



# NEWHOMEGUIDE

GTA Edition

Your Best Source for New Homes

## //INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

## From below the ground up

» by HUGH HERON



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**Buying a new home is exciting, especially for first-time buyers signing their Agreement of Purchase and Sale.**

For developers, however, the journey started years before, when they purchased the land and had it zoned residential. Negotiations with the municipality and province for subdivision agreements spell out where roads and amenities will be, the lot sizes, which types of housing are appropriate, and where they will be placed. The process can take years. Here's a snapshot of how your beautiful new home will take shape.

Once we start selling and a buyer chooses a design and lot, the engineer and surveyor plot the home on the land to make sure it complies with the subdivision agreement and advise the excavator where and how deep to dig the foundation hole. Then the surveyor places pins for the exact location of the house. The carpenter puts in the columns, concrete is poured on the footings, and the forming contractor sets up foundation walls. When the foundation is poured, the forming is removed, a waterproofing and drainage layer is installed on top, and storm water sewers are added.

Steel is then delivered to carry the load-bearing walls, and stone is placed into the basement to establish the base for the floor. The carpenters continue with the installation of walls and window frames. The house is ready for the roof trusses, and the shingles can be placed and windows installed. Heating and plumbing contractors can come in to rough in fixtures and install piping and duct work. After this is complete, the electricians can prepare the wiring so the electrical meter can be installed. This requires a mandatory electrical inspection, and the framing and plumbing have to be approved by a building inspector.

The builder now concentrates on the exterior of the home. Once the home is prepped, bricks and/or siding is installed, and details such as soffit, fascia, eaves troughs and downspouts can go in, porches can be prepared and poured, and railings put in.

We can now go back inside to begin finishing the interior. Insulation involves two types – foam in the garage, and fiberglass inside. Once these materials are installed, the vapour barrier is added. This clear plastic sheet nailed to the studs surrounding the insulation is a critical component of the home, and is applied in all the rooms. Both the insulation and vapour barrier have to be approved by the building inspector before we begin to apply drywall.

Drywall taping takes studs, insulation and plastic sheeting to a beautiful, seamless expanse of walls. While this is going on, the furnace can be installed, the hot water tank



and all the plumbing connections can be completed, and the electrician can work on the panel to make sure everything is safe. Then the garage can be finished.

Inside, workers are sanding the subfloors, and the electrician finishes off the home's electrical system. The temporary barriers for safety on the stairs can be removed, and the railing, interior trim and doors, flooring, kitchens and vanities installed. Once finished, the builder arranges for the ducts and house to be cleaned and for the mandatory inspections, all in preparation for the PDI walkthrough and the Certificate of Completion and Possession.

We're excited to hand over the home, but this can happen only after the lawyer has completed the paperwork at the Land Registry Office. Once we get the official go-ahead, we notify the sales office to release the keys.

Realize that when you choose a new home for your first home, you benefit from years of planning, the latest in technology and construction techniques, and a system of checks and balances that ensure top quality. Congratulations on your decision to buy new, and enjoy!