

PARADE OF HOMES

What's In A House? Rough Mechanical Insulation, Vapour, Barrier, Drywall

By Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (third of a four-part series)

When the house is framed, the roof on the exterior cladding is at least partially completed, interior work is begun. Plumbing and electrical installations, are then started.

Plumbing is installed in two stages: rough and finished. Rough plumbing includes the installation of both hot and cold water pipes, drain pipes and connections to municipal services. Later to finish the job, sinks, faucets, tubs and so on are installed.

A good plumbing system calls for proper planning from the beginning. It should be possible to install it without damaging the structural components. Easy access to the various connections is a must, to facilitate repairs later.

Rough plumbing is enclosed in the walls, ceilings and under the floors of the house. If the kitchen and bathroom are in adjoining rooms, or are close together, the need for extensive pipe lines in the house is eliminated and installation and repairs are much simpler.

Water pipes should never be installed in outside walls, unless they are effectively insulated against freezing. This can be difficult to do.

The electrical work is similarly installed in two stages. Initially the electrical circuits and so on are enclosed in walls and ceilings. Later on, the fixtures, and receptacle covers are put in place. The electrical system should be planned to meet the future load demands of the house.

Following these rough mechanical stages the

provision of insulation is the next step in home construction. Insulation slows the rate of heat loss from the house, helping keep heating costs down.

How well thermal insulation reduces heat loss is called its thermal resistance, measured in "R" values. The higher the "R" value of the insulation, the greater its thermal efficiency.

Many houses being built today have insulation values ranging from R 10 to R 14 in walls and R 10 to R 16 in ceilings, depending on the locale of the house. The colder the climate the more insulation required. Increased insulation should be considered because of changing costs of fuel.

A common insulation material used today, is fibreglass installed in batts. Unless it has been compressed, the thicker the batt, the higher the insulating or "R" value.

Insulation is placed between the vertical studs on outside walls. In ceilings it is laid between the joists. All outside walls must be insulated.

A vapor barrier is put over the insulation to keep damaging moisture away from both the insulation and the wood frame. The barrier itself is usually a polyethylene product secured to the studs over the insulation on the warm side of the house. It is essential that it is installed properly.

Once the vapor barrier has been installed the house is ready for the interior wall cladding. Walls are usually covered with a product such as gypsum or plasterboard. Plaster, still used in some homes today, is more expensive both in labor costs and materials. It takes longer to in-

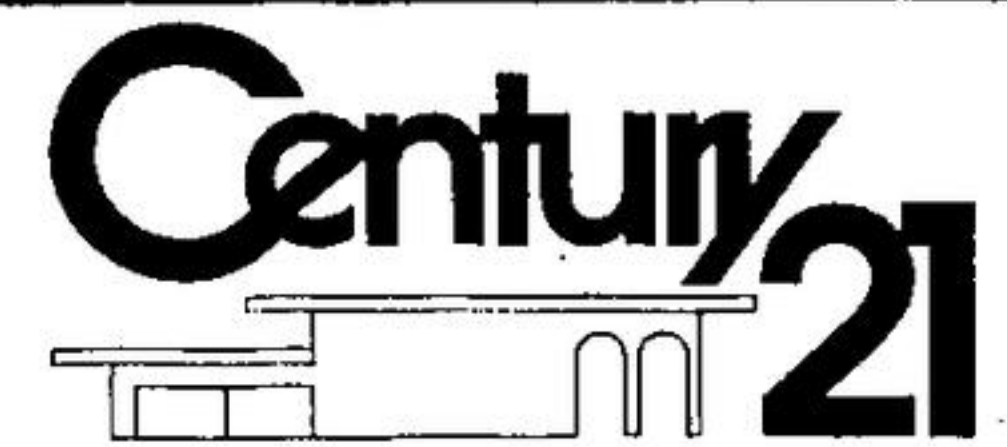
stall, since two or three layers are used and drying time is required between layers.

