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Wafer Board: See Oriented Strand Board.

Walk-Through: A final inspection of a home before "closing" to look for and document problems that need to be corrected.

Walk-Through Survey: That portion of the inspection where the inspector makes non-intrusive, visual observations of readily accessible areas of the subject property.

Walkways: Designated areas for foot traffic.

Wall Out: When a painter spray paints the interior of a home.

Wall Protector: Noncombustible shield between a wall and anything heat-producing for the purpose of reducing required clearance.

Wane: Bark, or lack of wood from any cause, on edge or corner of a piece of wood.

Warping: Any distortion in a material.

Warranty: In construction there are two general types of warranties. One is provided by the manufacturer of a product such as roofing material or an appliance. The second is a warranty for the labor. For example, a roofing contract may include a 30 year material warranty and a 5 year labor warranty. Many (but not all) new homes come with a one year warranty. Any major issues found during the first year should be communicated the builder at once. Small items can be saved up and presented to the builder in a letter on the 11 month anniversary of the closing. This gives the builder one month to make the necessary corrections.

Waste and Overflow: A bathtub drain assembly that has an outlet at the top to remove overflow water when filling the tub and an outlet at the bottom to remove waste water when the tub is drained.

Waste Pipe and Vent: Plastic plumbing pipe that carries waste water to the municipal sewage system.

Water Board: Water resistant drywall to be used in tub and shower locations. Normally green or blue colored.

Water Closet: Toilet.

Water Meter Pit (or Vault): The box, cast iron bonnet and concrete rings that contain the water meter.

Water Repellent Coating: Transparent coating or sealer applied to the surface of concrete and masonry surfaces to repel water.

Water Repellent Preservative: A liquid designed to penetrate into wood and impart water repellency and a moderate preservative protection. It is used for millwork, such as sashes and frames, and is usually applied by dipping.

Water Table: The location of the underground water, and the vertical distance from the surface of the earth to this underground water.

Water Tap: The connection point where the home water line connects to the main municipal water system.

Water Vapor: Moisture existing as a gas in air.

Water-Cement Ratio: The strength of a concrete mixture depends on the water cement ratio. The water and cement form a paste. If the paste is made with more water, the concrete becomes weaker. Traditionally, concrete mixes have been identified in terms of the ratio of cement to fine aggregate to coarse aggregate. For example, the ratio 1:2:4 refers to a mix which consists of 1 cu. ft. of cement, 2 cu. ft. of sand and 4 cu. ft. of gravel. Cement and water are the two chemically active elements in concrete and when combined, form a paste or glue which coats and surrounds the particles of aggregate and upon hardening binds the entire mass together.

Waterproofing: The process where a building component is made totally resistant to the passage of water and/or water vapor.

Wattage: The electrical unit of power. A kilowatt is 1000 watts and electric customers are billed on how many kilowatts of power they have used.

Wax Ring Job: Removing a toilet from the floor so that a blockage can be manually removed or to replace a degraded wax ring. Replacing a new wax ring on the bottom of the toilet to create a seal.

WC: An abbreviation for water closet (toilet).

Weatherization: Work on a building exterior in order to reduce energy consumption for heating or cooling. Work involving adding insulation, installing storm windows and doors, caulking cracks and putting on weather-stripping.

Weatherstrip: Jamb-width or narrower sections of thin metal or other material to prevent infiltration of air and moisture around windows and doors. Compression weather stripping prevents air infiltration, provides tension, and acts as a counter balance.

Weep Hole: A hole which allows for drainage of entrapped water from masonry or glazing structures.

Weep Screed: Tool used to drain moisture from concrete.

Weld: The joining of components together by fusing. In thermoplastics, refers to bonding together of the membrane using heat or solvents.

Well Casing: A steel or plastic pipe which serves as the lining of a well, preventing it from caving in and protecting ground water from contamination by surface water.

Well Casing Head: A heavy, flanged steel fitting connected to the first string of casing.

Well House: A structure that encloses a well Commonly found in the Midwest and Western States.

Wet or Dry Surface Plastic Roof Cement: Superior performance in cold and wet applications. Performs as a general-purpose exterior repair and maintenance material on damp or dry surfaces. Stops roof and other leaks fast.

Wet Seal: Application of an elastomeric sealant between the glass and sash to form a weather tight seal.

Whole House Fan: A fan designed to move air through and out of a home and normally installed in the ceiling.

Widespread: A style of lavatory faucet where the spout and handles are separate. Flex hoses are used between the spout and handles to allow adjustable centers, although this style of faucet is typically used on 8" or 12" centers.

Wind Bracing: Metal straps or wood blocks installed diagonally on the inside of a wall from bottom to top plate, to prevent the wall from twisting, racking, or falling over in a "domino" fashion.

Wind Uplift: The upward force exerted by wind traveling across a roof.

Window Buck: Square or rectangular box that is installed within a concrete foundation or block wall. A window will eventually be installed in this "buck" during the siding stage of construction.

Window Frame: The stationary part of a window unit; the window sash fits into the window frame.

Window Sash: The operating or movable part of a window; the sash is made of window panes and their border.

Wire Nut: A plastic device used to connect bare wires together.

Wire Size: Conductors for building wiring are available in AWG (American Wire Gauge) sizes ranging from No. 14 to 4/0. The larger the number size, the smaller the diameter. For example, 10 is smaller than 8. The larger the diameter of a wire, the lesser the resistance.

Wonderboard™: A panel made out of concrete and fiberglass usually used as a ceramic tile backing material. Commonly used on bathtub decks.

Wood Filler: A heavily pigmented preparation used for fining and leveling off the pores in open-pored woods.

Wood Rays: Strips of cells extending radially within a tree and varying in height from a few cells in some species to 4 inches or more in oak. The rays serve primarily to store food and to transport it horizontally in the tree.

Wood-Fiber Plaster: Consists of calcified gypsum integrally mixed with selected coarse cellulose fibers which provide bulk and greater coverage. It is formulated to produce high-strength base coats for use in highly fire-resistant ceiling assemblies.

Work-Life: The time during which a curing sealant remains suitable for use after being mixed with a catalyst.

Workmanlike: Executed in a skilled manner.

Woven Valley: Method of valley construction in which shingles from both sides of the valley extend across the valley and are woven together by overlapping alternate courses as they are applied. The valley flashing is not exposed.

Wrapped Drywall: Areas that get complete drywall covering, as in the doorway openings of bifold and bypass closet doors.