



Factum

Torontonians & Vancouverites More Likely to Experience Problems When Doing Home Renovations

Seven in Ten Canadians Have Difficulty Finding a Contractor They Can Trust

Toronto, Ontario, June 26, 2018 — A new Ipsos survey of Canadian homeowners on behalf Reno Assistance reveals that Toronto and Vancouver are the cities where people are more likely to encounter problems with contractors when doing home renovations. In both cities, nearly two in three (63%) homeowners claim to have experienced problems with their contractor, when doing renovations. The problems are particularly acute in Toronto, where the prevalence of stolen deposits, unexpected extra costs, and sloppy work needing to be redone is significantly higher compared to other cities where data is available, as well as the national average more generally. In fact, Toronto and Vancouver tend to rank higher in terms of the incidence of most other problems, as illustrated by Table 1 below.

Table 1: Home Renovation Problems Experienced by Major City

	National Average	Montreal	Toronto	Calgary	Vancouver
Unforeseen delays/ Project delivery was late	24%	25%	26%	28%	25%
Unexpected Extra Costs	19%	21%	27%	10%	22%
Bad Finishing	17%	16%	21%	22%	13%
Sloppy Work that Had to be Redone	15%	16%	22%	9%	16%
Communication Problems	11%	10%	16%	13%	16%
Contractor Didn't Show Up Without Notifying In Advance	9%	6%	14%	12%	13%
Stolen Deposit	5%	8%	9%	3%	3%
Theft/ Mysterious Disappearance of Belongings	2%	6%	2%	1%	6%
Other	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%
Did Not Experience Any Problems	47%	45%	37%	48%	37%

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In addition to the problems that plague many home renovation projects, seven in ten (69%) Canadians are having difficulty finding a contractor that they can trust to do a major home renovation project. Once again, the situation is particularly dire in Toronto, where more than three in four (78%) Torontonians are having difficulty finding a trusted contractor, including one in four (25%) who say that it is *very difficult*. Further, most Canadians do not trust any of the specialized building professionals, save for electricians, who are trusted only by a slim majority (53%), as illustrated by Table 2 below.

Table 2: Trust in Building Professionals by Major City

	National Average	Montreal	Toronto	Calgary	Vancouver
Electricians	53%	50%	50%	52%	42%
Plumbers	46%	40%	42%	49%	37%
Architects	39%	42%	38%	42%	45%
Building Engineers	39%	41%	40%	41%	44%
General Contractors	36%	32%	33%	35%	31%
Roofers	34%	29%	32%	35%	26%
Stone Masons	29%	27%	27%	29%	21%
Interior Designers	28%	35%	31%	30%	29%
Do Not Trust Any of These Building Professionals	20%	17%	22%	24%	19%

Despite a lack of trust and high incidence of problems with home improvement contractors, few conducted any sort of detailed, rigorous background check on their contractor. Just one in five (19%) checked their contractor's corporate liability insurance, one in six (16%) verified their contractor's relationship with their suppliers, one in seven (14%) checked the legal history of their contractor, one in ten (9%) did credit checks, and seven percent (7%) did criminal checks. Considerably more, though still just one in three, visited the contractor's website or portfolio (31%), read the contractor's reviews on the web (29%), or called or visited previous customers of the contractor (27%) while slightly fewer (21%) reviewed complaints about the contractor on the web. Prior to the commencement of home renovations, however, Torontonians are more likely to have taken each of the aforementioned steps. In other words, Torontonians appear to be more conscientious about doing proper checks prior to renovations, perhaps due to past experiences or familiarity with the recent home renovation experiences of others in their local area.

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted between May 18th and June 6th, 2018, on behalf of Reno Assistance. For this survey, a sample of 1,742 Canadian homeowners were interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online surveys is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the survey is accurate to within ± 2.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian homeowners been surveyed. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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