



Eagle's Eye on Housing: Assessing Renovation Projects

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When Over the years, we've developed a good understanding of how buildings perform. Construction techniques for new homes have changed rapidly. Most of these improved techniques also apply to renovations. If you plan carefully, you can renovate your home to make it look better, work better, last longer and be more comfortable.

Before renovating, it's important to assess the condition of your home to determine if any significant underlying problems must be addressed before or during your planned renovation project.

Why renovate?

- **To upgrade or improve outdated or deteriorated systems**—replacing an outdated furnace, old siding or windows are common upgrades.
- **To maintain and repair various elements of their house**—re-shingling a roof or fixing foundation cracks are typical renovations.
- **To address lifestyle needs**—converting unused attic space to living quarters, add a sunroom or build a home office.

When assessing your project, consider the principles of Healthy Housing™ (**Occupant health, Energy efficiency, Resource efficiency, Environmental responsibility and Affordability**) and the **House as a System**.

A house is much more than just four walls and a roof—it's an interactive system with many components, including the basic structure, heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment, the external environment and the occupants. Each component influences the performance of the entire system.

A renovation allows you to improve how your house performs. Ask yourself how changing particular components will affect the performance of the whole house.

For example, as part of a bathroom renovation, you may want to add a hot tub that will generate large amounts of humidity during operation. Your existing ventilation may be inadequate to handle the increased moisture levels. It will be important to provide proper ventilation to avoid mold growth, poor indoor air quality (IAQ) and damage to the structure or finishes. You may need to consult a qualified home inspector or professional renovator.

Avoid Surprises

A systematic and thorough inspection will help you to assess the condition of your home. Look for any signs of deterioration and the possible causes. Start your inspection in the basement. Many problems in other parts of the house originate there. Depending upon the size of your project, you may want to ask a qualified home inspector or a professional renovator to help you assess your building and develop a plan.



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Rewards

Correcting structural flaws, fixing leaks and ensuring that all services are adequate will make your home safer, more efficient and more durable. Then, other renovations can be done to make your home more pleasant, attractive and suited to your lifestyle.

Skills to Do the Job

You can assess most of your house with the help of a CMHC inspection checklist. Professional home inspectors are also available to do a thorough inspection for you. Repairing serious structural, mechanical or electrical problems will require the help of an expert.

From About Your House Series CMHC Order # 62246

Healthy Housing Training Seminars are available through FNNBOA. Included with the Healthy Housing™ Training seminar; the Complete set of Healthy Housing About your House Fact sheets or you can order the fact sheets at the CMHC website.

Priced Publications

Healthy Housing™ Renovation Planner Order No. 60957

Homeowner's Inspection Checklist Order No. 62114

Renovator's Technical Guide Order No. 61946

Clean-Up Procedures for Mold in Houses Order No. 61091

Free Publications

About Your House *fact sheets:*

Hiring a Contractor Order No. 62277

Before You Start Renovating Your Basement—Moisture Problems Order No. 62250

Before You Start Renovating Your Kitchen Order No. 62252

Before You Start Renovating Your Bathroom Order No. 62254

Before You Start Window and Door Renovations Order No. 62256

Sample Renovation Contract Order No. 62351

Fighting Mold: The Homeowners' Checklist Order No. 60516

A final note :

CMHC does not recommend or endorse any individual home inspector or association. CMHC supports national uniform standards of competency for home inspectors.

For more information on the First Nations National Building Officers Certification Council, please refer to FNNBOA's website http://fnnboa.ca/html/certification_council.html.