



DISCUSS THESE WITH YOUR BUILDER

TO ENSURE YOU RECEIVE A QUALITY BUILD

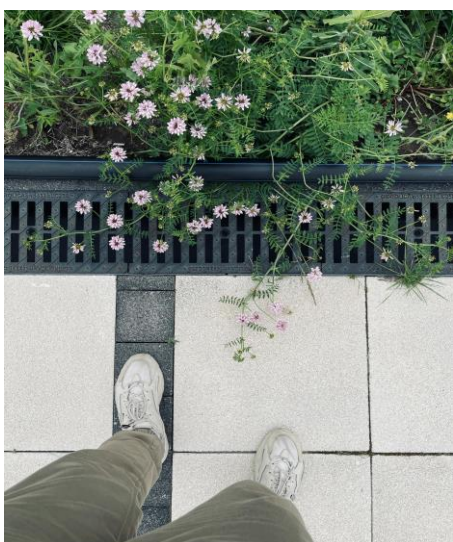
Building a custom home is often overwhelming and stressful. Sometimes we are so focused on how the home looks that we forget basic construction considerations that help ensure the home was built with quality in mind.

We've identified a list of items to discuss with your builder during the planning process to reduce frustration and expense after your home is built. Depending on how involved you want to be in the construction process (such as the selection of methods and materials), delving into these topics with your builder will ensure you're enjoying your home long after it's built.



EXTERIOR LIGHTING:

There are many exterior lighting considerations which affect the aesthetics and functionality of your property. For example, exterior ground-based lighting for driveways, walkways, and accent assist in the security, safety and beauty of your property. Lighting in your eaves and in porch/patio ceilings can add nighttime ambiance while also providing practical lighting at garage entries and the sides/rear of your home. Even if you plan to defer the cost of some exterior lighting fixtures, it's best to lay the groundwork early so they can easily be added later.



DRAINAGE:

Not a glamorous topic – but an important one! How your builder decides to control water run-off around and near your home is a critical consideration that can have grave consequences if not done properly. Depending on your ground elevations, consider installing drainage on the uphill side of your residence to route water around your home. Running all downspouts into underground piping which feed into a French drain or sewer is also a good idea. These can alleviate unwanted water pooling and prevent drain water from running onto sidewalks and driveways.

ROOF LIFE:

When it comes to your roof, there are many options, and all have advantages and disadvantages. Roofing can dramatically change the way a home looks and the quality of the roofing material can have a large impact on long-term maintenance. Weather may also be a factor (i.e., higher pitched roofs are better in heavy snow areas). Ensure you know if you're getting a low, mid or high-grade roof as well as roof life (30 or 50 year). Consider the aesthetics of each roof type on your home: metal, asphalt, composition, tile, architectural singles, etc.



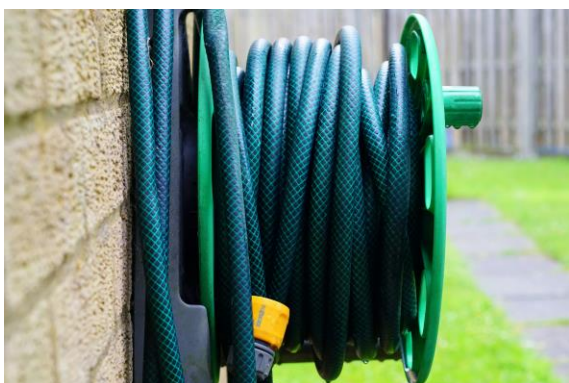


SIDING:

If you've never heard of the Louisiana Pacific siding ("LP siding") lawsuit, give it a google. This happened in the mid-90s and was a nightmare for many homeowners. Today, Louisiana Pacific offers many reputable products (we have LP siding on our home!) but it's always good to know exactly what type of siding you're getting and it's manufacturer. There are countless siding pattern options in the industry, including horizontal, vertical, panel, board and batten and shingles. Siding materials include engineered wood, fiber cement, natural wood, vinyl, metal, stucco, stone, and brick just to name a few. All carry their own maintenance profiles and can vary greatly in cost. Do your research and discuss with your builder the advantages and disadvantages of each.

WINDOWS:

There are MANY window manufacturers and window types. Some of the most popular window types include, fixed (or picture), sliding, double hung, casement and awning. In terms of quality and energy efficiency, there are several window frame options including vinyl, aluminum, composite, wood and fiberglass. Make sure you discuss with your builder his or her choice of manufacturer and then do some research to determine if you feel the manufacturer's quality meets your standards. For more on different window types, click [here](#).



EXTERIOR PLUMBING:

Have you ever purchased a home and later realized you didn't have the necessary hose bibs you needed for gardening, washing cars, cleaning porches, patios, etc? Or wish you had a direct fuel source for that barbeque or firepit? These might seem like small things, but it can be a major pain to add these things later, not to mention expensive. Consider where you plan to use exterior water and ensure you communicate this to your builder. Determine where your barbeque and/or firepit will be and ask the builder to add the appropriate gas lines for these.

HEATING & COOLING:

There are many types of HVAC systems available today, both with ducting and without. The one you choose will be driven by your climate, size of your home, cost, and personal preference. In recent years, ductless systems have become more popular because of their energy efficiency and ability to control temperature by room. You may also choose to heat some rooms with radiant heat such as bathrooms. Whichever you choose, it is good to know the manufacturer of your unit(s) as they vary widely in price and quality. To learn more about the different types of HVAC options, read more [here](#).



OFF GRID:

If you plan to be self-sufficient, or simply like the idea of being prepared for power outages or natural disasters, then consider planning for this during construction. Back-up generators and solar panels need to be discussed with the electrician for proper wiring, and with your builder for optimal placement. If you will be using propane, consider burying your tank underground to eliminate an eyesore! For water collection, consider having a cistern installed and

route run-off into that. If you plan to have a greenhouse, address irrigation and lighting with the builder as well.

IRRIGATION:

There is nothing like the convenience of an automatic watering system. Whether you will use your water main or separate irrigation water for irrigating your landscaping, discuss with your builder the location of sprinklers, and other water accoutrements (swimming pools, water features, hot tubs, etc). Your builder can ensure the proper water lines are available prior to pouring concrete or completing grading work. Consider telling your builder you would like the controls for your watering system located INSIDE the garage for easy access.

