



Keeping Your Home & Family **SAFE** from the **STORM**



The Sunshine State has a 62 percent chance of experiencing a hurricane. So if you live in Florida, it's best to be prepared for stormy weather. Family-run Paradise Exteriors wants to make sure your doors and windows will withstand severe winds and flying debris to protect your home and keep you safe.



Written by Karen Hawthorne

What happens when a hurricane warning is issued for your area? You test your flashlights, fill your bathtub and extra jugs with water, and make sure your windows and doors are ready for impact. That means putting up your hurricane shutters before the winds get too high, the same shutters that block daylight in your home when the electricity is out during and after bad weather.

But with hurricane impact windows now required by building codes, residents of South Florida can rest a little easier in storm season. They don't need to do anything with their windows and doors other than to double-check they are closed and locked. That's peace of mind, and something the Beckner family has been proud to offer customers since 2005 through Paradise Exteriors, a home contractor that specializes in premium windows and doors based in Boynton Beach, Florida.

"When Hurricane Wilma hit Florida in 2005, my dad had some work down here for hurricane relief," Anthony Beckner, COO, says of the company's beginnings when his parents, Dan and Tina Beckner, moved the family from Cincinnati, Ohio. "He always wanted to live in Florida and he came back from there and said, 'we're moving.' I was graduating high school, so it worked out well."

Beckner has worked for his dad in construction since he was 18, with time away from the family business during college and other jobs, and he's been back at Paradise for the past three years. Dan oversees the company, Tina is General Manager and his Uncle Eric is Production Manager.

It's definitely a family-run business and that's one of the things he loves most about it. Paradise is team-oriented with 50 full-time and 20 part-time employees who get together for full staff and additional department meetings every week to make sure the 500 to 600 projects on the go are running smoothly. The company does about 2,000 installations a year, nearly doubling its business every year since 2014.

The company's customers benefit from great personal service and attention from a smaller family-owned contractor, and Beckner gets to spend a lot of time with his hardworking family. He even shares an office with his father. ▶▶





“My dad’s my boss. He’s great to work for. A large reason for our success is that he is an easy guy to work for,” Beckner says. “He’s worked in every single position in the company; he knows what each job entails and who is doing a good job. He knows how to work with people well. Like any father and son, you butt heads on a few things but for the majority, everything goes along great.”

Why Paradise? It’s a memorable name that suits the locale, and came up during dinner conversation at the kitchen table. “I love Florida,” he says. “You wake up and the sun shines, big palm trees, warm weather, right on the beach. It’s a beautiful thing. That’s why we’re Paradise Exteriors.”

“We know we’re giving people a premium product that’s going to last for the time they stay in their home.”



And when the weather turns violent – and it can happen fast! – the Beckners know the custom-made windows and doors they’ve installed in homes across South Florida are top-quality impact-resistant and built to last, keeping homes and families safe and secure.

The company has exclusive rights to selling Soft-Lite windows in South Florida, a vinyl double-hung premium window that ▶▶





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is far superior to the aluminum, builder-grade windows often used by contractors and developers, Beckner says. Paradise windows and doors also come with a solid warranty for life and can be passed to the next homeowner when you move.

While single-hung windows have only a lower operating sash for ventilation, double-hung windows have two operating sashes that move up and down, allowing for ventilation on the top, bottom or both. But the real beauty of the Soft-Lite windows is that they are durable, stylish and eco-friendly. Plus, they lower your energy bills.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gave Soft-Lite the 2018 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Sustained Excellence Award for superior energy efficiency. In 2016 alone, ENERGY STAR certified products, homes, buildings and plants helped Americans save more than \$30 billion in energy costs and roughly 400 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity.

"Any time the company gets an update on a customer order, an email or text is sent to keep the customer in the loop."

"We know we're giving people a premium product that's going to last for the time they stay in their home. We wouldn't install something in somebody's home that we wouldn't have in our own home," Beckner says.

He also credits PACE financing, and lenders such as Ygrene that have created lending to homeowners which is not based on credit score but rather on the equity in their homes.

"As long as they have equity in their home, homeowners can get funding for renovations on their home, for a new roof, windows, doors. So this program has really helped our business help a lot of people. It's taken off in the past two years."

Good business is certainly about providing a quality product, but it is also giving back to the community. Paradise has been recognized with numerous awards, including the prestigious Florida Governor's Business Ambassador Award this March for the company's commitment to creating jobs for the local community. The company has also won best window and door contractor in the city, putting Paradise in the Boynton Beach business hall of fame.

What also sets Paradise apart from competitors are the advanced technologies and software it uses to improve estimates and keep customers updated. The goal is, "we don't know more than the customer knows," so any time the company gets an update on a customer order, an email or text is sent to keep the customer in the loop. Since permits are required and there's a backlog of permit requests at building departments because of growing demand, it can take a few weeks before an order can be processed.

"Typically we're in our customers' lives for anywhere from two to four months, so we like to keep the customer updated every 10 days," Beckner explains.

Software created by LEAP has moved pen-and-paper contracts online, eliminating potential errors and guesswork. The system showcases all the Paradise products with full details online, so customers know exactly the product they're getting and where

it's going to be in their home, and installation has become that much more efficient.

Now the challenge is the strong economy, with glass and other manufacturers underestimating product demand and scrambling to fill orders. Keeping customers updated is a priority when wait times are longer than anticipated industry-wide. But with a great reputation, client referrals and award-winning service, Paradise has no shortage of customers in sight.

"It's all those struggles that you go through as a business," says Beckner. "And the economy always turns. We're hoping it stays strong." ■



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