

# **Wind protecting houses in Newfoundland.**

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Newfoundland is known for its brutal winds, all year round. So I thought there would be no better place in Canada to take a look at what to you do to a house to avoid wind damage, and keep that wind out of the house. I called on my old buddy Gary Reardon, a prominent new home builder in St. John's, head of Reardon Construction, and asked if we could visit a few of his construction sites. Gary is proud of all of his subs, and with reason. The first photo shows a hurricane tie down, a metal bracket that attaches the roof trusses to the top of the wall much more securely than simply toenailing. This house is on a hill where the wind whips up the slope and catches rather violently under the eaves. The tie down just makes sure that nothing ever comes loose. Not used in all houses, this can prevent problems where the wind can become a problem. When you want a draft free basement, installing the vapour barrier at the top of the wall can be complicated. Here the air sealing specialists draw a bead of acoustical sealant around the joists at the level of the vapour barrier. When they install the plastic, they have an extra foot that is temporarily stapled to the bottom of the floor joists. Then they slit this plastic right down the middle of the joist. This allows them to fold this piece up into the joist area and embed it into the sealant. Also note the careful caulking around every electrical wire that comes through that vapour barrier, even when the wires come through the first stud of a partition wall. The electrical mains wires are sealed as well. Even any plumbing pipes in this area are sealed air tight. Windows are insulated and sealed with special non-expanding insulating foam. Even with all this effort to make an air tight vapour barrier, these houses have a completely sealed house wrap on the outside, like two lines of defence to stop that wind. One thing that these guys are proud of is running that house wrap continuously around the overhang of a cantilevered floor. Although these kinds of procedures are common in R-2000 housing across the country, the windy conditions of Newfoundland means that any well built Newfoundland house needs to follow these techniques to keep the wind out and keep the heat in.

**Keywords:**

Vapour Barrier, Air Sealing, Truss, Air Barriers, Air Leakage, Wind, Roof