

# IN GOOD HANDS WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION

By Brookes Merritt

**M**any Edmonton homes fell victim to water damage this summer. Floodwaters have left homeowners wading through a sea of confusion as they attempt to assess damage done to their homes.

Cracked foundations, sunken basements and dysfunctional weeping tile invited torrential storm water into thousands of homes, destroying valuable living space and creating insurance line-ups not seen since the 1987 tornado.

Kevin Braddell, owner of Abarent Construction Foundation Repair Company has never been busier. He's also never had so many customers call to praise his workmanship.

"People feel safe putting their homes in our hands," he says. "They understand how much we value our work; they know we'll take care of things properly, without cutting any corners."

Abarent crews specialize in repairing water problems caused from cracked foundation walls and cement slab floors.

With over 14 years under their belt as a locally owned and operated business, Braddell and his foremen excavate around entire basements to get at dysfunctional weeping tile, and to repair and waterproof concrete surfaces below grade.

Renovation jobs are at the top of their list. Abarent focuses on three areas of improvement found not only in water-damaged homes, but in Edmonton's oldest and newest housing developments as well.

Aging basements in need of structural repair are perfect candidates for a restorative face-lift, as are homes where the foundation has settled or sunk.

Highly-skilled Abarent crews can install piles beneath a foundation to raise it back to its origi-

nal level, and are one of the only Edmonton repair companies that can lower concrete floors to increase ceiling space in basements

What sounds impossible is made easily understood thanks in part to Braddell's commitment to customer service and education. He personally ensures that Abarent's clients are shown why certain repairs are recommended, and what the benefits are of one renovation method over another.

"Ask five different contractors the best way to repair your foundation and you'll get five different answers," he says. "We take the time to explain all of our methodology, that way clients can make an informed decision about how best to proceed."

Abarent's website ([www.abarent.net](http://www.abarent.net)) offers a comparative table explaining the pros and cons of the different types of foundation repair. It also includes a list of questions homeowners should ask repair firms before they commit to hiring. Testimonials encourage potential clients to seek references for Abarent's spotless record of service and value.

The company's commitment to honesty provides customers with every opportunity to inform themselves about proper foundation repair. They learn first-hand the magic that goes into raising entire homes onto steel I-beams so old, failed walls can be removed and re-poured.

Foundation replacement of this kind provides homeowners with the option of re-developing a finished basement living space, new window installation and upgrades to eight or nine foot ceilings. Replacement of a foundation can often increase the life of character home.

For homes where basement living is not a priority, or where drainage plumbing is not problematic, Abarent can perform a less costly

renovation in which the house need not be raised at all.

Like the hundreds of foundations Abarent has already repaired this year, their administrative team is a water-tight unit of professionalism. With five full-time crews and full-time in-house office staff, Braddell is able to supervise every project and ensure that no cracks exist for clients to fall into.

By not having to subcontract any work, Abarent projects can abide by strict quality control guidelines that ensure no corner is ever cut.

Prospective clients are presented with a comprehensive reference package and an information sheet outlining what they should expect from any foundation repair contractor.

Job estimates include manufacturers specifications for all materials and highlight building codes and city regulations, so that clients can be confident Abarent will stand by their work.

As a member of several professional associations, including the BBB, The Edmonton Home Builders Association and the Alberta Ready-Mix Concrete Association, Abarent has established a reputation as a credible and reliable renovator. Abarent is also proud to be a fully insured member of the WCB.

Braddell is familiar with some contractors' ability to tarnish the construction industry's reputation with shoddy workmanship, and encourages all his clients to be inquisitive.

"People who've been taken on poorly done jobs or warranty issues can become skeptical and I don't blame them," he says. "I know how important personal attention can be; we take time to ensure clients understand the process, that comfort level is what really makes the difference." **R**