

NEW BRUNSWICK CONSTRUCTION NETWORK

---

# Materials & Products

Questions about building materials, products,  
brands, and selection

9 Expert Answers from Construction Brain

[newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/construction-brain](https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/construction-brain)

# Table of Contents

---

1. What's the best concrete mix for pouring a garage pad in Campbellton where we get temperatures down to minus 35?
2. Is stamped concrete or interlock pavers a better choice for a driveway in Dieppe where we get heavy salt use in winter?
3. What type of window frame material performs best in New Brunswick — vinyl, fiberglass, or wood-clad?
4. What's the best exterior door material for a home in Saint John that faces the harbor and gets constant wind?
5. What's the best siding material for New Brunswick's freeze-thaw cycles and coastal moisture?
6. What roofing material lasts the longest with New Brunswick's heavy snow loads and ice?
7. Should I choose vinyl or Hardie board siding for my house in Moncton?
8. Is engineered hardwood or laminate better for a New Brunswick home?
9. What is the best deck material for New Brunswick weather?

## What's the best concrete mix for pouring a garage pad in Campbellton where we get temperatures down to minus 35?

For a garage pad in Campbellton's harsh climate, you'll want a high-strength, air-entrained concrete mix — typically 32 MPa (4,600 psi) with 5-8% air entrainment and a low water-cement ratio around 0.45. This combination provides the freeze-thaw durability essential for surviving northern New Brunswick's brutal winters.

**Air entrainment is absolutely critical** in your climate zone. Those microscopic air bubbles act as expansion chambers when moisture freezes inside the concrete, preventing the cracking that destroys so many slabs in the Maritimes. Your ready-mix supplier in the Campbellton area will know the local requirements — they typically add air-entraining agents automatically for exterior slabs.

**Timing your pour is crucial** given Campbellton's extended winter season. Concrete cannot be placed when ambient temperature is below -10°C without heated enclosures, and it needs to cure above 5°C for at least 7 days to develop proper strength. Plan your garage pad for late May through September when you can count on consistent temperatures. If you absolutely must pour in shoulder seasons, you'll need insulated blankets, heated enclosures, and possibly accelerating admixtures — adding \$3-8 per square foot to your costs.

**Foundation requirements** in your area are particularly demanding due to the 4+ foot frost line depth around Campbellton. Your garage pad will need proper granular base preparation (typically 6-8 inches of compacted gravel), vapor barrier, and likely thickened edges or frost walls extending below frost depth. The **Regional Service Commission 2 (Restigouche)** handles building permits for rural Campbellton area — contact them at (506) 789-2595 to confirm foundation requirements for your specific location.

**Finishing considerations** for the harsh climate include a hard steel trowel finish (better than wood float for durability), proper slope for drainage (minimum 1/8" per foot toward the door), and control joints every 10-12 feet to manage shrinkage cracking. Many contractors in northern NB also recommend sealing the concrete after 28 days of curing to protect against road salt and moisture penetration.

**Cost expectations** for a typical 24x24 garage pad run \$2,800-4,200 installed, with the higher end reflecting the specialized mix requirements and shorter construction season in your climate zone. Get quotes from local contractors familiar with northern NB conditions — they'll understand the specific challenges of building in Campbellton's freeze-thaw environment.

Contact RSC 2 first to confirm permit requirements, then source your concrete from a local supplier who regularly works in the Restigouche region and understands the air entrainment specifications for your climate.

---

## Find a Masonry Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- BCB Electric ?
- Blue Energy Ltd ?
- Forever Epoxy Inc ?

Browse all contractors ?

---

Q2

### Is stamped concrete or interlock pavers a better choice for a driveway in Dieppe where we get heavy salt use in winter?

**For Dieppe's harsh winter conditions with heavy road salt, interlocking pavers are generally the superior choice over stamped concrete.** The frequent freeze-thaw cycles and salt exposure that are typical in southeastern New Brunswick can cause significant damage to stamped concrete surfaces within just a few years.

**Salt damage is the critical factor here.** Road salt penetrates concrete's porous surface and accelerates freeze-thaw damage, leading to scaling, spalling, and cracking. Once stamped concrete starts deteriorating, repairs are difficult to match seamlessly with the original pattern and color. You'll often see patchy, mismatched repairs that look worse than the original damage.

Interlocking pavers handle New Brunswick winters much better because individual units can flex with ground movement during freeze-thaw cycles. When salt does cause damage, you can replace individual pavers rather than resurfacing an entire section. The joints between pavers also allow for better drainage, reducing ice buildup that can damage the surface.

**Cost considerations for the Dieppe market:** Stamped concrete typically runs \$12-18 per square foot installed, while quality interlocking pavers range from \$15-25 per square foot. The higher upfront cost for pavers often pays off through lower maintenance and longer lifespan in our climate.

For a typical two-car driveway (600 square feet), expect \$7,200-\$10,800 for stamped concrete versus \$9,000-\$15,000 for pavers. However, factor in that stamped concrete may need sealing every 2-3 years (\$800-\$1,200) and potential repairs within 5-7 years in our salt-heavy environment.