Drywall, a term used to describe a ready-to-install covering, enables the builder to proceed quickly. Gypsum board is the type of drywall used, though hard pressed fibreboard or particleboard are also used.

Drywall products are produced in large sheets which are nailed or screwed directly to the frame on top of the insulation and vapor barrier. Gypsum board sheets are butted side by side and where they meet, workmen tape the seams and cement the joint. If the seams are well nailed, taped, cemented and sanded they are virtually invisible after painting.

Next, in the series, we will discuss final interior finishing.

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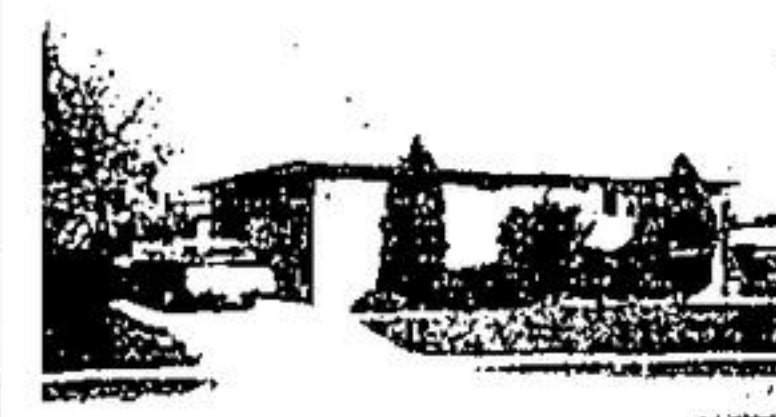
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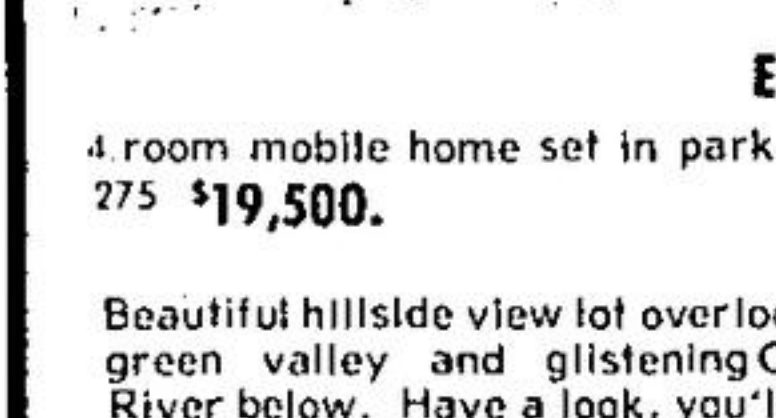
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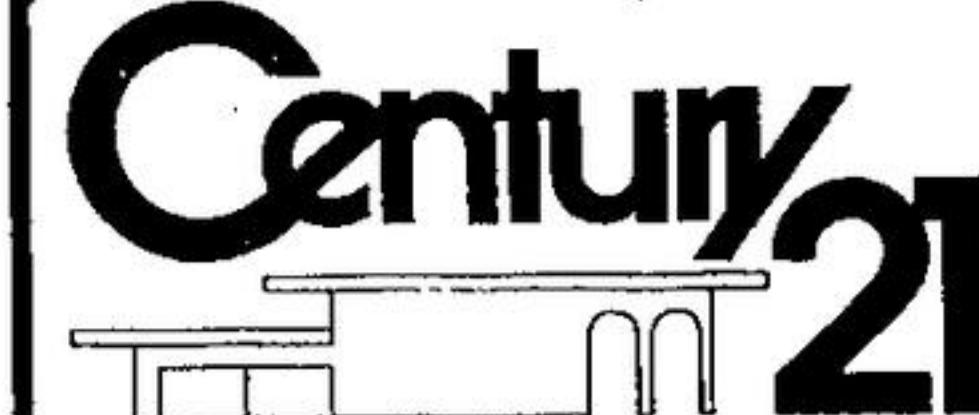
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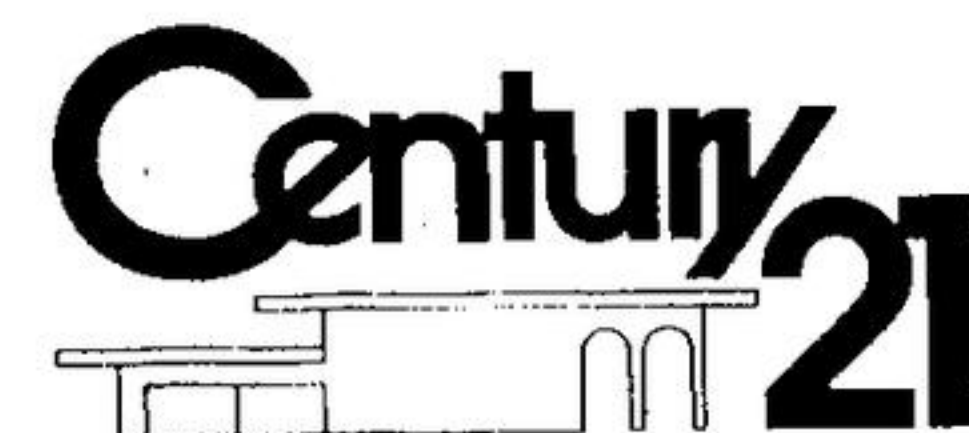
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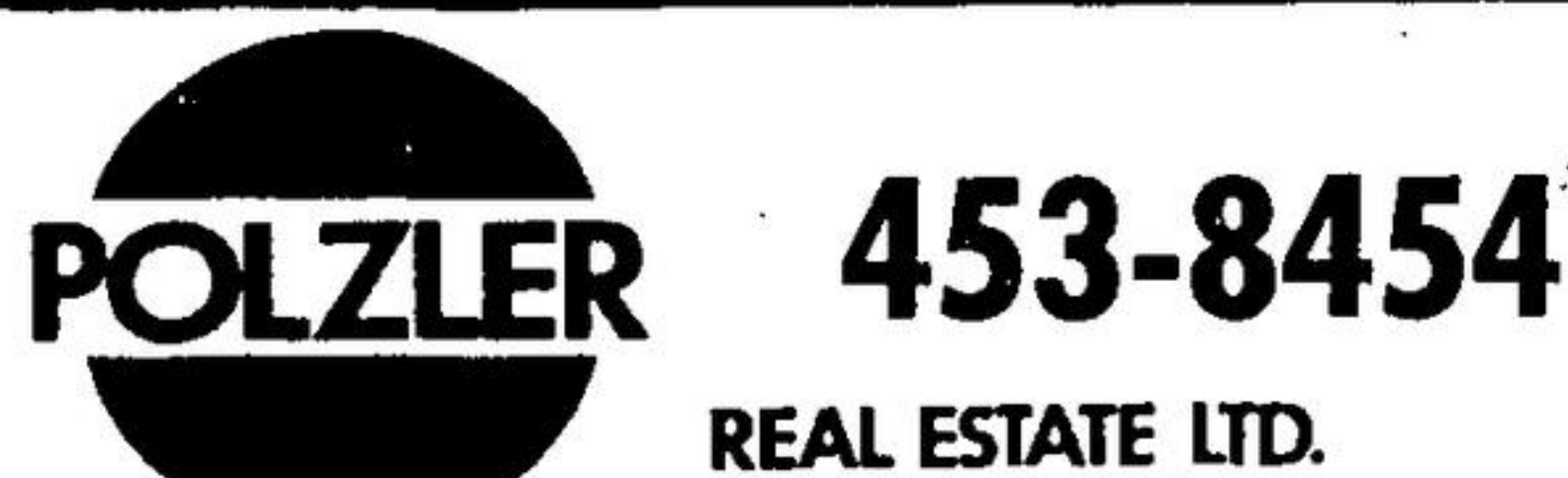
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