

POOL & SPA MARKETING

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REFINING THE PLANNING PROCESS

ACTIVITIES PRECEDING POOL INSTALLATION



Being informed about design ensures the work is art, not just a pool.

Photo courtesy Chad King, A Bird's Eye

Probably the single most important aspect of proper job management is recognizing the importance of the team. This group includes individuals within the pool construction firm, subcontractors, soil and structural engineers, the pool architect and, most importantly, the homeowner. If the owner is not familiar with what to expect during the construction process, or if the plans and design are unreadable or incomplete, it is unlikely the project will be a success.

BE PREPARED

To ensure a successful pool installation, a significant amount of time and effort should be spent on activities that precede construction. The following are key points:

Design

Very few individuals in the pool and spa industry actually have any formal design training, but this fundamental skill is

paramount in project success. Being informed about design (proportion, scale, texture, rhythm, balance, etc.) colour concepts, joinery and art history is a tremendous advantage, ensuring the work is art, not just a pool. This is true regardless of the project's cost or scope.

Plans

Many builders rely on canned computer-aided design (CAD) programs for the sales process, which rarely result in viable working documents. Clear plans with dimensions, elevations, sections and mechanical criteria keep everyone on the same page, while informing the owner about details they may have overlooked. Regardless of the scale of the project, proper plans are key to success.

Engineering

Structural engineering that reflects both soil support (or lack thereof) and project design ensure future shell and decking liabilities are significantly reduced. A site-specific soil



The original gutter was redone, as was the area around the column.

Photos courtesy John Crystal Pools



The steel is in for the perimeter bench, which allowed the cove to be eliminated. The floor was also raised.



The shell prior to remodelling.

report, as well as a bottom inspection after the dig is complete, should be routine. In many cases, a drainage plan is also required. Engineering without consideration of site conditions is a recipe for disaster.

The construction team

If everyone, including personnel within the construction firm, understands the quality of workmanship needed,

defects and redundant supervision will be minimized. If the concept is generated by an architect or landscape designer, their idea of a detailed execution is often different than the builder's concept—or in some cases, may be completely unworkable. Remember, construction workers are a key part of the team.

The site visit

Before the building process begins, there should be a site visit with subcontractors and homeowners. All personnel working at the client's home should be introduced and plans should be discussed to ensure no details have been overlooked. Access to the site should be reviewed; in addition, locations for a portable toilet (an absolute necessity), as well as remote locations for the pool and spa controls, and plumbing and electrical routing, need to be determined.

Like most successful endeavours, planning and preparation, accompanied by a professional team, make the difference between an average pool with a dissatisfied client and an extraordinary outdoor environment with an ecstatic homeowner. ■



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