

Common mistakes by homeowners

1. Shopping like you are buying a car or major appliance:

Unlike most purchases homeowners make, a swimming pool is constructed on site. In ground pools are *major* construction and believing the saying that “a pool is a pool, is a pool”, is one of the most common mistakes a homeowner makes. In ground swimming pools are *lifetime* investments so it is important, if you want to eliminate cost over-runs and problems, you chose a company that has the experience, expertise, and personnel to deal with all the nuances that are associated with this type of construction. Like it or not, you will have an on going relationship with your pool builder. So, do yourself a favor and make sure you do your research and pick a company that is reputable and always insist on a large referral list.

2. Believing pool companies and sales reps tell you everything you need to know:

While we believe referrals are your best choice in helping you select your pool company, many customers will shop using outside sources as their contacts. Assuming the sales rep. is going to give you a proper education or is even capable of giving you one is another mistake consumers make. Most sales reps. have never installed a pool or even worked on a pool. Salesmen have a working knowledge of the quality of materials and products their company offers, but lack the expertise to discuss the finer points of your installation. Access, drainage, township requirements, designs that compliment your yard, and the actual building of your product in order to make it look beautiful and fit your individual budget are what salesmen lack in this industry. Don't fall victim to your desire to “hear what you want to hear”, because the salesman will *always* tell you what you want to hear if it means closing the deal. Problems arise when it comes time to get the company to back up those promises made by that salesman. The components that make up your pool, though important, are just a part of the construction of your backyard makeover. Make sure your salesman is experienced enough in all phases of your project to avoid costly over-runs and hidden extras, so your project comes in at the budget *you* had in mind.

3. Bait and Switch:

Homeowners are constantly drawn to low advertised prices, only to find out that there are hidden costs and up-grades that are needed just to meet industry standards and township requirements, not to mention what the customer wants. This approach allows companies to advertise low, usually unattainable, prices and use scare tactics on the quality and warranties for their material in order to up-grade your purchase to the price range that the *company* had in mind all along. This may lead to a lot of sales leads, but usually leaves the customer feeling misled. If you feel this is untrustworthy, imagine how you are treated after you have signed your contract to purchase your pool? A reputable company will always offer the highest quality products with the best warranties up front, with no up-grades or hidden fees necessary. After all, who would make this kind of investment and commitment with anything less?

4. Design and Planning:

Design and planning is an essential ingredient to planning your backyard. An in ground pool is only one element in creating the backyard oasis you have dreamed of. Whether you are planning a simple project or something more complex, a well thought out plan will save you time and money. Few consumers have the knowledge needed to cover all nuances needed to complete a successful project. A reputable contractor should assist and guide you through the process and not leave you to your own resources. The customer should take the time to discuss all aspects of what their overall desires may be. The contractor, whether he does all the work or not, should be willing to work in a joining effort to achieve the project gets done correctly and in the time frame they both agreed upon.

5. Time and Price:

Shopping based solely on price and availability is a common homeowner mistake. Though cost is always a factor, don't be lured by initial low prices only to find once construction begins, it is full of surprises and charges you did not expect. Homeowners should try to choose a contractor who offers the highest quality products at fair prices and who has a reputation for completing their projects in a timely manner. Since the northeast has a limited season, homeowners feel pressured to have their pools installed as soon as possible. Homeowners fall victim to salesmen's unrealistic start and completion dates; that, unfortunately, is common in this industry. Permit preparation by municipalities, take time and will vary from town to town. So, when planning your installation time frame from beginning to end, be realistic on how soon a contractor can start and finish your project. Again, this is a lifetime purchase and believe it or not, some contractors, even with a wait time, are worth waiting for.