**Professional installation is crucial for both options.** The base preparation is identical - proper excavation, compacted granular base, and adequate drainage. In Dieppe's clay soils, this foundation work is critical to prevent

settling and frost heaving. A building permit from the Town of Dieppe typically isn't required for driveways, but verify setback requirements from property lines.

**Your next step:** Get quotes from local contractors experienced with both materials. Ask specifically about their winter warranty policies and to see examples of 5+ year old installations in the area. The contractor should discuss proper sealing schedules for concrete or edge restraint systems for pavers - both critical for longevity in our Maritime climate.

---

## Find a Masonry Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- [Worry No More Handyman Services ?](#)
- [RPB Construction Ltée ?](#)
- [Atlantic Roofing and Contracting Inc ?](#)

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

---

Q3

## What type of window frame material performs best in New Brunswick — vinyl, fiberglass, or wood-clad?

**Fiberglass frames typically perform best in New Brunswick's harsh climate**, offering superior durability against our extreme freeze-thaw cycles and temperature swings from -35°C winters to +30°C summers. However, the "best" choice depends on your budget, home style, and specific location within the province.

**Fiberglass windows** excel in NB because they expand and contract at nearly the same rate as glass, reducing seal failures that plague other materials during our frequent freeze-thaw cycles. They won't warp, rot, or require painting, and they maintain their structural integrity through decades of Maritime weather. Expect to pay \$800-\$1,500 per window installed, but they often last 30+ years with minimal maintenance. Brands like Inline Fiberglass and Thermotech perform exceptionally well in Atlantic Canada.

**Vinyl windows** dominate the NB market due to their affordability (\$400-\$800 installed) and decent performance. Quality vinyl frames handle our climate reasonably well, though cheaper versions can become brittle in extreme cold or warp during hot summers. The key is choosing thicker-walled vinyl (minimum 3mm) with multi-chambered frames for better insulation. Avoid bargain-basement vinyl — it rarely survives more than 15 years in our climate.

**Wood-clad windows** offer the best of both worlds for heritage homes or premium installations. The exterior aluminum or vinyl cladding protects against moisture and UV damage while maintaining wood's natural beauty inside. They're ideal for Loyalist-era homes in Saint John's Uptown or Victorian properties in Fredericton where heritage character matters. However, they're the most expensive option (\$1,200-\$2,500+ per window) and require periodic maintenance of interior wood surfaces.

For **coastal areas** like Saint John, Shediac, or Bathurst, consider the salt air factor. Fiberglass and quality vinyl resist corrosion better than wood-clad options with metal exterior cladding. If choosing wood-clad in coastal locations, ensure the exterior cladding is marine-grade aluminum or high-quality vinyl.

**Energy efficiency** is crucial given NB's new NBC 2020 Tier 2 requirements (effective May 1, 2025). All three materials can achieve excellent performance with proper glazing — look for triple-pane units with low-E coatings and argon fill. The frame material matters less than the overall window system design.

Your **next step** is getting quotes from local window dealers who understand NB's climate challenges. Ask specifically about warranty coverage for seal failures and frame performance in extreme temperatures — this separates quality manufacturers from budget options.

---

## Find a Windows Doors Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- [A&S Electric Ltd. ?](#)
- [Coastal Comfort Solutions - HVAC ?](#)
- [Top Tier Roofing Ltd. ?](#)

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

## What's the best exterior door material for a home in Saint John that faces the harbor and gets constant wind?

**For a harbor-facing home in Saint John, fiberglass is your best choice** — it handles the Bay of Fundy's salt air, extreme winds, and temperature swings better than any other material.

Saint John's harbor location puts your door through serious punishment. You're dealing with salt spray that corrodes metal components, winds that can exceed 80 km/h during storms, and those brutal freeze-thaw cycles that split wood and warp cheaper materials. The Bay of Fundy's unique conditions — including fog, high humidity, and storm surge — demand a door that won't deteriorate after a few seasons.

**Fiberglass doors excel in marine environments** because they don't absorb moisture, won't rot like wood, and resist salt corrosion better than steel. Look for doors with polyurethane foam cores for insulation (critical during those -25°C January nights) and reinforced frames. Quality fiberglass doors from manufacturers like Masonite or Therma-Tru run \$800-\$2,500 installed, depending on style and glass options.

**Steel doors are your second choice** if budget is tight (\$400-\$1,200 installed), but you'll need galvanized or stainless steel hardware — regular steel hardware will rust within two years in Saint John's salt air. Apply marine-grade primer and paint every 3-4 years to prevent corrosion. Avoid basic steel doors with magnetic weatherstripping; they'll fail quickly in high winds.

**Skip wood entirely** for harbor-facing exposure. Even cedar or mahogany with marine finishes require annual maintenance and will eventually succumb to the moisture. I've seen beautiful wooden doors on Water Street properties that looked great for five years, then needed complete replacement.

