



# OCTOBER 16-18 • STATE FAIR PARK

## NARI MILWAUKEE HOSTS 30th ANNUAL HOME & REMODELING SHOW

*Show Helps Homeowners Looking to Improve Indoor & Outdoor Living Space*

**MILWAUKEE** – For the past few months, calls have been pouring in to NARI Milwaukee members. Families who've been spending significantly more time at home and in their yards are looking to make changes.

They're asking for updated kitchens with a better workflow, improved bathrooms that can accommodate more usage, finished basements with home offices and rec areas, a backyard patio for entertaining and everything else in between.

For those who have projects in mind, the NARI Home & Remodeling Show is the place to find qualified professionals who can do the job right. This year's show runs Oct. 16-18 at the Wisconsin Products Pavilion at State Fair Park, 8200 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis.

More than 80 NARI Milwaukee members will be exhibiting and on hand to answer questions, make recommendations and provide guidance, solutions and creative suggestions. In fact, now is the time for homeowners to line up contractors for their 2021 home improvement and remodeling projects.

Participating exhibitors run the gamut of remodeling and home improvement services and products - from design/build firms to specialized contractors for all areas of the home, including roofing, gutters, windows, doors, HVAC, electrical and more.

For those who'd like to experience portions of the show from home, NARI Milwaukee is hosting a number of Facebook Live Events. The Facebook Live schedule will be posted at [NARIMilwaukeehomeshow.com](https://www.facebook.com/NARIMilwaukeehomeshow) in the coming weeks.

"We're excited to connect homeowners who are eager to get their home improvements underway with local contractors. By hosting a safe and accessible show, we're helping reopen the economy and support area small businesses," says Diane Welhouse, CKBR, executive director of NARI Milwaukee. "Nearly 80% of our members are small businesses with fewer than 10 employees so the annual show

is important to them."

In response to the coronavirus, NARI Milwaukee, State Fair Park and Valley Expo Services have implemented a number of new protocols.

- An updated entry and ticketing procedure, based on six-foot social distancing guidelines.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be located in the vestibule, at the entry and throughout the show floor.
- The show will also include controlled capacity, one-way aisles, additional cleaning and social distancing. Face coverings will also be required for both exhibitors and attendees.

Tickets for the 2020 Home & Remodeling Show are just \$5. Children age 17 and younger and retired and active duty military personnel (with I.D.) are free. Parking at State Fair is \$6. Otherwise, ample street parking is available.

The NARI Home & Remodeling Show runs:

- **Friday, Oct. 16, Noon - 8 p.m.**
- **Saturday, Oct. 17, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.**
- **Sunday, Oct. 18, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

NARI Milwaukee is a nearly 700-member strong organization that represents the best remodeling and home improvement professionals in the area. Since 1961, NARI Milwaukee has been a trusted resource for consumers. The non-profit promotes professionalism, ethical conduct and sound business practices in the remodeling industry and works to educate and inform Milwaukee-area homeowners. Consumers can have peace of mind and confidence when selecting and working with a NARI Milwaukee member.

For more information on the NARI Home & Remodeling Show or to receive a free copy of "Renovate," our new consumer magazine and membership directory, visit [NARImilwaukee.org](https://www.narimilwaukee.org) or call 414-771-4071.



Kitchen by AB&K Bath & Kitchen



Exterior remodel by Paul Davis Restoration & Remodeling



# Read This Before You Sign That Contract

Congratulations! You've chosen the remodeler you'd like to work with on your home improvement project. Now it's time to get down to business. Before embarking on any project, professional remodelers will provide you with a contract. Required by law, the contract is designed to protect both you and the contractor.

Just because you talk about something with your remodeler doesn't mean it's guaranteed. Make sure to get everything you discuss in writing and ensure it's included in or added to your written contract. Thoroughly review the entire contract and be certain you understand it before signing. Don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions. Never sign an incomplete contract, and always get a final copy.

In addition to the contract, get copies of all other documents involved in the transaction, such as: financing terms (if provided by the contractor), warranties, Wisconsin Right to Cure brochure and lead safety information (if your home was built before 1980).

