

Building above code



COSTS MORE

BY CLAUDIO MASTRONARDI

Today's renovation clients have come to expect more from the companies doing home construction. And so they should. Popular TV shows have done a lot to highlight the fact that not all contractors are created equal. These shows have helped make the consumer wiser and better prepared to ask important questions about the quality of work they can expect. In the process, however, while raising client expectations, the cost differential between building to code and building above code has not always been clearly outlined.

For example, if your renovation includes re-roofing, the building code says nails are sufficient to secure the plywood sheeting. This method meets code requirements, is cost effective and efficient. There is another way of putting plywood sheeting in place, however. In this case screws are used instead of nails. This is definitely above code. This method, although excellent, is costlier by comparison because it is more labour intensive. The bottom line is greater cost to the client and more time to complete the job.

TV host and contractor Mike Holmes states in his book *Make it Right* (Collins, \$39.95), "For myself, when I build, I like to see everything above code." The fact is that building above code simply costs more. If, as a consumer, you want construction on your project to exceed the current building code standard, you are entitled to that, but you should be aware of the additional costs involved.

Consumers should also be aware that it makes good sense to purchase builders risk insurance. This must be purchased by homeowners to protect them from theft, vandalism or fire while construction is underway. It is over and above the typical homeowner's insurance policy and covers issues beyond the scope of the contractor's own insurance. It is an extra safeguard that anyone considering a renovation should look into. 🌿

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