



## Shed Builder SPOTLIGHT

### Shed Builder Spotlight: MATTHEW BLACK, BLACK'S BUILDINGS

*Innovative shed builders have pivoted their builds as consumer demand for customized sheds continues to rise. Once known only as a space for storage, sheds have recently been rethought as an extension of or even a replacement for a traditional home. We spoke with Matthew Black, founder of Black's Buildings in Lebanon, Tennessee, for insight on shed trends, how demand has increased, and the role [LP products](#) play in it all.*

#### **The Rise of Alternative-Use Sheds**

Black notes that as housing prices in the Tennessee area continue to rise, more people are looking to alternative housing options. Today the outdoor building structure industry has the structural and stylistic capacity to expand beyond typical shed usage and into an alternative living space. With so many options for trim, siding, roofing, flooring and external accessories, people are able to design a space that suits their style and their budget.

Black explains, "Now more than ever, we have been receiving an influx in tiny home requests. The exterior variety and sturdy building materials now offered for sheds make finishing a shed into a tiny house a great solution for people looking for cost-effective housing."

As requests for the building or conversion of tiny home-like structures have increased, so has a trend in homeowners who use sheds in the traditional sense. "People want to differentiate their building from others in the neighborhood," said Black. Many homeowners are expanding their sheds and revamping the exterior for a unique look. "Steeper pitches, larger overhangs, double pane windows—people want something nicer than your common shed," notes Black. Updating the look of your shed elevates the overall look of your home.

#### **How Exterior Design Trends Influence Sheds**

People have spent more time at home than ever during the pandemic, which gave many homeowners reason to invest in their indoor and outdoor spaces, including sheds. As people build, update and convert their sheds, they are looking for house-like exteriors that stand out. At Black's Buildings, A-frame sheds are their best seller. Black also notes that consumers are opting for gray siding.

When it comes to exterior design trends, Black prefers to use primed [LP® SmartSide® Trim & Siding](#) products as the base for not only their ease and durability but for how they contribute to an overall crisp, versatile aesthetic. "[It] works really well and gives the customer a look they can't traditionally get with a lot of other siding products," says Black.

#### **Black's Go-to Engineered Wood Products**

Durability is key to shed builds, and with more people turning them into their homes and workspaces it's important that sheds provide what Black calls "comparable reliability to traditional housing." Because of this, Black uses a portfolio of LP products for their durability, installation efficiency and overall aesthetic.

"I think it's the best siding on the market," states Black about LP SmartSide products. "The pre-primed siding streamlines the process and allows for easy paint application."

Historically, many of Black's Buildings customers opted for metal shed materials; however, the aesthetic appeal of LP SmartSide products is growing customer interest. From a builder's perspective, LP SmartSide Lap Siding & Trim is a lighter, more durable siding solution with quicker install time compared to its competitors.

#### **Making a Lasting Choice**

"The 50-year limited warranty that LP SmartSide products offer is the best in the market," says Black. "I don't know of any other products that I can stand behind as much as LP does with this product."

Black has found it hard to find products with warranty options, so when he discovered LP SmartSide products boasted a 5/50-year limited warranty it changed the game. "Customers gravitate towards LP products more than other building materials because of the limited warranty and history of premium durability," says Black. In fact, his customers haven't had a single warranty claim on LP products.

Whether you're converting a shed into a workspace, giving it a refresh or turning it into a home, LP's portfolio of shed products makes it easy for both customers and builders to reach their goals.

