NEW HOMES & CONDOS

Questions, questions, questions



Tontinually remind new home shoppers to ask questions of the builders, communities and homes they are considering.

I call it doing their "homework," and I'm happy to say that buyers are more educated now than ever before. On the other side of the Agreement of Purchase and Sale, builders are more sophisticated and concerned with quality as well.

When you shop for a new home, you should also ask a few questions beyond the obvious – and think seriously about how lucky you are to be buying a home in Ontario.

A few examples of questions you may ask are, "Is there 2x6 exterior wall construction?" and "Are the foundation walls wrapped?" and "How is the builder ensuring that the homes are placed in the exact right spots on the lots?"

spots and build up low areas. Road installation happens only after we have figured out how rainwater will drain off of them. During it all, the municipality and region have to approve the various steps. We make a draft plan and then a final plan that shows where each home is to be placed.

From lines on paper, surveyors place stakes in the ground, and when we dig for and install the foundations, we have to ensure that each home fits exactly within the municipality's tolerances — and trust me, they have to be right on the mark.

Our modern machinery and technology allow us to do the GTA scheduling concrete suppliers, for example.

Each foundation takes two or three loads, and once you start pouring, you have to keep going until it's complete. The coordination of all of this is incredible. It's amazing how well we do as an industry.

Most people take homebuilding for granted, as though new homes pop up like Jack-in-the-Pulpits in a flower garden. It reminds me of the hilarious Conan O'Brien segment with comedian Louis C.K., when Louis goes on and on about how people take things like flying, cell phones and technology in general for granted. He points out that "Every-

He points out that "Everything is amazing right now and nobody's happy." It also reminds me of an episode of "The Agenda with Steve Paikin" a while back when the topic he and his guests were discussing was how we tend to take things for granted — sometimes important things. Our new homes are built with incredible accuracy, and considering the complexity of it all, I am proud of the job we do.

Contrary to the comedian's statement, I'm going to go out on a limb and say that most new home buyers are happy. They recognize that this isn't an exact science and that when homes settle, things like nail pops are natural. A good builder backs the home's warranty and fixes deficiencies in a timely fashion. If you are in doubt about anything at all concerning the building of your new home and community, ask, ask, ask. If the sales representatives don't know the answers, they should be willing to find out for you.

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We have to follow stringent guidelines set out by Ontario Building Code, and many of us go above and beyond those criteria to offer solid, thoughtfully designed and well-built homes. Today's buyers research areas, amenities, builder reputations, features and finishes to arrive at their purchase decisions.

You may be surprised at the complexity of the answer to the third question. When we plan a new community, we have to take into consideration the contour of the land and whether there is enough sewer capacity to handle the growth.

We literally sculpt the land in order to smooth out high that. Now, consider the fact that a community with hundreds and even thousands of homes at differing elevations has to work as a whole.

Then consider the suppliers who have to arrive with materials at specific times so that we can keep progressing to meet occupancy dates. There are people in offices across

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