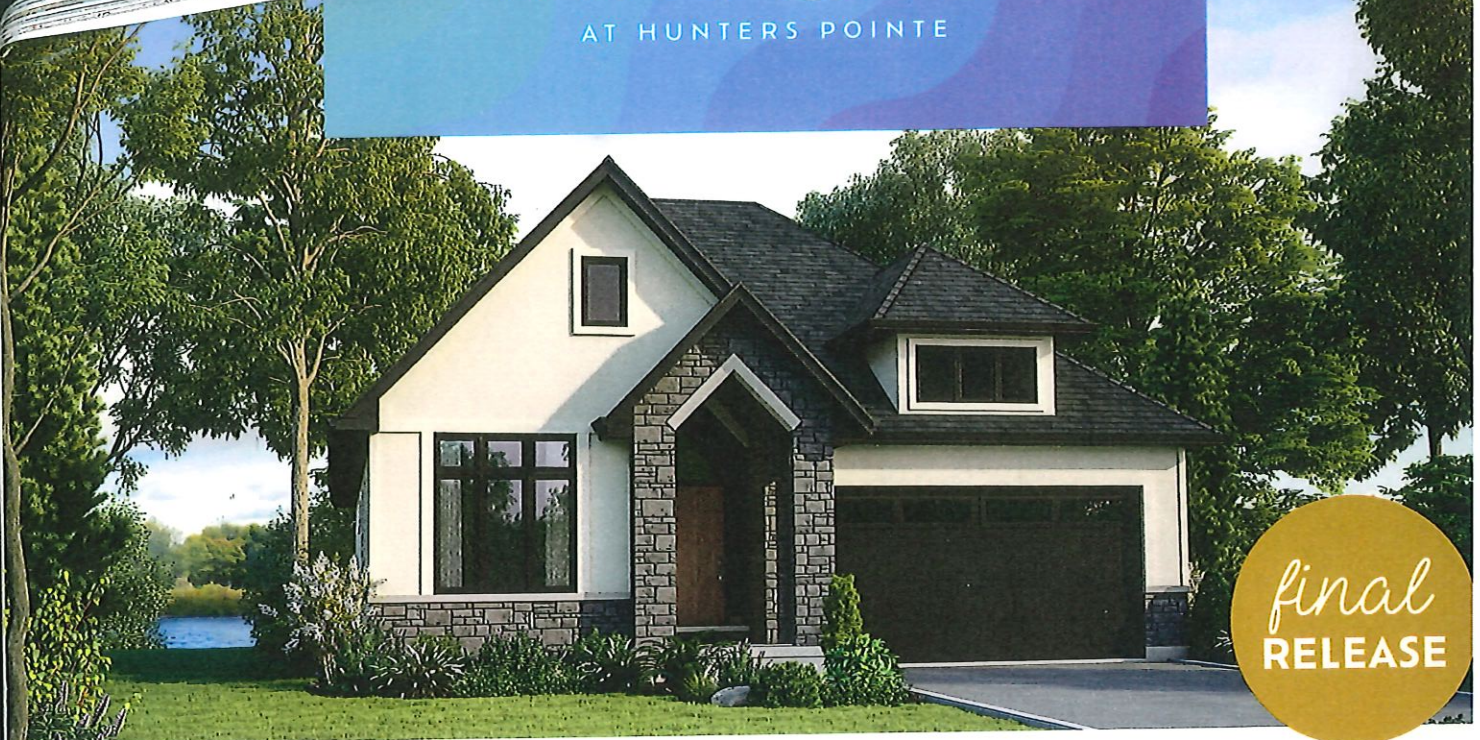


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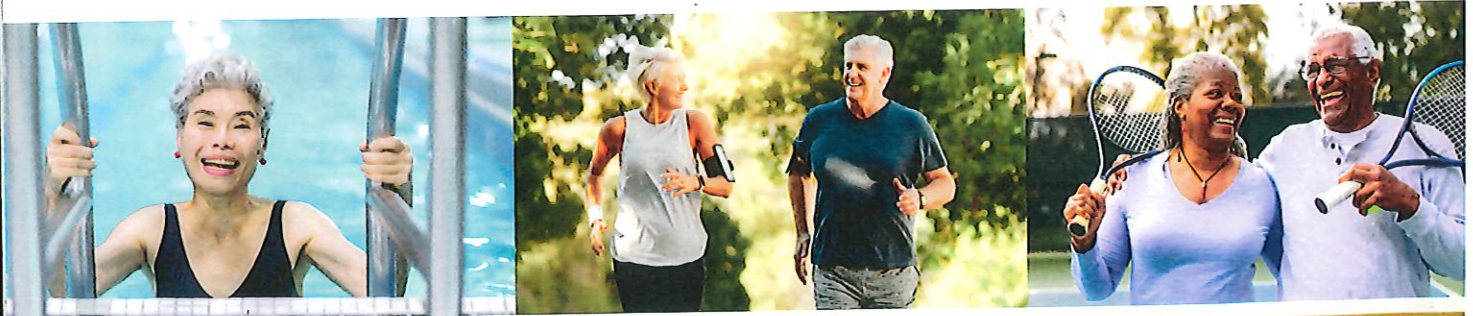
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NOW IS THE TIME

