

This Takes the Cake

By George Porter

Well... I did it again this week. I met yet another person who wants to try to make the rules for the installation of Manufactured Housing simple by having only one way to do it. First of all, if that were possible surely someone would have done it by now!

The only fun in all of this for me is to try to keep inventing new ways to explain why it can't be done. For the last 10 years I have used the differences in the roof close up as an example. Sometimes I use the marriage line blocking differences or the placement of exterior windows, or sometimes spark plugs.

Spark plugs used to be my favorite for a while. I would say that putting together these homes is a lot like working on cars. If you wanted to tune up your car, would you simply go down to the auto parts store and ask them what spark plugs were on sale? Suppose they had some discontinued ones they would let you have real cheap, but there weren't enough of them, so they would throw in a couple of other kinds to get enough to fill your needs. You could probably save a bunch of money, BUT, would they fit; would they work if they did fit; would they damage your car? Probably all the above! Everyone knows that you need to read the owners manual to make sure you get the proper plugs. The type of engine, the year and make of the car or truck make a big difference, so reading the manual is absolutely necessary. Most folks don't think this car thing is so hard to understand, why is it so hard with Manufactured Housing? What we need is a law saying that all cars must have the same spark plugs; this would make tune-ups easier. Right, that would work!

My new example is cake. Manufactured houses are like cakes. (Better image than a car engine isn't it?) Cakes are sort of complicated to make, what with all the different recipes available. So, we need a law saying that all cakes will be made with the same recipe, what do you think of that? The response is always, "but not all cakes are the same, some are a lot different from others, who would want only one kind of cake?" At which time I usually say, "exactly the point I wanted to make!" Cakes are different from each other, but they are still called cakes. The variations in the types of cakes are what make it necessary to change the recipes a little bit, sometimes a lot. All our homes are called Manufactured Homes but that doesn't make them all the same.

If you want the manufacturers home to come out like it is supposed to, you have to follow the recipe made up by that manufacturer. It is called the installation instructions.

I am now working on an example for used homes, which by the way, still need to be installed the same way they were meant to be installed if you want them to work. Used cake sort of conjures up a very bad image, repossessed spark plugs doesn't work either. I am having a problem with this one, but I will work on it.