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FIVE OAKS CUSTOM PREFAB HOME

From "Assembly Required"

episode DASR-208 -- [More Projects »](#)

A 4,400 square foot home in Colorado looks almost ready for move in. However, a crew from Five Oaks Homes is about to take it apart and send it on a road trip.

Five Oaks' Prefab Process

Five Oaks custom modular homes are all one-of-a-kind designs. They're all built on a seven acre lot next to the company's design offices. The homes are built to 85% completion (**figure A**) and then taken apart and shipped to the homeowner's site (**figure B**). Five Oaks is the only modular company known for this approach.

Before the house is taken apart, the crew disconnects the roof caps, detaches the plumbing and wiring and unbolts each section from the temporary steel undercarriage. After the house is disconnected, the crew starts at the top. They feed 50 foot straps through slots inside the roof. Then, a crane lifts the first cap off, while crew members guide the cap onto wooden crates called cribs. The three caps come off easily, and then the crew starts moving the big stuff...five 15 ton boxes!

The top box is removed carefully with only an inch of clearance on each side. The second box is a little heavier and the crew installs bracing at each opening before moving it. Box three comes off easily, leaving only two boxes left to be separated. The crew starts lifting the fourth box and realizes the last two sections are still attached. Two tiny bolts are still attached, and the crew rushes to saw them off before any major damage is done.

Finally, the house is in pieces. The crew then shrink wraps the sections, loads them on flatbeds and ships them down the road to its new family of four.

Prefab Delivery and Assembly

Elaine and Mike Sanders moved out west six months ago onto a breathtaking 35-acre site in Gardner, Colorado. Since then, they've been living in close quarters with their two teenage boys, two dogs, two birds and even a few fish. Now, they're all more than ready to move out of the RV and into their new, roomier home.

The Sanders weren't originally planning to go prefab. However, they also weren't planning on living in the RV for a year until builders could come look at their site. In his desperate search for a builder, Mike discovered Five Oaks Homes and was lured by the short build time and custom designs. Elaine was skeptical, but agreed to check it out.

Jay Anderson from Five Oaks gave the couple a tour of a modular-style home in mid-construction (**figure C**). Mike was sold, but Elaine still needed more convincing. Jay assured her that a modular home could still be custom designed to fit their needs...including 4,400 square feet, three levels and 90 windows. And the best part? The family could move into their home less than three months after delivery.



Figure A



Figure B



Figure C

Mike gave the word and Jay and his team got to work building the Sanders' dream home.

The Sanders' Five Oaks home is in pieces and barreling down 75-miles of highway (**figure D**). The trucks make it over a mountain range and squeeze through cattle guards before finally arriving at the 35-acre site.

Set supervisor Jim Baker and his crew are ready to set the pieces, but there's a problem...the wind. There's no way 30,000 pounds of house can fly through the air in 30 miles-per-hour wind. While they wait out the weather, the crew stages the trucks and preps the boxes. Unfortunately, the wind stays strong and it starts snowing, causing dangerous conditions for the crew. Jim decides it's "safety first" and postpones the Sanders' home set until the morning.

The next day, the crew is moving quickly and the first module gets set with no problems. The next piece won't be as easy. The truck with the second section gets stuck while moving into position. The crew rescues the truck with a bulldozer, but they're not out of trouble yet. The second piece is too heavy and the crew struggles to get it in place.

The second section gets set and the two pieces are screwed together. Jim pays close attention to make sure every mating wall is perfectly level. One mistake can mean a sewer line won't line up, or electricity won't go up a wall.

The third module gets lifted into place and it looks like smooth sailing. However, a big oversight causes a delay. The team does not put the home shell back together the way it came apart. They set the third box in the wrong order. While fixing the problem, the crane lifts the module and it accidentally gets stuck in a tree top. After an hour delay, the third box is finally set and the crew is back on track (**figure E**). The last two sections get put on and the house is complete.

After only three months of planning their custom prefab home, the Sanders finally see it taking shape. In no time, the final touches will be completed and the Sanders can move in and enjoy the view (**figure F**).



Figure D



Figure E



Figure F

RESOURCES:

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