When all the work has been finished you may be asked to sign a waiver certifying that the work has been completed. Before you sign, carefully inspect the work and materials as specified in the contract. Don't sign if you are not completely satisfied or if the work has not been completed.



Important! Make sure the contract includes these items:

- The contract includes the contractor's name, address, phone, license number (if applicable) and the start and completion dates. This sounds simple, but it's often overlooked.
- Study the design plans carefully. Insist that you approve them and they are identified in your written contract before any work begins.
- Think about the scope of the project and make sure all items requested are included. If you do not see a specific item in the contract, consider it not included.
- A detailed list of materials for the project should be included in the contract, with information such as size, color, model, brand name, and product.
- Warranties covering materials and/or workmanship must be included and identified as either "full" or "limited." The name and address of the party who will honor the warranty (contractor, distributor or manufacturer) must be identified. Make sure the time period and terms are specified.
- Make sure financial terms are understood and spelled out in the contract. Total price, payment schedule and any cancellation penalty should be clear.
- A dispute resolution clause should be included in the event a disagreement occurs. Consider ways to resolve a dispute without costly litigation.

## Lien Waivers

When you contract to remodel your home, the job may be subcontracted to another firm or may require special laborers to do the plumbing, cabinetmaking or electrical wiring. As you pay your primary contractor, they are then supposed to pay these laborers. If the contractor fails to pay them, each laborer, subcontractor or material supplier may have the right to file a claim for a lien against your property for the amount owed to them by the contractor. The law requires that you receive a lien waiver from the contractor. Discuss with your contractor if you want waivers for partial or final payments. A lien waiver is a receipt which states that the workers and suppliers have been paid and they won't be asking you for the money you have already paid the contractor. For more information, contact the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at (800)422-7128 or <https://datcp.wi.gov>.

## Right of Rescission

Known as the "Right of Rescission," federal law requires a contractor to give you a written notice of your right (without penalty) to cancel a contract within three business days of signing it, provided it was solicited at some place other than the contractor's place of business or appropriate trade premises.

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# 10 Things to Do Before Remodeling Begins

Careful planning and preparation are the keys to any home remodeling project. "Doing your research, outlining your goals and knowing what questions to ask is a critical part of the remodeling process," says Tom Mainville, CR, UDCP, of Story Hill Renovations, LLC and president of NARI Milwaukee.

These 10 key steps will help you plan and get prepared for your next home improvement project.

**1. Research:** Take time to decide what type of project you want to do. Is it a cosmetic touch up, full remove and replace or structural reconfiguration? Each will have a different price point and timeline. Research projects online for design ideas and inspiration. Make note of products or materials you like. Does everyone in the family have the same style and desires or do differences need to be addressed? Create a physical or online picture book of likes and dislikes. Pay special attention to product or material price ranges and how your selections can influence the project price.

**2. Think long-term:** How long do you plan to stay in your home? Is this renovation to improve your life and bring you joy - or to sell? How might your family structure change over time? Will you need to make any major repairs in the future? These questions should be answered early on to ensure your project will fit your lifestyle and neighborhood value after it's complete.

**3. Determine your budget:** Deciding on a realistic budget and arranging finances to support your project are essential. This number needs to include everything - the design, remodel, products, contingencies, etc. It's important to discuss a budget with your remodeler who

can guide you on project costs and possible financing options if necessary.

**4. Find professionals:** All NARI members are local, trusted and proven professionals with proper licensing and insurance. A list of current NARI contractors can be found at [narmilwaukee.org](http://narmilwaukee.org). With nearly 700 members, there are specialists in every area! If you have any referrals from friends or family, be sure to look up the companies to ensure they are NARI members. It's always a good idea to talk with more than one remodeler. You'll be entrusting them with your home - so getting a good feel for their process, style and approach is crucial. Also, be sure to check the background and reputation of your chosen remodeler with other credible organizations.

**5. Ask the right questions:** Describe what you envision for your home remodel, the styles you like, your estimated budget, and other ideas for the remodeling work. Ask the remodeler for references and look at their website or brochure that describes their experience and accomplishments. Confirm basic elements about the contractor's business:

- Does the remodeler have all required licenses?
- Do they have general liability insurance in case of an accident on the job? Ask to see a copy to verify coverage.
- Do they warranty their work?
- How do they handle any challenges that may arise on the project?

