

Check the building bylaws

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Waiting for a permit can be tedious, but not obtaining one can be downright painful. You might be asked to open walls, ceilings and other finishes so an inspector can see if the work complies. You may even have to remove the renovation entirely.

It's tempting to believe no one will ever find out that a renovation was made without a permit, but what if questions come up when it's time to sell? Potential buyers often hire home inspectors who can identify renovations. A buyer who discovers that construction was done without a permit may demand a price reduction, or even scuttle

the deal entirely.

Complete your home renovations the right way by following these four pointers:

- Consult the experts — a real estate lawyer can confirm that the work planned is legal and can review contracts before you sign.
- Obtain several quotes to get a good idea of the expected cost.
- Determine which renovations require permits in your municipality.
- Get your agreement with any contractors in writing.

If you're a buyer seeking assurances that renovations were done right, a real estate lawyer can also help you determine whether permits were obtained.

Tips for a thriving flower garden

1. Don't be afraid to get wild. Choosing a wide variety of wild flowers doesn't just help your garden to stand out — wild flowers suited to the weather and conditions of your home province are also hardier and easier to grow. By planting a diverse selection of flowers that bloom throughout the spring and summer, you'll be providing more diverse and nutritious nectar and pollen for honey bees. Some varieties to consider include lance-leaved coreopsis, sneezeweed, New England asters, dense blazing stars and

golden tickseed.

2. Bee friendly. Did you know that worker bees spend their days travelling from flower-to-flower, collecting as much pollen and nectar as they can? According to Statistics Canada, Canadian honey bee populations are on the rise, but we should still be vigilant about caring for honey bees to help them thrive. This is also its own reward, as some plants can't pollinate themselves, which means they rely on honey bees and other pollinators to grow.



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