

Combating the effects of climate change

Masonry-built homes offer a solution to an increasing problem

From global warming to regional changes in seasonal weather patterns to local temperature and humidity anomalies, climate change— the shift in long-

term average weather patterns which can include changes in temperature and precipitation amounts— is increasingly apparent.

Architects and engineers involved with providing society's infrastructure requirements face new challenges and new opportunities due to shifts in climate occurring around the world today. Even with preventative measures being developed to protect the environment, the change is inevitable and construction professionals are responding accordingly.



Benefits of building with masonry

The definition of a dream home can be subjective and often varies from one person to the next. However, according to a recent survey conducted by Leger Marketing on behalf of MasonryWorx, an association of masonry professionals committed to creating beautiful communities across the province, Ontarians definitely have a clear vision of their dream home and how it would be built.

When asked to describe their dream home, an overwhelming majority of Ontarians said that it would be a fully detached house (91 per cent) and that it would be built using masonry products (81 per cent).

"Buying any home — let alone your dream home — is a serious investment," says Judy Pryma, President of MasonryWorx. "While brick, block and stone have long been popular choices for building, this survey clearly shows that Ontarians really value the benefits of solid, beautiful, environmentally friendly construction."

So, what are the benefits of building with brick, block or stone? In addition to being environmentally friendly, homes built with masonry offer many advantages, including:

- Fire protection — masonry walls are non-combustible, and help minimize the risk of fire spreading from within, and to/from neighbouring buildings;
- Mould resistance — typical masonry wall construction is effective at preventing toxic mould growth because they don't provide a needed source of food and they resist the penetration of water;
- Noise reduction — because masonry products are so dense, they provide a highly effective barrier to sound;
- Higher resale value — research has shown that the resale value of a masonry home is six per cent higher than that of a home with non-masonry cladding.

For more information on the benefits of building with masonry products, visit www.masonryworx.com.

—News Canada

Canadians can no longer base planning and development on weather we have experienced in the past. And, in designing buildings and communities, it is important to plan for the climate throughout the design life of the development, not just for the current climate.

"While there's nothing we can do to control the weather, we can make sure that buildings are constructed to be more durable and resistant to extreme climate changes," says Judy Pryma, president MasonryWorx, an association of masonry professionals committed to creating beautiful communities across the province. "Masonry homes can save a significant amount of energy over their lifetime compared to other building materials."

As climate change drives up temperatures, the thermal mass

in masonry homes can help maintain comfortable conditions while helping to minimize energy use and CO2 emissions. Masonry products— brick, block and stone— can provide significant benefits for helping with the overall sustainability of buildings, heating and cooling as well as increasing availability and use of energy efficiency.

"It is important to recognize that a building's environmental

impact does not stop once it has been built," says Pryma. "It is essential that the energy that is likely to be consumed during a building's lifecycle is taken into account when evaluating construction materials."

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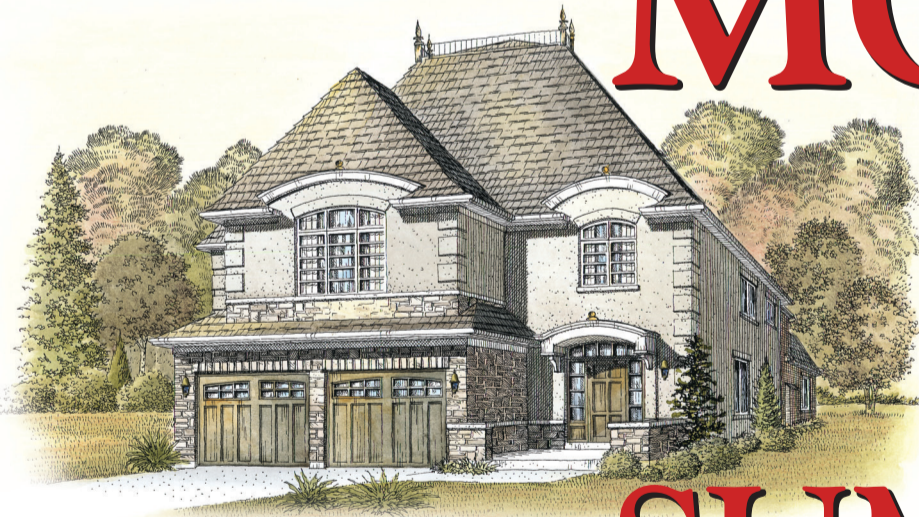
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