

New Construction – Slab Phase

Home building is a sequential project. While there is some variation from builder to builder and area to area, construction basics dictate that each phase must follow a preordained plan with the appropriate inspections along the way.

The first stage is the slab stage. This encompasses all steps before and during the actual pouring of concrete for the slab. The engineering specifications for the slab were written in the contract-to-release phase. An engineer specifies the exact slab construction details including strength and tension of the slab and any support piers based on soil composition, size and design of the home, topography, and expected movement of the soil on which the slab will rest.

During this time, any underground gas and electrical work will be completed. Water and wastewater lines will be installed. Lot drainage will also be addressed.

A survey will mark lot lines and easements so that the structure will not encroach any building set back requirements. The lot must then be scraped by an excavator and the forms set. Forms outline the actual exterior dimensions of the slab. Within the forms, plumbing lines, gas lines, electrical conduit will be laid along with the cable reinforcements. Cables give the slab strength to support the house and the tension to withstand soil movement.

In areas where there is much soil movement, the engineer may require support piers to support the slab during upward and downward shifts. Proper engineering will ensure that slab will not crack with normal soil movement and that the structure will remain sound for years to come.

As these materials are installed, the builder and inspectors come to verify that these critical items are being installed properly and according to plan. Once the inspectors have approved the work, the concrete is poured.