how you invoice and who pays you, then sends a real-looking progress billing with different bank details. No malware, no warning — just a payment that never arrives and an argument about who eats it. A trade that emails bids, change orders and supplier invoices all day is the shape this is built for. The quieter number is adoption: under 20% of firms with fewer than 20 staff use AI at all.

What to do about it: You don't need a security program. You need multi-factor authentication on email and your accounting login, and one rule everybody follows: nobody changes bank details on the strength of an email or a call — you ring the number you already had on file and confirm. That covers most of it, and costs nothing. The part it doesn't — how the systems are set up — is the day job of our parent company, CyberSainya.

FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, 2025 Internet Crime Report — reported cases only, rounded from \$2,946,830,270, \$2,770,151,146 and \$3,046,598,558. U.S. Census Bureau, Business Trends and Outlook Survey, May 3, 2026.

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EVERY LEAD

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Inbound text

After-hours

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Capture every lead

Answers, qualifies, books — around the clock

Answers every call & text, 24/7

Qualifies & captures the job

Live warm transfer to you

Books onto your calendar

Instant text-back to callers

Custom intake questions

Spam & robocall screening

Call recordings + transcripts

Booking reminders

Review requests

Pushes every lead to your other tools, in real time

Emergency escalation to cell

Bilingual (on request)

Multi-location

Outbound campaigns

Monthly ROI report

"Your front desk never sleeps."

Reception \$209 · Growth \$439 · Full Engine \$899 /mo

CERNO · DEAL DESK · LIVE

Close every deal

Turns the call into a priced quote that books itself

AI drafts the estimate from YOUR price book

Itemized good / better / best options

You approve from your phone

Customer page: options, photos, plain English

Accept → book a time window

Automatic follow-up until booked

Tech photo line (techs text photos in)

Financing & maintenance-plan display

Shared job room (AI, tech, owner, customer)

Works with your stack or standalone

"From first call to booked job."

Deal Desk \$149 · Pro \$249 · Bundle +\$100 /mo

2SEE EVERYTHING — YOUR DASHBOARDS

Read-only, branded, one-key login. Two clean views of the money.

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example view - this month

ANSWERED312

BOOKED88

CAPTURED124

MISSED0

47 calls caught after hours — a 9-to-5 desk would have missed them

CERNO DEAL DESK · OWNER DASHBOARD

example view - this month

OPEN12

AWAITING4

SENT18

WON71

6 min average from request to quote sent · 71% estimate → won

\$

Booked, paid job

The lead becomes revenue

SEEN IN YOUR DASHBOARD

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Questions? Reach out.

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See both desks running, and the pricing



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