

[Backcountry Essentials remodeling upstairs space for retail](#)

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By Isaac Bonnell

Backcountry Essentials, an outdoor retailer located at [214 W. Holly St.](#), is in the process of remodeling its downtown store in order to open up a second story space for retail purposes.

The \$40,000 remodel will add a new staircase, an upstairs restroom, and reinforce the floor of the 1,200-square-foot upstairs space, said Chris Gerston, who owns the business with his wife Erica.

The extra retail space, which was previously used for storage, will allow Gerston to spread out the store's inventory and use the first floor space better.

“We were piling up so high, that was the only direction we could expand,” he said, adding that he will eventually bring in more items. “Our first step is just going to be to spread things out. I’m nervous about growing too quickly.”

The project started in early November and is expected to finish by the second week of December, just in time for the holiday rush, Gerston said. Along with the expansion, Gerston said he is looking to add one or two more employees to his staff of four.

For more information, call Backcountry Essentials at (360) 543-5678 or visit www.backcountryessentials.net.