TO START PLANNING YOUR RENOVATION



DAVE WILKES

You meant to have your kitchen redone or your bathroom finished this winter, but spring is here and your renovation project is still only an idea. Not to worry, because now is the perfect time to start planning to make your renovation a reality.

With a generous lead time, you can afford to be thorough with every step in the renovation process, increasing your chances of success. The first step is to articulate what goals you want to achieve with your renovation and develop a clear description of what you want to change. Write down your priorities and items that would be nice to have if your budget allows. Make sure everyone in your home participates in the discussion so you have a complete picture of what is needed.

Next, find a professional renovator who will guide you through the process. The good ones get booked up months in advance. You will be putting a lot of trust in this person, so look for a renovator who is a member of BILD's RenoMark program, which means that they have committed to the RenoMark code of conduct and BILD's code of ethics. To find a RenoMark renovator, visit renomark.ca.

Price is an important consideration when choosing a renovator, but experience, construction schedule and references are just as crucial. Take the time to check three references to get a good understanding of how the company operates.



Once you have selected your professional renovator, he or she may bring in a designer or architect and together you will work through your project outline and create plans and specifications. These will help determine the budget estimate and any building permits and approvals you will need. In some municipalities, obtaining building permits and approvals can take many weeks and even months – another reason it's good to start the process early.

When you are comfortable with the preliminary design, budget, and timetable, you're ready to draw up a written contract with your renovator. The contract sets out the precise scope of the work, the price, a schedule of payments, a reasonable timetable for completing the work, product-specific details and a warranty clause. The contract should be reviewed by a lawyer.

A RenoMark renovator will provide a contract for all projects. Avoid renovators who offer to work without

a contract, even if they promise to skip the HST or offer another incentive. They may not be paying workers' compensation or carry adequate insurance, leaving you at financial risk.

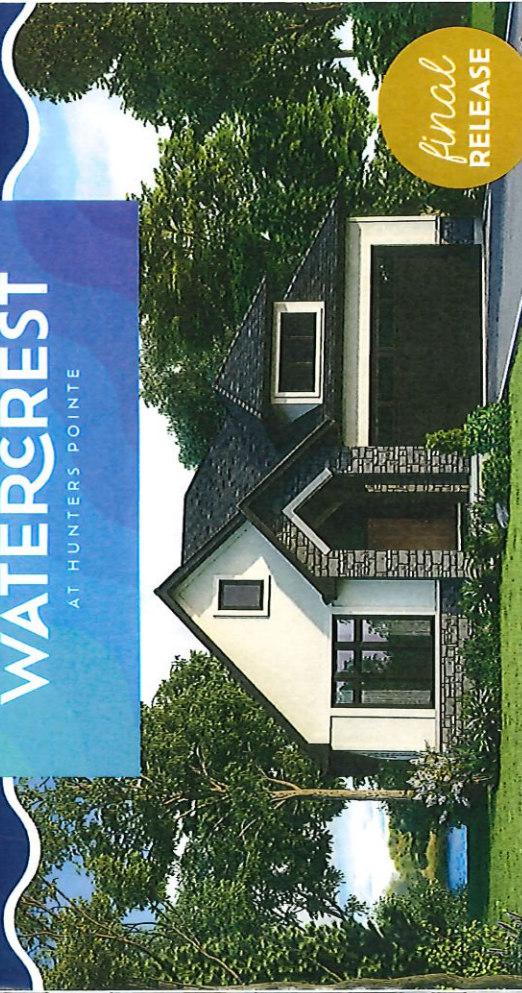
My final piece of advice is to spend some time on renomark.ca and read the articles – they cover various aspects of renovation in more detail. Renovating your home is exciting and rewarding. And as you can see, there's plenty you can do to make sure you're prepared.

Dave Wilkes is President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), the voice of the homebuilding, land development and professional renovation industry in the GTA. For the latest industry news and new home data, follow BILD on Twitter, @bildgta or visit bildgta.ca.

➔MORE CONTENT ONLINE
nextthome.ca



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