



The Building Process

The Wisconsin Builders Association understands that once you make the decision to build, you look forward with great anticipation to the date you can move into your new home! It's natural to want to see immediate and frequent progress, but it's important for you to have realistic expectations about the building process. Be flexible and avoid making arrangements that might cause you to worry if the move-in date changes slightly over time.

Before Construction

In the initial stages of the project, there are several factors beyond the builder's control:

Weather — this is an obvious factor throughout construction.

Building Permit — most residential construction requires a permit, and the time needed to obtain a permit varies depending on local practices and workload.

Design Review Committee — many communities today have covenants protected by a homeowner's association; your house plans may need to be approved before construction can begin.

Structural Changes — the home design must be finalized before applying for a building permit, and it may take several days to several weeks to update the plans when you make structural changes.

During Construction

The builder creates a construction schedule based on experience and input from the trades. At several points during construction, nothing appears to be happening — don't panic! Builders are experienced in handling many issues that affect the progress of the home:

Trade Contractors, early — sometimes a trade completes its work ahead of schedule; the next trade has an assigned time that the builder cannot change on short notice.

Trade Contractors, late — one late trade can force the builder to reschedule several others; this may cause your home to lose its place in line with one of the affected contractors.

Building Inspection — at several points during construction, the work up to that point needs to pass required building inspections; work cannot move beyond that point until the inspection is completed.

Material Delays — materials may not arrive on time or arrive incomplete or damaged.

Perceived Delays — some portions of the work move quickly while other tasks require more time; work may be progressing quite well even though you don't see much change.

Site Visits

Many builders schedule specific dates for you to visit the construction site of your new home; when on the site, remember that your safety, satisfaction, and the smooth flow of work are the builder's prime concerns:

Contact the Builder — if you have a question or concern, contact the builder; *do not give instructions directly to trade contractors.*

Degree of Urgency — with any issue, consider whether it can wait until the next planned conversation with the builder or whether you should contact the builder immediately; try to resist pointing out items the builder will address in the normal sequence of construction.

Play it Safe — if you're in doubt about how urgent your concern is, contact the builder.

Put it in Writing — reduce the possibility of miscommunication by putting your comments in writing; remember to keep a copy for your records.

Safety

For your safety and to avoid violations and fines, the builder may require that you be accompanied by company personnel when visiting your home site; you may also be required to wear a hard hat at various phases of construction. Whatever the builder's policies, keep the following points in mind at all times:

Always look in the direction you're walking — beams, boards, etc may be sticking out where you would normally not expect them.

Stay clear of large, noisy equipment and power tools — assume the operator does not see or hear you.

Be aware of someone working above you — construction personnel working on the roof may not hear you arrive.

Hands off — avoid handling or attempting to use any tools, equipment or ladders you see on the site.