



# Things You Should Know

# When Choosing a LOG HOME COMPANY



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Interview with:  
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## WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD POTENTIAL LOG HOME OWNERS ASK A LOG HOME PRODUCER IN TERMS OF MATERIALS, COST, TRANSPORTATION, AND WHAT'S INCLUDED?

It's usually not what is included that will get a homeowner in trouble; it's what is not included. If you are not working with a company that can offer turn key (start to finish) services or a company who's not very well-versed in building and general contracting, I would certainly recommend having your materials provider and selected contractor discuss all items pertaining to a complete home. When selecting a company, make sure they are trustworthy and credible, because it is very easy in this industry to substitute materials, switch options, or provide low estimates that are replaced with unexpected change orders later during construction. A company may quote you with a low price in the beginning to get the job, and then later surprise you with change orders (additional costs) throughout construction. Be clear and concise on what your expectations are regarding finishes and materials, and for the items that you may not be familiar with, rely on your trusted home package provider for their best recommendations. Make sure there aren't any hidden or unaccounted for fees or charges that may come up, and make sure your allowances are adequate for the finishes you are expecting. At Wisconsin Log Homes, we pride ourselves in giving our clients a high-end, very realistic estimate; we'd much rather have their home come in lower than anticipated versus higher.



## WHAT SHOULD THEY LOOK FOR IN CUSTOMER SERVICE?

It's important to work with a company who is going to be attentive to your needs and follow through...do what they promise from the beginning. A company can promise anything, but it's what they deliver that really matters. It's also important that you genuinely like and get along with the people you'll be doing business with for the next several months, and later in the future after your home is finished. You'll be working very closely with them on a regular basis, and getting along with one another makes the process much smoother and more enjoyable. It would be a good idea to get several references from the company you are looking to work with to see what their experience was like.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE #1 CONCERN OF YOUR POTENTIAL CLIENTS?

All the issues and stress that can occur with working with a separate designer, materials provider and general contractor, which is why Wisconsin Log Homes offers competitive nationwide turn-key services, including architectural design, materials package, construction, and even interior design & décor.



## WHAT ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS?

We periodically hear concerns from people about the trees we use and how we harvest our logs in harmony with nature. It's important to work with a company who is environmentally-friendly while manufacturing your logs and building your home. Wisconsin Log Homes takes proper forest management very seriously. The log and timber suppliers we partner with follow conscientious harvesting and foresting practices, ensuring a continuous supply of quality trees. Innovative, ecologically sound programs have been implemented to replant and maintain harvested areas, planting about three trees for every one harvested. The latest technologies in road building and harvesting are used to ensure that the environment is impacted minimally. Also, all scraps from our logs are made into landscaping "chips" and are brought to local parks and recycled in other ways once a week.

Our super energy-efficient Thermal-Log Building System was green long before "green" was an actual term. Many of our customers are requesting "green" building methods, such as homes that exceed energy efficient standards, wind and solar power, geothermal HVAC, etc. Our system was designed to easily incorporate green building methods.

WHAT DO CUSTOMERS NOT ASK, BUT SHOULD? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IS ONE ASPECT OF THE PROCESS THAT PEOPLE MIGHT NOT KNOW TO INVESTIGATE AHEAD OF TIME?

There isn't really any right or wrong question, but there are many questions that could be asked and simply are not. Often times the customer is not an expert in home design or building and does not know what to ask. It's the very reason I am not driving a car I built myself. I don't know how (although I could probably figure it out!) the pieces go together, where I would start with design and engineering, and where to source all of the parts in a quality or reliable fashion. I leave this to the experts so I can have a quality car to drive and depend on for years to come. I do my research, discuss with a trusted dealer which vehicle will best suit my needs, and then select a vehicle from a company or experts who manufacture them. For this reason, do your homework when you decide to work with a log or timber home provider. Make sure they are reputable, and provide the kind of home, finishes, and aesthetics that you are looking for. Make sure they are going to be able to address all of your concerns, and in a timely fashion.

Today's homes are more complex than ever. The technology and designs surpass anything that was done in the past. I could come up with a list of questions based on the knowledge I have gained in this industry over the past 10 years, but it would likely be self serving to my own needs and visions if I were building a home. Each home is as unique as the visions and needs of each homeowner. I could be writing questions down for the next month and still not address every "should have asked" question. This is why it is so important to align yourself with a reputable company that you are comfortable with.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS YOU INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO YOUR WORK? DO YOU PROVIDE REFERENCES OR TOURS?

We offer facility and mill tours, tours of completed homes, tours of homes under construction, personal site visits from the design stages through complete construction, references, and have a wealth of photos and information from all of the custom homes we've been a part of since our company was started in 1976. Getting to know each of our clients on a personal level is





important to us, whether it be in person, or over the phone and e-mail. By learning more about our clients and their family, we're able to get a better understanding of their dream home needs.



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