



# NEWS from Blumentals/Architecture Inc

Multi-Family

Office/Financial

Renovation/Remodel

Industrial/Warehouse

November 2009

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## > Welcome!



We welcome a new member to **Blumentals/Architecture**! Erin Kelash, LEED® AP is a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota's (Twin Cities – College of Design) Master of Science in Architecture – Sustainable Design program. Erin also holds a Bachelor of Architecture from North Dakota State University, with minors in Art and Psychology. She became a LEED® accredited professional in July 2008, and has been involved in several projects pursuing LEED certification.

Erin brings with her over three years of architectural experience in multi-family residential, commercial, government and worship projects. Erin is a member of the Twin Cities' Emerging Green Builders (Current) and United States Green Building Council (USGBC) – Mississippi Headwaters Chapter (Member in 2008). We are very excited to have her as part of our B/A team!

## > College Drive Townhomes

*Brainerd, Minnesota*  
Minnesota Brokerage Group / Alliance Building Corp.



College Drive Townhomes is a renovation project consisting of five buildings. This multi-family townhome complex containing 24 three, two, and one-bedroom units was completed in May of 2009. This project followed the "Green Communities Criteria".

New fiber cement siding with weather barrier and new metal shingled roofs tightened up the exterior shell of all five buildings. Geothermal wells were drilled separately for each unit providing a cost-effective, energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly way of heating and cooling each unit.

The site was revised with natural plantings to protect vulnerable slopes, as well as the addition of rain gardens to support infiltration and treatment of runoff from the parking lots and building areas. To cut back on property maintenance, "no-mow" grass was added to all non-play areas.

Inside the units, Energy Star fluorescent lighting with pin connections and new Energy Star appliances were installed throughout all the units.

This project is also taking the first long-term initiative in the Brainerd Lakes Area to address permanent affordable housing for the homeless. Four of the 24 units will be designated to those who have lost a job, have a medical condition, or have their lives disrupted and need a place to live. For the complete story, read it in the Brainerd Dispatch: [http://www.brainerddispatch.com/ystories/111408/hom\\_20081114002.shtml](http://www.brainerddispatch.com/ystories/111408/hom_20081114002.shtml)

## > Radon in Homes

Beginning June 1, all new houses built in Minnesota will be required to include features designed to resist or reduce the infiltration of radon gas. This is an important step in reducing the potential exposure to a cancer-causing gas and high radon levels in homes.

### So What is Radon?

Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas that can be found in homes all across the US. It's the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon is colorless, tasteless, and odorless gas that is produced by the decay of both uranium and radium found in the earth. Radon enters homes through structural cracks and holes in foundations and floors.

All buildings are at risk to have some level of radon. The Minnesota Department of Health estimates that one in three homes in Minnesota have radon levels above the EPA recommended action level of 4.0 pCi/L.

### Preventing High Radon Levels in your Home

Under the new Code, homes built using radon-resistant construction techniques usually rely on "passive" radon control. These systems reduce soil gas entry points and provide a route to vent the gases to the outdoors. A fan may need to be installed to further reduce the radon level. A complete system includes the following:

- 4" thick clean aggregate sub-base.
- 6 mil thick polyethylene soil-gas retarder placed over aggregate.
- Closed/sealed all entry points.
- A 3"-4" dia. PVC "T" fitting inserted into the aggregate sub-base.
- A 3"-4" vent pipe connected to the "T" which runs vertically up to and through the roof.
- Electrical junction box in attic for future installation of an active sub slab depressurization system. (Fan Unit)

In existing homes and buildings, short-term and long-term testing kits are available to test the levels of radon in the lower level. If the test results provide radon levels above the 4.0 pCi/L, the reduction process should begin with an inspection of the site to determine the course of action to reduce these levels.

Installing a radon control system in an existing building is relatively easy and inexpensive to install, and in most cases it does not disturb activities in these spaces. These systems can be installed in a short amount of time and often cost under \$2,000 to install.

**Blumentals/Architecture** has been involved with multiple projects where radon control systems have been installed in areas with high radon levels. After the systems have been completed we have seen a drastic drop in these levels well below the limit of 4.0 pCi/L.





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## > California & Ohio Projects

Dominium Development & Acquisition LLC



Desert Palms Apartments  
Cochella, CA  
Icon Builders

Mountain View Apartments  
Beaumont, CA  
Icon Builders

Two renovation projects, Desert Palms Apartments and Mountain View Apartments, both located in the desert near the Palm Springs area, were completed in Fall 2009. These projects were complete rehabilitations of the existing exteriors and interiors of all buildings and units. Both properties were approaching 30-years in age, and both were in need of major renovations to improve the living experience for its tenants as well as the marketability to compete with newly completed properties within the area.



Lakeshore Beach Apartments  
Cleveland, OH  
JAS Construction, Inc.

Lakeshore Beach Apartments located in Cleveland, Ohio, celebrated it's Grand Re-Opening in October 2009. This project was required to follow the Green Communities Criteria, including the following:

- Additional sidewalks for connection to neighborhood
- Re-use of existing plants & trees
- New high-efficiency, hybrid hot water system
- New high-efficiency windows
- Additional attic insulation
- Interior Energy Star fluorescent lighting

## > Minnesota National Guard Armories

Madison, MN New Ulm, MN Ortonville, MN & Camp Ripley - Little Falls , MN



New passenger elevators will be added to the MN National Guard Armories in Madison, New Ulm, and Ortonville to improve accessibility for the disabled to as much of the public portions of all the buildings as possible. The existing freight elevator at Camp Ripley Building 2-1 was no longer working, therefore it was important to provide a new freight elevator that would be operational and physically brought up to code. The Madison armory (shown) will also get a new exterior elevator lobby to accommodate the new interior elevator. New energy-efficient windows will also be installed at the New Ulm Armory.

## > Northern MN Projects

Thies & Talle Management, Inc.

Earlier this year, we finished renovations at Pine Manor Townhomes located in Ely. This was another complete renovation project consisting of interior and exterior improvements. This site consists of six townhome buildings, an office building with laundry and an accessible unit, and four garage buildings. This project focused on improving the weather tightness of the buildings along with upgrades that improve the livability for the residents.

We are currently working with Thies & Talle Management on three other projects in Duluth, MN, with five more to start in 2010.

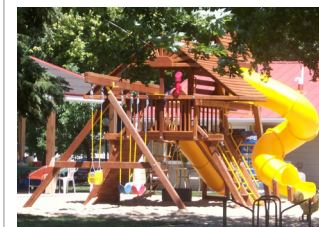


Pine Manor Townhomes  
Ely, MN  
J&S Siding & Gutters

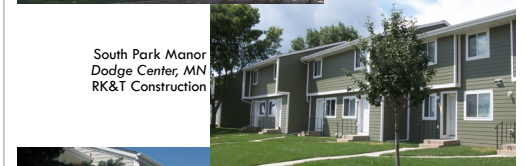
## > Southern MN Projects

Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership

Rock Manor in Luverne, South Park Manor in Dodge Center, and Westgate Apartments in New Prague, are three apartment stabilization projects recently completed. All three projects involved extensive exterior and interior renovation work including all new cabinets, finishes, plumbing fixtures, windows, doors, siding and roof. To enhance the site, new picnic pavilions and play equipment were added as amenities. These updates brought a whole new life to these older apartment complexes.



Rock Manor  
Luverne, MN  
Southwest Building Specialists



South Park Manor  
Dodge Center, MN  
RK&T Construction



Westgate Apartments  
New Prague, MN  
Lumber One