

Topic No. 14: Step 10 - Observing Construction

Topic objective: To inform buyers of when they should arrange to visit the build site for observation.

While most buyers will want to visit the job site frequently to observe construction, they need to be cautioned to not overdo it. In most cases, when buyers do this and start making demands of the builder or his subcontractors, it causes more problems than it solves. When it is necessary for the builder to make corrections, the need should be communicated by your buyer agent.

Because of the builder's liability for potential injury, it is important that site visits be approved in the contract and that the buyer and their agent follow the established protocol. Often, the buyers will not be allowed on the job site without the builder or his superintendent during the time workers are on the project.

The buyer and agent should visit the project at the following construction stages:

1. When the engineer has staked out the location of the home on the lot
2. When the footings have been poured
3. When the forms have been removed from the foundation, the walls damp-proofed and drainage system installed
4. When the gravel and rebar is in place for all flat concrete work
5. When the framing is completed and roofing installed
6. To meet with the electrician for any special needs
7. When caulk, foaming and insulation are installed
8. When sheetrock work is completed
9. When painting has been completed
10. For the final walk-through

Your buyer agent should point out any unacceptable work, and these changes should be communicated to the builder in writing. When the framing is completed, you and your agent will want to ensure all walls are placed appropriately and all changes made before sheetrock application.

If you have hired an inspector, you will want to have him involved at the beginning of the building project so that he can observe the construction at most of these stages.