



Brian Campbell,
WRHBA President 2012-13

Renovation Offers a Fresh Start

The words "a fresh start" can be interpreted differently by different people. Some consider it an opportunity to close the door on an existing routine and develop a more productive one. Others may view it as an end to a pleasant, comfortable setting and a challenge to create one that is equally secure.

When it comes to renovation, I like to think that the interpretation of this phrase is a mix of the two. The excitement of seeing your home get an upgrade and increase your quality of life, not to mention property value, is often balanced with the realities of budgeting, timing and quality of work.

With a home renovation, you don't have the option of letting the things naturally fall into place. You are putting your home into the hands of a contractor, with the cost of fixing his mistakes potentially outweighing the cost of the renovation itself.

This is why it's important to hire a professional contractor for your renovation needs. My recommendation is to consider members of the national RenoMark™ program. All RenoMark™ contractors have agreed to abide by an industry Code of Ethics as well as a renovation-specific Code of Conduct. RenoMark™ has been so well received by the public that it is now offered by more than 32 markets across seven provinces, with an eighth coming soon.

Your search starts at www.renomark.ca/waterloo then click the "Find a Renovator" tool. It doesn't stop there, however. Your next step is to narrow down a list of contractors and meet with them to determine which is best for you.

As you collect names of suitable renovators, you need to think about how you will judge the renovators you choose to interview. Start by looking at:

Presentation

Professional renovators operate in a business-like manner. They respect your schedule and show up for appointments on time. They present themselves well, are organized and deal with your questions and concerns directly. How a renovator deals with you before a contract is signed tells you a lot about how you can expect to be treated once the job begins.

Communication

Renovation is a "people business" and good renovators are good listeners and communicators. Professional renovators must "translate" your ideas and goals into a workable plan and a pleasant experience. If you don't feel you can communicate with them effectively, you should keep looking.

Skills and experience

Renovating a home can be a far more complex task than building it in the first place. It takes years of experience in the business before most renovators are ready to manage a major project on their own. It also involves a lot of different types of work, some of which require specialized expertise. Whatever the scope and nature of your project, your renovator needs to have solid experience with that type of work.

Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association

725 Bridge Street West, Suite 1, Waterloo, ON N2V 2H1 | Bus: 519.884.7590 | Fax: 519.884.7361

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, OR TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW CONTACT:

Marie Schroeder, Executive Officer Email: Marie-schroeder@wrhba.com www.wrhba.com

Professional reputation

Established renovators will provide you with references from previous customers, and in fact, you shouldn't even have to ask for them. They also work with a network of other businesses within your community - banks, material suppliers and trades. It's a good idea to ask a renovator for references to any of these people to find out about their reputation within the industry itself.

Renovating your home should be a positive experience - free from worry and stress. You should have full confidence in your renovator and know that you are getting the best, from start to finish.

Make sure you hire a professional and get your fresh start right, from the start.

Established in 1946, the Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association (WRHBA) is the official voice of the residential construction industry in Waterloo Region. WRHBA is actively involved in all facets of the new home construction and residential renovation industries. As a voluntary association with over 250 member companies, WRHBA's network of professionals effectively manage industry issues across the region including the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. WRHBA's primary goals are to promote housing affordability and choice; and to build vibrant, prosperous and healthy communities through encouraging innovations and excellence in the planning and building of sustainable communities and in the redevelopment and renovation of existing communities. WRHBA works with and regularly facilitates discussions between the industry and the federal, provincial, regional, and local governments to establish fair and effective policies that affect development, building, and home ownership in Waterloo Region.

For further information contact Marie Schroeder, Executive Officer - Marie-Schroeder@wrhba.com

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