Having these answers in advance can help prevent future problems and nail down the best professional remodeler for the job.

**6. Keep design in mind:** Think about all the things you want to change about your current space: style, lighting, convenience or otherwise. Make sure you articulate what you like (or don't like) about a style or design and share examples of ideas. Work with your remodeler to lay out your room, taking into consideration traffic flow, furniture, lighting and storage. Professionals will guide you with what can and can't be done in your space to incorporate accessibility, functionality, ease of modification, style and value into your design.

**7. Consider more than price:** Many people are lured by the lowest price, thinking that they have found a great deal. But be skeptical of unusually low prices. These bids may cost more in the end - especially if the contractor is cutting corners, not pulling permits, not calculating certain costs, or is inexperienced. Often, NARI professional remodelers end up fixing remodels from unscrupulous contractors who did shoddy and unsafe work or failed to complete the job. The lowest price may not provide the best value. Ask clarifying questions about each bid. Sometimes the higher price might be worth the cost of better-quality materials and professional service.

**8. Make your selections:** Deciding on products and materials is a larger process than most imagine. With so many options to choose from, product selections are one of the primary

reasons project timelines get extended. Base your decisions on quality, function, price, style and availability.

**9. Review the contract:** Once you have selected the remodeler you'd like to work with, they will supply you with a contract. This protects both the homeowner and the remodeler. Review the contract carefully. Ask about terms if you don't understand. Pay attention to details about change orders, payment, additional fees, timeline and responsibilities. Make sure the contract includes product selections to lock down pricing and keep your budget intact.

**10. Know the communication plan:** A common downfall in remodeling is lack of communication between the homeowner and remodeler. Your remodeler should lay out a communication plan at the beginning of the project. If not, ask them to do so. Be sure to get all changes in writing if the scope or complexity of your remodeling project is modified while work is being done. This plan should clarify roles of everyone involved, communication methods, availability and frequency of communication that is expected.

Questions? Call the NARI Milwaukee office at 414-771-4071. We are happy guide you through the remodeling process and help you find a professional remodeler you can trust.



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# Updating Your Bathroom

In a busy household, a small or inefficient bathroom can cause problems when it is suddenly being used throughout the day by all family members.

NARI Milwaukee asked several of its members who specialize in remodeling baths and other areas of the home for their advice and recommendations.

“Think about what you really need and want and prioritize that list,” advises Tracy Grosspietsch, Certified Kitchen and Bath Remodeler (CKBR) and Universal Design Certified Professional (UDCP), with AB&K Bath & Kitchen in Greenfield. “Take a few minutes each day to observe how the space is, or isn’t, working and then ask yourself a series of questions.”

Top questions include: is more storage needed, is a second sink or more counter space a necessity, is there an area of the bathroom that’s causing a slowdown in the morning routine, does your family typically take showers or baths, are separate areas for showering, changing and getting ready needed?

Identifying usage or traffic flow problems is a good starting point. That way, the remodeling company can determine whether: there are elements that need to be added or removed; the layout of the space needs to be reconfigured; or if the space needs to be expanded in some way.

Of course, what you’d like to accomplish in your bathroom remodel is also dependent on the budget.

The cost for a remodel varies greatly and depends on a number of factors, including the size of the bathroom, materials/finishes selected, complexity (are walls being moved or is the layout staying the same) and age of the home.

“One of the questions we get daily is about

cost,” says Margaret Falk, a designer with Kowalske Kitchen & Bath in Delafield. “To help address that, we provide some general ‘starting point’ numbers. We’ve found it really helps homeowners get a better handle on their budget.”

Falk explains the budget breakout typically allocates: 40% for materials like cabinetry, countertops, fixtures, etc.; 36% for mechanicals like plumbing, electrical, HVAC; and 24% for labor, including job prep, demo and carpentry.

Maretes Hein, CEO and president of COR Improvement, LLC, in Glendale, reminds homeowners to be realistic about the remodel timeframe, especially these days.

