

Manufactured houses popular in Michigan

DETROIT (AP) — More Michigan residents are calling manufactured housing home, but the structures don't resemble the old trailers many people still associate with the term.

"People have the image that everyone who lives in a manufactured home is a hick that lives in a trailer," said Jerry McMichael, who lives in a 1,768-square-foot manufactured home in Romulus.

"That's just not true. These are beautiful homes that are just as nice as any others."

About 500,000 state residents, or one in every 18, live in manufactured housing, and the total is increasing. Nationally, there has been a 48.9 percent increase in the number of manufactured homes since 1991.

The Michigan Manufactured Housing Association reported sales of 8,611 manufactured homes through October and could set a record for 1995. Pushing the change in Michigan are lower prices, better quality and the passage of Proposal A. "Sales in the manufactured housing industry have exploded in the last couple years. We can barely keep up with the demand," said Tom DeWitt, association president.

Buyers include a cross-section of the population, DeWitt said, including older people, single mothers and the middle class.

Further challenging the idea many people have about manufactured homes, University of Michigan architecture Professor Kate Warner recently reported that the homes are essentially equivalent to traditional homes.

Except in price. A manufactured home costs an average of \$39,600, compared with an average of \$110,000 for a new home.

"We wanted our own home and we didn't want to spend too much money," said Patricia Hunter of Dearborn Heights. "When you are inside, you can't tell the difference from a regular house."

More than half the manufactured homes in Michigan are situated in their own communities, with the rest on private lots. Depending on the community, residents pay \$200 to \$425 a month.

Another factor that helped communities of manufactured housing become accepted was the passage of Proposal A, which altered school funding to diminish the importance of property taxes.

Cathedral ceilings need planning

Having a house built is one of the most exciting yet trying times in a family's life. And it's the perfect time to build in all of the beautiful design options and amenities you have always dreamed of.

One of the most popular design options in houses today are cathedral ceilings, and it's easy to see why. Cathedral ceilings offer a dramatic appearance both inside and outside of a house. They can, however, pose some construction challenges, particularly in the area of insulation, ventilation and condensation.

If your house plans call for cathedral ceiling, the CertainTeed Home Institute recommends that

you discuss the following with your contractor or builder to ensure comfortable, energy efficient construction and a beautiful exterior design.

■ **High-performance fiber glass batts:** Unlike standard insulation, high performance batts are designed specifically for cathedral ceilings to provide greater thermal efficiency in smaller space while allowing room for ventilation.

High density batts like CertainTeed's are available 8 1/4-inch-thick R-30 and 10-inch-thick R-38.

■ **Air Space:** Insist that your builder leave at least some space, 1/4 inch or more, for adequate air

circulation between the insulation and the roof deck.

■ **Ventilation:** The best system of ventilation is a combination cave (or soffit) or continuous ridge. This type of ventilation system allows for the movement of air under the roof deck, which can minimize moisture problems.

■ **Skylights:** Skylights can be un-

ventilated areas unless both high and low ventilation openings are provided.

For more information on cathedral ceilings and insulation write to the CertainTeed Home Institute, P.O. Box 860, Valley Forge, PA 19482 or call 1-800-782-8777 and ask for the "How To Insulate Cathedral Ceilings" brochure.

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