



Ask Questions of Builders when Touring Homes

You'll see a lot of interesting things as you tour the homes in Valley Home Builders Association's signature events: the Winter Wonderland of Homes and the Parade of Homes. Maybe you're going through the homes to "dream of the day when" or to look for interior decorating ideas and see what's new, or, maybe, you're ready to buy a new home.

You might think that the people staffing the homes are there just to make a sale. But the representatives are truly resources of information on the home, the builder, the development and the area. Beyond the question of "how much does it cost?," and "when can we move in?," here are some other questions to note the answers to:

- Will the builder give you references of recent buyers/occupants?
- Are there options in the floor plan – can a basement or deck be added?, etc.
- Can a room such as the basement be left unfinished?
- How much "customizing" can be done versus standard features?
- Can appliances be up- or down-graded?
- Are there any additional fees relating to the home or development?
- Does the builder offer a warranty program?
- Does the price include landscaping? and what if the plants die within a year?
- Are there any restrictive covenants?
- What are the estimated taxes on the property?
- How is the school system rated?
- Are day care and grocery stores convenient and satisfactory?
- What about emergency facilities—police, fire department and hospitals?
- Are there any major development plans for the area in the next 5 years?

You have a right to and need to ask every question that you think is important. A little research with the neighbors is also a good idea, though it will be best to save those questions for after the Parade, when the traffic in the neighborhood subsides.

Remember, a professional builder and the builder's representatives will want you to be a happy and satisfied homeowner. Their next sale could depend on your reference.