“Some materials and fixtures simply aren’t available because of supply chain and manufacturing disruptions. Plus, due the current situation, city inspections have been taking longer,” she says. “I advise my clients that a small bathroom can take four to six weeks while a larger master bath can take three months or more.”

As Hein points out, the weekend bathroom remodels completed on HGTV aren’t realistic and don’t deliver the level of workmanship that a quality, long-lived remodel requires.

In terms of bathroom design, there’s a lot to share.

“Many homeowners are getting rid of tubs. They’re an expensive piece of real estate, especially if they aren’t used a lot,” says Grosspietsch. “Instead, they’re being replaced with larger more luxurious shower systems that have different water heights and spray patterns.”

For those who still like to soak, Grosspietsch says freestanding tubs are popular.

Falk adds that walk-in showers and “wet rooms” are becoming more common.

Often referred to as curbless or walk-in showers, these are especially convenient for older adults, young children and even pets since there’s no need to step up and into the shower. Walk-in showers can be completely enclosed with four walls and a door, no door for a true walk-in experience or sometimes three-sided for an open space creating a “wet room.”

A wet room integrates all elements - shower, toilet and sink - in a seamless way. In a wet room, the shower is part of the room instead of being its own closed off space. To control moisture, the floor is slightly sloped so water is channeled to a central drain and moisture is contained within the room’s sealed walls.

“There’s a practical and stylish element to walk-in showers and wet rooms,” explains Falk. “By eliminating the shower door or the fourth wall, there’s a ‘wow’ factor making the space seem bigger and airier. With less walls and corners in and around the shower, the bathroom is easier to clean and maintain.”

In terms of style, Hein says there’s a lot of mixing and matching going on in today’s bathroom. In fact, she calls the style “consistently inconsistent.”

“We’re seeing different finishes being put together like a bronze vanity light with chrome faucets. Statement tile is another trend. You might have white subway tile on the wall with a bold pattern for the floor tile,” says Hein.

When working with clients, Hein advises them to select one element that’s going to be an inspiration of the room. It may be a wall color, a unique sink or a spectacular mirror. Then, design around that piece. Keeping a unifying piece in mind helps eliminate the problem of having a chaotic mix of elements.

“Research, research, research,” adds Hein. “Visit design web sites and start picking out items -

faucets, tile, mirrors, colors, etc. You want to give the designer you’re working with a good idea of your style and what you like. The more insight you provide, the more the remodeled bathroom will reflect your personal taste and design aesthetic.”

Easy or low-maintenance elements are another trend.

“There are a number of products that have been designed specifically for convenience and ease. For example, there are glass shower doors that have a special coating that makes them easier to clean and resistant to spotting,” explains Grosspietsch. “There are showers that can be programmed to turn on automatically in the morning and exhaust fans that turn off after a set amount of time.”

No matter how big or small your bathroom remodel is, all three designers say any project should begin with research and a project consultation with a qualified professional.

“Take time to visit each company’s web site. Look to see which associations the company is part of and pay attention to whether they have certified professionals on staff and have earned industry awards. For example, NARI Milwaukee offers various certifications like CKBR and UDCP that demonstrate individuals have an advanced level of expertise. We also have a yearly awards competition that recognizes some of the best bathroom remodels based on quality, craftsmanship and aesthetics,” says Diane Welhouse, CKBR, executive director of NARI Milwaukee.

To find a qualified contractor or remodeler, start by visiting the NARI Milwaukee website at [narimilwaukee.org](http://narimilwaukee.org) or call 414-771-4071 to receive a free copy of “Renovate,” NARI’s new consumer magazine and membership directory.



Bathroom by COR Improvements, LLC



Bathroom by Kowalske Kitchen & Bath



# How to Create a Backyard Oasis

Today, families are sticking closer to home and looking for ways to entertain themselves, their children and close friends. Three members of NARI Milwaukee who have a combined 90-plus years in the industry share their thoughts on how to create a backyard oasis.

## How should homeowners start planning for their own backyard oasis?

David J. Thompson, owner of Swimming Pool Services, Inc., in Waukesha, begins by asking homeowners a series of questions.

