

# Read Between the Walls



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## How to recognize quality between the studs.

### 1 Pipe Up



If you could peek inside your home's walls, you'd also see your plumbing pipes. For decades these were made of metal—notably copper—but today builders are finding greater reliability installing pipes made from a manmade product known as Pex™ (cross linked Polyethylene). The material has been modified for improved properties such as enhanced heat resistance and long-term strength and stability. Some

building professionals even make persuasive arguments that the material is more eco-friendly than pipes made from metal.

### 2 Wiring



The walls of your home also conceal the electrical wiring that brings power from outside your home to the appliances and other devices inside. All wiring work is performed to strict rules and local codes which determine the types of wiring used and where it's to be placed inside your walls. After installation, but before closing the walls, the electrical system is then checked thoroughly by licensed inspectors to make

certain everything works exactly the way it's supposed to work.

### 3 Holes, Seams and Gaps



The most important thing to look for inside your walls is how well your home has been sealed. The amount and type of insulation between your walls is also important, but sealing the hundreds of small gaps and seams between framing materials, pipes, electrical boxes and other mechanical elements will help prevent unintended thermal loss. One of the most effective methods for insulation today is Icynene® foam

insulation which is sprayed between walls to fill even the smallest of gaps where air can either enter or escape.

### 4 Drywall



Finally, the walls themselves can offer testimony of a home's quality. Drywall panels (gypsum) can be installed using two different methods. One is to simply nail them to the framing members which, unfortunately, can cause twisting, warping and nail pops as weather begins to act on the framing members, usually made of wood. A more desirable construction method is to install drywall using glue

and screws which help prevent shifting as the home undergoes its inevitable reaction to the outside elements.