

## **My Handyman owner launches Home Tips 4 Women Web site**

### **Web site offers tips to get projects done**

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GREENLAND — Cars come with owner's manuals. Houses don't.

And while there are professionals for every type of home project or repair, a knowledge gap prevents many from talking confidently with contractors. This group, said Portsmouth My Handyman owner Tina Gleisner, includes single women, who now account for 21 percent of U.S. home sales.

"Most building professionals learn by watching and doing — not by reading and talking," Gleisner said. "Until I learned the terminology, contractors would talk to me, but it was hard to have a conversation."

Gleisner learned those terms building her franchise, which she opened in 2003, and fielding customer calls, providing directions for projects over the phone and following up with explanatory e-mails, which she began to collect for reuse.

Realizing many women could use such information, Gleisner created the Association of Women Home Owners at [www.hometips4women.com](http://www.hometips4women.com), an online community designed to teach women about all aspects of home ownership, including building, interior design and maintenance.

The AWHO site went up Friday at a launch party at Kevin Roy Builders, 64 Portsmouth Ave., Stratham. For Gleisner, the event was more about thanking customers she's connected with through her business, blog and newsletter, Nut & Bolts.

"I'm not really pushing a product," she said. "I'm just trying to build a community where there's interaction."

Gleisner said the AWHO site is designed to empower women, make them comfortable conversing with roofers or plumbers, and knowledgeable enough to assess whether they can tackle a project or if they should hire a contractor.

"Most homeowner Web sites are about do-it-yourself projects written mostly by men who assume you know what a Sawzall is," Gleisner said, referring to the reciprocating saw used to cut studs within walls or nails attaching a windowsill to a jamb.

Gleisner's site, which she is rolling out in stages, will have two primary components: a library and a business directory. The library will feature construction and home-care articles written by building professionals as well as user stories, which, Gleisner feels, are equally valuable. "People learn better by reading stories, especially on such a dry topic," Gleisner said. "I think women will be supportive role models for one another and will help keep education fun."

The library will also include educational videos. The first ones will provide orientation to the site and others will encompass the entire home ownership life cycle, and archived episodes of Gleisner's weekly "Home Tips 4 Women" BlogTalkRadio show she began in July.

The business directory, to launch in early 2011, will provide pages for building professionals to promote their business. The directory expands the concept Gleisner developed in 2006 with 4 Walls, 1 Roof, an online, co-marketing network of women-owned, home-services businesses.

Space in the new directory will be larger at 5 to 10 pages, and Gleisner hopes, more personal.

"An entry that talks about a business and its owner is a more friendly way to reach out to customers," she said.

Home professionals will pay an annual fee for directory inclusion and will be able to publish articles to the library. The first 1,000 will receive the first year free

Homeowners will always have free access to both the library and directory and can post article requests for topics not covered on the site.

Future features, Gleisner said, will include a private interactive community where homeowners for a fee can talk directly with professionals — a service designed to give homeowners support and a higher comfort level with contractors prior to projects.

Ultimately for Gleisner, the launch of the AWHO site is about connecting people.

"The idea is to bring resources together, such as plumbers, paint store owners and flooring providers. Customers don't want to have to look in a hundred different places for help with their home."

#### At a glance

Association of Women Home Owners (AWHO)

Founder: Tina Gleisner

Address: P.O. Box 426, Greenland

Phone: (866) 433-0966

Web: [www.hometips4women.com](http://www.hometips4women.com)

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