

# suburban life

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**My Deck** celebrates 40 years in business as an innovator and leader in the outdoor industry, always striving to put its customers' needs above its own.

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# Fabulous at 40

**My Deck** celebrates four decades in business as an innovator and leader in the outdoor industry, always striving to put its customers' needs above its own.

**F**orty years in business is certainly a notable achievement, but Robert Lascelle doesn't plan on celebrating the milestone with some kind of lavish party. His company, called My Deck, has lasted for four decades not by resting on its past success, but by being innovative, staying ahead of its competitors, and being committed to the mantra of always doing right by the customer, even when it means a more difficult path.

"You cannot take the path of least resistance," Lascelle says. "To this day, I'm not done trying to improve our company. I'm always trying to make it better."

That mindset, along with his boundless energy, helped My Deck flourish right from the start when he founded the company in 1986. Lascelle originally intended to become a harbor pilot like his father. Instead, he found



his calling in designing and building beautiful outdoor living spaces where homeowners can create lasting memories with their loved ones.

Early on, he offered kitchen and bathroom

renovations, finished basements, and additions. He changed course about 20 years ago, choosing to focus just on outdoor living spaces.

"That was the best decision I ever made," he says. "I didn't think I could have enough business in this industry just doing decks all year long, but I was completely wrong. I took a leap of faith, and it worked out well."

My Deck has built more than 5,000 custom decks in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and has established itself as a leader in the industry by embracing new technology and evolving trends. For example, My Deck was one of the first decking companies in the region to use helical pier footings and steel framing, which have since become standard.

Helical piers are deep-set screw piles that anchor securely in the ground, providing a more





solid foundation. The superior strength of steel framing enables longer spans with fewer support posts, creating more open deck designs. It also solves many of the issues associated with wood framing.

"Even though it costs more money, clients understand the value, the quality, and how long the deck is going to last," Lascelle says. "Pressure-treated wood, especially today, is softer, less dense, and it warps and twists. When you put a composite material on top of that, you think you have that deck just perfect, but there is nothing any contractor can do to prevent it from warping, moving, and having visible dips and bumps throughout the deck's surface that you can feel when you walk on it."

Lascelle is a proud member of the North American Deck and Railing Association and holds top-tier certifications from the leading manufacturers in the industry, including Trex, TimberTech, MoistureShield, and Deckorators. Unlike some in the decking business, he is not beholden to any one manufacturer.

"Those decking companies do that because they get favoritism through leads and dollars through the manufacturer, the more jobs they do," he says. "We don't do that. We always choose the products that are best for our customers, not for us."

That also means Lascelle will go out of his way to give homeowners a deck they will get the most use out of and enjoy for decades to come. With his experience, he knows that certain trends are just adopted for aesthetic reasons and should probably be avoided.

"I've said this to clients many times: If you're going to spend X amount of money on a deck and it's not functional, you might as well not do it. Don't waste your money," Lascelle says. "It's important



to build something you're going to use and enjoy, and it's something that is going to pull you outside.

"Having features like outdoor kitchens, firepits, and all of these amenities is an amazing way to enhance your deck," he continues. "We're doing a ton of covered decks and louvered pergolas right now, which are just game-changers because they can block out the sun and the rain. We do screen walls that drop down at the push of a button to keep bugs out or block the sun when it's coming in at an angle in the late afternoon. There are really



amazing things we can do to make an outdoor space functional and truly make it an extension of your home."

Other options include multilevel decks, TVs, outdoor lighting, or an accompanying patio. My Deck installs custom aluminum rails templated to each deck for a precise fit, then fully welds them, eliminating brackets for a cleaner appearance and a stronger structure. The result is a sleek, durable railing system finished with a powder coating that lasts for years.

Homeowners can gain a better understanding of various materials and amenities by walking through the My Deck showroom. The brick-and-mortar location, which Lascelle owns, means My Deck is easy to find should any problems arise down the line.

It's easy to see why so many people have trusted the company with their outdoor needs, and why one respected local inspector recently paid Lascelle the ultimate compliment: "If I were going to go out and work for somebody, I would want to work for My Deck. They do everything right. I can't fail them for anything, and that's a company I would want to work for."

Lascelle, of course, would welcome the opportunity to make his company even stronger. That's been his approach for 40 years, and he has no plans on changing now. ■

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