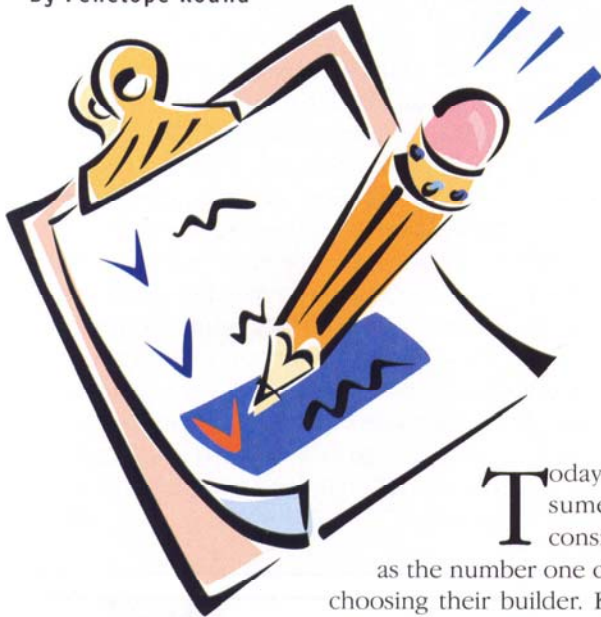
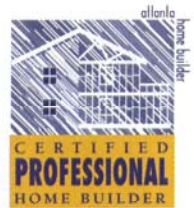


Ready For Inspection?

New criteria for 2003 requires CPHB builders to allow home inspections

By Penelope Round



Today's consumers still consider trust as the number one criteria for choosing their builder. Kim Howell, director of The Housing Institute (THI), discovered during the 2001 focus groups that well-researched consumers still rely on feelings of trust both on-site and throughout all communication with their builder. THI's Board of Directors has spent the past year developing new program criteria for the Certified Professional Home Builder (CPHB) program based on the results of those focus groups. The emphasis of the new criteria will help builder members offer more value and build more consumer trust.

Comments from the focus groups showed that when a builder denies the consumer the right to have a private home inspection done, it created mistrust. One of the new criteria for CPHB members implemented during 2003 renewals will be the Home Inspection Clause. The idea of a home inspection clause is to foster the relationship between builder and inspector while creating an opportunity for the builder to reinforce to the consumer that they made a wise purchase. "The standards we've established have the potential to raise the overall quality of new homes, allowing home buyers to hire private inspectors makes them part of the quality control process. The result would be a higher level of confidence in the builder," said Dan Peace, past president of the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors and a THI Board member.

There is no evidence that shows that current members of the CPHB program are denying private home inspectors, but by adopting this program-wide policy, CPHB builders can stand out from the rest by providing additional credentials to home buyers which establish more trust. The program will require that members allow for inspections and set guidelines. The

guidelines must be equivalent to those approved by THI's Board of Directors on June 13, 2002 (listed below):

Proposed Policies and Procedures

Add new sub-section under Section III (A.) (1.) As follows:

Home Inspections:

The Applicant must agree in the Application to offer to each homeowner, in the contract with the homeowner for the construction and sale of the homeowner's sole expense, by an inspector who at the time of the inspection meets the following criteria:

1. Maintains all business licenses as required by law;
2. Is a full-time professional inspector or registered professional engineer;
3. If not a registered professional engineer, is a member in good standing of either the American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc. or the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors, Inc.;
4. Has general liability insurance in an amount of at least \$500,000, and Workers Compensation coverage, if required by law; and,
5. Is a certified One and Two Family Dwelling Inspector under the state-adopted one and two family dwelling building code.

These requirements shall be contained in the contract between Applicant and the homeowner either in the main body of the contract, or in an exhibit or addendum signed by both parties. The contract provision containing these requirements shall stipulate that any private home inspector the homeowner hires to conduct any permitted inspection shall meet these requirements, and shall stipulate that the homeowner shall provide proof to Applicant prior to any such inspection that the inspector meets these requirements at the time of the inspection. Moreover, the provision containing these requirements shall require any such private home inspector to evaluate the house solely in accordance with the applicable construction standards defined by the contract and by governing law in effect on the date of issuance of the permit and not in accordance with other standards, and shall require that any alleged code violations noted by such private home inspector be specific in writing in detail and with as precise a reference as possible to the applicable code(s).

If you have questions regarding the Home Inspection Guidelines or the Home Inspection Clause, please contact Kim Howell, director of The Housing Institute, at (678) 775-1462.