

Rainy Weather Construction



One of our readers recently asked about processes used during winter construction to eliminate problems with water intrusion. It's a great question – how do we build dry, moisture-stable homes in the middle of the winter rainy season?

The answer is relatively straightforward. Landed Gentry's Project Manager, Bill Stone, explains, "It's all about air flow." Drying out a rain-soaked home under construction is not a problem as long as certain precautions are taken. Construction materials, especially lumber, are stored on elevated blocks and under plastic tarps until needed. Roof trusses are custom built off-site for each home, and are delivered and installed the same day to prevent



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Ensuring Homeowner Satisfaction

The idea of a "punch list" may not sound very appealing at first, but it's really an invaluable tool for making sure our homes meet the standards and expectations of our homebuyers. A punch list -- industry slang for a short checklist of items that need to be completed, repaired, or replaced -- is also an effective communication tool with our trade partners and our clients. It acts as a quick and easy reference to the status of the project and its state of readiness.

Most commonly, punch lists are used as the house nears completion. Increasingly, one is created and addressed internally (by our staff, without the homebuyer present), and a second one developed as a homeowner and one of our associates walk through a new house just before the close of escrow. In either case, the punch list typically contains minor items that can be addressed quickly and easily. Conducting an internal inspection and addressing punch list items before the final client walk-through has proven to boost our homebuyers overall satisfaction.

Lesser known (but common among the most professional builders) are the punch lists that are produced at almost every phase of the building process. This enables us to communicate and collaborate with our product suppliers and subcontractors regarding the quality and status of their work in progress. Like those created during a final walk-through with a homebuyer, punch lists during construction ensure that each stage of work is complete and ready for the next phase. We can then call for an inspection by the local building department or schedule the next wave of trade partners and material deliveries to start the next stage of work. This formal process is key to managing the thousands of details in building a new home, helping us stay on schedule and on budget.

Still, no matter how many times we conduct inspections and develop punch lists, no house is perfect. There are bound to be some things that homebuyers notice and identify to the builder during a final walk-through; in addition, there may be items a builder will point out as already on the punch list, and explain the policies and procedures in place for taking care of everything on the list in a timely manner.

accumulation of moisture.

Once the roof is completed, the framed home is briefly left open to dry using natural airflow. Later, when wall coverings are added, the home's heating system is installed. Warm air flow from the furnace is allowed to further dry out the home's interior, prior to the addition of insulation and drywall. This is an extra step that Landed Gentry performs that most builders do not take.

Roofs, walls and ceilings are carefully checked for any remaining dampness. In addition, upgraded flooring materials are used to prevent swelling from any water that may have gotten in, and floor boards are tested with a moisture meter prior to the installation of carpet, tile, or other flooring. These careful steps have proven effective in preventing problems with water intrusion, ensuring that Landed Gentry's construction quality remains consistently high, even during Washington's frequently rainy weather. Thank you, Mr. Kossman, for the excellent question.

Builders differ in their approach to satisfying the punch list. Most of them work to cross every item off the list prior to the close of escrow so that the closing process is hassle-free. Depending on the punch list, a builder may try to schedule the necessary labor to address every item on the same day, rather than over several days, out of respect for a new homeowner's time and busy schedule. With a reliable and consistent punch list system in place, we are able to deliver a truly completed house that regularly meets or exceeds the expectations of our homebuyers.

When we communicate effectively with our clients, subcontractors, and materials suppliers throughout the process, punch lists are typically short and easy to complete, helping us deliver the most positive overall experience and best possible new homeowner experience possible.

Warm regards,

Brian

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Building Success 101

Q: Am I liable for accidents that occur during the construction of my house?

A: In most cases, no. Builders and their subcontractors carry liability and worker's compensation insurance against job site accidents. In addition, they are regulated by the federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), as well as their insurers, to maintain a safe workplace, eliminate hazards, and train their workers in safe work habits and emergency response. Make sure that you follow your builder's safety guidelines and procedures should you visit the job site.