

Never Say Never

By George Porter

Five years ago I wrote a book, I said I would never do it again! It takes forever, it is more complicated than you could ever imagine, and the time and expense involved is huge. And, unless the topic involves money, sex, or weapons (preferably all three) it will never ever be a best seller. Why would a sane person ever want to do this again? There is just too much pain involved.

Well, by now you have probably guessed that I wrote another book. But, I have found someone to share the pain! The Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI) asked me to write a text solely on the installation of manufactured homes. They would help with a lot of the details like layout and publishing and add it to the publications in their bookstore. My first book "Installation and Repair of Manufactured Housing" had some installation topics but it mainly dealt with repair. In fact it is the text for training and testing repairers in two states at this time. I had intended for it to be used as a textbook for training new people for the industry in trade schools around the country; but the lack of interest, as well as qualified instructors, has left the idea somewhat flat. Outside the industry, the world can not imagine why anybody would need any training to work on a "trailer." Oh well, some day this understanding will happen and the book will be there when it does.

The new book will be called "Manufactured Housing Installation" and should be in print in a few months. The text is done and is in the last stages of review by a score of nice folks around the nation. In fact, by the time you read this I will be placing pictures in it and maybe even have sent it to the publisher for layout. The book deals with "how to" and "why" extensively. At the present time it has 15 chapters and 4 megabytes of words (that's a bunch). It is only a guess, but it should be around 200 pages after the pictures, but this can change depending on how the publisher puts it together, type size, margins, etc.

The text will cover anchoring, basements, crawlspaces, rolling and jacking, OSHA, home construction, reading a factory manual and its charts, the standard equipment that an installation crew should have; and everything else I could think of that had anything to do with installation in the USA. It is very generic and should apply to all homes in the industry. This is a text book that can be used by anyone to understand manufactured homes and why we have to do what we do.

If you think this book is for installers only, you are mistaken. Quite to the contrary it may be the most useful to the people who do not work under the home, such as retailers, government agencies, inspectors, and manufacturers. On the subject of manufacturers, let me share with you a conversation I recently had with the CEO of a very successful home manufacturing company. He said, "Our people need to know more about installation. We are wasting good money on service costs when most of these troubles could have been prevented by a proper installation." I said "Great!, lets start with you, what do you know about installation?" He looked at me for a few seconds with an expression of, "what does this have to do with me?" I asked him whose money were we really talking about anyway? While I had no idea of his compensation package and it most certainly was

none of my business, I figured he must get some sort of bonus based on the profit of the company. Profit means money left over after all the bills are paid and service costs are certainly bills. So in reality, he was personally losing more money due to bad installation than any salaried employee in his company.

The employee not understanding installation could cost the whole company money, but the “boss” not understanding installation costs him his own money as well. Not only that, what other person probably has more to do with the general focus and direction taken by the entire industry. Who is on those big “high level” committees that generate policy for many years to come? Who has the resources of both time and money to participate in “the big picture,” and make the national decisions that affect installation? Not the service manager and not the installer, that’s for sure.

Bless his heart, I think he became interested, and as soon as I can, I am going to send him one of these books. He could never attend a 15 hour seminar, but he might read this book on a plane someday soon. His company will benefit and so will its stockholders.

This is a lot to hope for from one little book, but this is the first time a book of this kind has ever existed, and I hope it makes a difference. Besides, I never ever plan to write another book! Honest, this is it, I really mean it this time!