

Things you should consider before building a home

This informational packet is provided to you by Construction Industry Professionals representing the following fields: Real Estate Law, Title Company, Real Estate Sales, Banking, Mortgage Company, Building Contractors, and Building Department. The items contained herein are not mandatory; however the objective is to assist you with options available to you to aid in an informed decision in contracting the construction of your new home.

When selecting a contractor:

- When talking to a potential contractor, request the names of owners from the last two or three homes that the contractor completed or a client whose project is currently under construction if available.
- Check with the North Port Building Department, Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, North Port Area Chamber of Commerce and the Better Business Bureau for any complaints against a potential contractor.

When signing your contract:

- Read your contract. Consider having an attorney examine your contract before signing.
- If for mortgage purposes you need to sign over your title to your land; do not sign over your title to a contractor unless you have ensured the financial stability of your contractor. Ask if both your name and the contractor's name can be listed on the title. Understand that if you sign your title over, you have lost ownership rights. If your contractor defaults, continuation of the project may require YOU hold interest or right to the title to the property.

Once the job has started:

- Examine your Notice of Commencement carefully. If a contractor lists his own name as the property owner, you will not receive Notice to Owner Certificate, and you may have liens that you don't know about.
- Check with your lender periodically throughout your project to insure that payments issued are equal to work performed.
- Monitor all Notice to Owner Certificates. Just because a contractor has signed a release of lien, doesn't mean that the subcontractor has been paid for doing work on your home.
- Photograph the project each time partial payment is requested. Document the installation of any equipment or appliances and record the serial numbers.
- Check with the North Port Building Department on the process to access permit and inspection information.

Things you should consider before building a home (cont.)

- Insure the premises during construction and receive a copy of the Certificate of Insurance.
- Note that if you hold title to your property and your builder defaults, you can be held liable for the condition of the property.

Once your home is completed:

- Ensure your lender has received a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy and request a copy at the closing on your home. You also can confirm that your Certificate of Occupancy has been issued by contacting the North Port Building Department.
- Ensure there are no liens against your home before closing by checking the Sarasota County Clerk of Court's Web site and communicating with your title company.

Contact Information:

City of North Port
Building Department
www.cityofnorthport.com
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286
Office: (941) 429-7044

Florida Department of Business and
Professional Regulation
<http://www.myflorida.com/dbpr>
1940 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Office: (850) 487-1395

Sarasota County Clerk of the Court
www.sarasotaclerk.com
2000 Main Street
Sarasota, FL 34237
Office: (941) 861-7400

Sarasota County Property Appraiser
www.sarasotaproperty.net
2001 Adams Lane
Sarasota, FL 34237
Office: (941) 861-8200

Better Business Bureau
<http://westflorida.bbb.org>
2655 McCormick Drive
Clearwater, FL 33759
Office: (727) 535-5522 (24 Hours)
Toll Free: 1-800-525-1447

North Port Area Chamber of Commerce
www.northportareachamber.com
15141 Tamiami Trail
North Port, FL 34287
Office: (941) 423-5040

Additional websites for information:

National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), www.nahb.org

Federal trade Commission, www.ftc.gov

Things you should consider before building a home (cont.)

This will be included in the permit package for your new home. Please sign and notarize the following:

I have read and understand the above information.

Signature _____

Owner

State of Florida, County of Sarasota, The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by _____, who is personally known to me____, or has produced _____ as identification. Witness my hand and official seal this _____ Day of _____, 20____

Notary

Seal

Signature _____

Contractor

State of Florida, County of Sarasota, The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by _____, who is personally known to me____, or has produced _____ as identification. Witness my hand and official seal this _____ Day of _____, 20____

Notary

Seal