"I find out what the couple or family likes to do outside. How they prefer to spend their time, what level of physical activity they engage in, how they currently entertain, how they'd like to entertain and what they want the yard to do for them," says Thompson.

He also encourages his clients to remember their best childhood memories of being outside.

By exploring the past, present and future, Thompson is able to get a feel for the direction the backyard should take.

Michael A. Manke, PLA, ASLA, with LandCrafters in Wauwatosa, says a wish list is a great place to start.

"We're getting inquiry calls because people have been working from home the last few months and they've been looking at their yard and

thinking of ways to improve it," says Manke.

He recommends homeowners visit websites to create their idea file and be ready to share their thoughts and dreams during an initial consultation.

Ken DePratt, owner of KD Poolsapes in Franksville, says it's important to remember the practical elements of planning a backyard project.

"I advise doing research in advance so the contractor knows what they're working with in terms of the actual amount of space that's available and whether there are any neighborhood or municipal restrictions that might impact the project. Having a firm understanding of your budget also helps the process go smoother," says DePratt.

For homeowners in newer subdivisions, DePratt suggests contacting the architecture planning committee to find out if there are any restrictions. An advance call to Diggers Hotline is another wise move.

## Are there any "must have" elements in a backyard oasis?

According to the NARI Milwaukee professionals, each backyard is customized to the homeowner and what they desire so there aren't any "template" plans.

"Within a backyard, homeowners can have a number of different areas," says Manke. "We usually include a space for cooking, dining and entertaining but we can also do a kids' play area, hobby areas for vegetable or herb gardening,

relaxation areas or almost anything you can think of."

Manke says LandCrafters has even created

*continued on next page*



Backyard by LandCrafters

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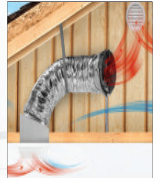
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# Backyard Oasis

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bocce ball courts, Japanese gardens and exterior lounge areas complete with TVs.

All three professionals agree that fire features are popular and serve a number of purposes.

“Fire pits and fireplaces add ambiance to a space and are a natural place to gather and relax,” says Thompson. “We can incorporate different seating options around a fire feature like seat walls or a more traditional grouping of couches and chairs.”

Fire pits can be natural gas or wood burning and range from traditional to modern designs. For any fire feature, it's important to check the local codes that might dictate setbacks and other requirements.

Structures like a pergola, gazebo or shade sail provide a sense of “space” and provide a practical way to get out of the sun.

For those who want a more active backyard with a way to cool off entirely, swimming or wading pools are the answer.

“A pool is really a destination point and an activity center for parents, kids and friends,” says Thompson. “Oftentimes, we hear that parents like the idea of knowing where their kids are and who they're with.”

Pools come in all shapes and sizes and can take many forms.

“We're getting more requests for pools that are smaller and shallower. They're designed for

floating, cooling off and hanging out,” adds DePratt. “We're doing patio pools that are just three to six feet deep so everyone can splash around and enjoy the water - similar to how you'd use a pool at a resort.”

## Is there a way to “see” how my finished backyard will look?

With today's technology there are a number of ways to “see” what a new backyard will look like.

KD Poolsapes uses 3D software that helps bring a landscape plan to life.

“We usually share three slightly different renderings to give homeowners some choices and options for their backyard space,” says DePratt.

LandCrafters draws plans to scale so the space (and what it can fit) is accurately represented.

“We get into all the details to ensure there's an appropriate amount of space to accommodate every element. We don't want to have any surprises like there's not enough room for a six-person outdoor table,” explains Manke. “We also share the overall concept. For example, if we're creating a more relaxed space, the design will incorporate curvilinear or curved lines - like curved seating walls, garden beds, etc.”

All three companies have a project showcase on their website so homeowners can browse completed yards.

“In addition to our portfolio, our web site has other resources, including an easy-to-complete 'Dreams Checklist' and a free, downloadable report on '10 Steps to the Perfect Pool,’”

says Thompson.

To find a qualified landscape or pool company, start by visiting the NARI Milwaukee website

at [nariumilwaukee.org](http://nariumilwaukee.org) or call 414-771-4071 to receive a free copy of “Renovate,” NARI's new consumer magazine and membership directory.



