

Understanding the terminology used in the home improvement and construction industries can help homeowners be better informed and involved in projects around their homes. The following are some common industry terms.

**Aggregate:** Crushed rock used in many asphalt applications.

**Ampacity:** The amount of current a wire can safely carry.

**Asbestos:** A fibrous material that was once used widely in building materials but is linked to cancers of the lung and lung cavity.

**Backfill:** Soil or gravel used to fill in against a foundation.

**Beam:** Horizontal framing member designed to carry a load from joists or a roof.

**Butt joint:** Lumber pieces joined at the ends.

# Home Improvement GLOSSARY

**Casement window:** A window with hinges on one of the vertical sides making it swing open like a door.

**Caulking:** Flexible material used to seal a gap between two surfaces.

**Code:** Rules set forth by a government institution to determine fair and safe trade practices.

**Curing:** A process that brings paint or masonry materials to their final, durable form.

**Drywall:** A wall finish made from gypsum plaster encased in a thin cardboard.

**Estimate:** The anticipated cost of materials and labor for a project.

**Fixed price contract:** A contract with a set price for the work.

**Flashing:** Sheet metal or roll roofing pieces fit to the joint of any roof intersection or projection.

**Footing:** Widened ground base of a foundation to support foundations or piers.

**Framing:** The structural wooden elements of most homes.

**GFI:** A ground fault current interrupter, which is an

electrical device used to prevent injury from contact with electrical appliances.

**Jamb:** The exposed upright part on each side of a window frame or door frame.

**Level:** A tool to check for level or plumb surfaces.

**Permit:** A legal authorization to begin a work project.

**Pitch:** The slope of incline on a roof.

**Rebar:** Steel rods that are imbedded in concrete for stability.

**Shim:** A tapered piece of wood used to level and secure a structure.

**Stud:** Vertical parts of framing placed 16 or 24 inches apart.

**Watt:** A measure of the electrical requirement of an appliance.

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