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# Remodeling Addresses Variety of Home Issues

Today's home is working overtime as adults and children are using it as their restaurant, office, classroom, entertainment spot and vacation destination.

NARI Milwaukee members report homeowners are looking to improve, repurpose and expand their space due to these increased demands.

## Kitchen Convenience

Since March, many families have been putting their kitchen to work three times a day, every

day. They're now preparing and eating breakfast, lunch and dinner at home.

"Homeowners are discovering their kitchen layout isn't ideal because, quite often, it wasn't originally designed for more than one cook," says Heather Brannan, an interior designer with Callen Construction in Muskego. "We're currently remodeling kitchens to give homeowners a more functional work triangle and more space to operate in."

Ideally, the placement of the sink, refrigerator

and stove should form a spacious triangle to allow for a smooth flow between those three main work areas.

Galley and U-shaped kitchens often pose challenges to this design concept. If a kitchen is used infrequently, some inconvenience is tolerable. However, these days, homeowners are looking to remedy situations that have escalated from annoying to "must address."

"To increase the size of the kitchen and improve functionality, we've been removing walls between the kitchen and living room," says Michael Maple, general manager of Renovations Group in Hartland. "In addition, since the dining room isn't used as much as before, removing the wall between the dining room and kitchen allows us to reconfigure the space for a larger kitchen."

Older homes often have a number of compartmentalized rooms that can be opened up and reconfigured to deliver more space.

"If we're creating an open concept room, we sometimes end up with additional space that we're able to turn into a walk-in pantry," adds Brannan. "Removing soffits in the kitchen is another way to deliver additional storage because we can install taller cabinets."

## Basement Conversions

Another area of the home that's getting a second look is the basement.

"Basements have typically been seen as a storage area," says Nicole Raffensperger, owner and lead designer with Design Tech Remodeling in Mequon. "Homeowners are now utilizing basements to meet their needs for additional space. They're creating home offices, entertainment areas and bedrooms so the family can spread out more."

Any basement remodel should begin with a thorough inspection by the homeowner and contractor to look for signs of water infiltration. A radon test is another smart move. The basement might also require the addition of an electrical sub panel, especially if the space needs an additional heat source like electric baseboards.

For those considering a basement bedroom, it's important to know that building codes mandate an egress window. Egress windows must meet specific requirements in terms of size and height from the floor so, in the case of a fire or another emergency situation, anyone in the lower level can escape and emergency personnel have access.

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# Remodeling

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## Home Office Boom

While home offices are popping up in the basement, little-used bedrooms are also being converted.

“To have a fully functioning home office, we've been adding electrical and lighting to bedrooms,” says John Nehmey, MCR, CR, UDCP, owner of Nehmey Construction, Inc., in Oak Creek. “We'll install recessed lighting throughout the room or above the desk. We've been doing the same thing in children's bedrooms to accommodate the fact that many are attending school at home.”

Nehmey notes that an ideal home office should be completely enclosed by four walls and have a door so the space is quiet, private and removed from other household activities.

## Attic Areas

Some homeowners are turning to their attics for extra room.

“Depending on the structure, roof height and stairs, the attic is a perfect space to subdivide for an additional bedroom, workout area or a multi-use space,” says Maple. “When it comes to attics, many of our clients are asking for a master bedroom suite.”

An attic remodel does have its own special considerations. The layout must accommodate a staircase. Additional plumbing and electrical might have to be run and adequate lighting is essential. Skylights, solar tubes, oversized windows or a dormer can beam natural light into an attic space.

“From a construction standpoint, the attic floor joists might need to be enhanced to support the added structure and intended use of the space,” explains Brannan. “However, you're adding more livable square footage to your home so it's definitely a positive conversion.”

To talk with NARI members who are experts in remodeling and construction, visit the NARI Milwaukee Home & Remodeling Show, October 16-18, at State Fair Park.

The photos in this section are from remodelers that have won a NARI Milwaukee Remodeler of the Year Award. Winners in the Remodeler of the Year awards have proven their commitment to customers and quality, and their exceptional work ethic shows from concept to completion.



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