**Installation is critical** — your door needs proper flashing, marine-grade sealants, and a storm door rated for coastal winds. The installer should understand Saint John's building requirements and use stainless steel fasteners throughout. Poor installation will void warranties and create air leaks that cost hundreds in heating bills.

Contact the City of Saint John's building department at (506) 658-2835 if you're replacing the entire door assembly — some installations require permits, especially in heritage areas of Uptown Saint John.

Find experienced door installers familiar with coastal installations in our New Brunswick Construction Network directory — they'll know which products perform best in Saint John's challenging harbor environment.

---

### Find a General Contractors Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- alka masonry ?
- Lawrence Landscaping ?
- Duguay Construction ?

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

---

Q5

## What's the best siding material for New Brunswick's freeze-thaw cycles and coastal moisture?

**Fiber cement siding is the top choice for New Brunswick's harsh climate**, offering exceptional durability against freeze-thaw cycles while resisting coastal moisture and salt air. James Hardie and similar fiber cement products can handle our temperature swings from -35°C winters to humid summers without cracking or warping.

**Vinyl siding remains the most popular option** due to its affordability (\$8-12 per square foot installed) and proven performance in Maritime conditions. Quality vinyl with proper backing won't crack in extreme cold and sheds moisture effectively. However, cheaper vinyl can become brittle in our harsh winters and may fade from UV exposure.

For coastal areas like Saint John, Shediac, or the Bay of Fundy region, **material selection becomes critical due to salt air corrosion**. Fiber cement excels here because it won't rust like steel siding or deteriorate like wood. Use stainless steel or hot-dipped galvanized fasteners - standard nails will fail quickly in marine environments.

**Wood siding can work beautifully** but requires significant maintenance in our climate. Cedar naturally resists moisture but needs annual staining or sealing. The freeze-thaw cycles will open joints and create water infiltration points if not properly maintained. Budget \$2,000-4,000 annually for upkeep on a typical home.

**Aluminum siding** handles temperature extremes well and won't corrode in coastal areas, but hail damage is a concern and denting from ice buildup is common. Steel siding offers durability but requires premium coatings for coastal applications.

**Installation timing matters tremendously** in New Brunswick. Schedule siding work between May and September when temperatures stay consistently above 5°C. Many siding adhesives and caulks won't cure properly in cold weather, leading to premature failure.

The building envelope must include proper vapor barriers and insulation per NBC 2020 standards. With Tier 2 energy efficiency now mandatory (effective May 1, 2025), your siding contractor should coordinate with insulation upgrades to eliminate thermal bridging.

**Get multiple quotes from experienced contractors** who understand Maritime climate challenges. Browse verified siding contractors in our New Brunswick directory who know proper installation techniques for our unique conditions. Expect to invest \$15,000-35,000 for a typical bungalow, with fiber cement at the higher end but offering the best long-term value.

---

## Find a General Contractors Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- Expressions Painting ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- alka masonry ?

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

---

Q6

## What roofing material lasts the longest with New Brunswick's heavy snow loads and ice?

**Metal roofing is your longest-lasting option for New Brunswick's harsh winters**, with quality steel or aluminum systems lasting 40-60+ years while handling heavy snow loads and ice buildup exceptionally well.

New Brunswick's climate demands roofing that can handle 250-350cm+ of annual snowfall, frequent freeze-thaw cycles, and temperatures dropping to -25C to -35C. Metal roofing excels because snow slides off naturally rather than accumulating, reducing structural stress and eliminating ice dam formation that plagues other materials.

**Standing seam metal roofing** performs best in our conditions - the raised seams shed water effectively and the continuous panels eliminate leak points. Expect to pay \$12-18 per square foot installed for quality steel systems, or \$15-22 for aluminum. While the upfront cost is higher than asphalt shingles (\$4-8 per square foot), metal roofing pays for itself through longevity and reduced maintenance.

Clay and concrete tiles, while durable in milder climates, aren't recommended for most of New Brunswick due to freeze-thaw damage and excessive weight on snow-loaded structures. Slate can last 100+ years but requires specialized installation and costs \$20-35 per square foot - plus finding qualified slate roofers in NB can be challenging.

**Architectural asphalt shingles** remain the most common choice, lasting 25-35 years in our climate when properly installed with ice and water shield. They're affordable (\$4-8 per square foot) but require more frequent replacement. Premium synthetic shingles offer better durability at \$8-12 per square foot.

For any roofing project, ensure your contractor pulls the proper building permit from your municipality (like Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John) or Regional Service Commission for rural areas. The work must comply with National Building Code 2020 snow load requirements - particularly critical in northern NB where snowfall is heaviest.

**Your next step:** Get quotes from licensed roofing contractors who understand NB's climate challenges. Ask specifically about their experience with metal roofing installation and request references from jobs completed at least 5-10 years ago so you can see how the systems have performed through multiple harsh winters.

---

## Find a Roofing Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- [Copperstone Construction ?](#)
- [SE Metal Roof ?](#)
- [PERMA-DRY ?](#)

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

## Should I choose vinyl or Hardie board siding for my house in Moncton?

For Moncton's climate, Hardie board (fiber cement) is generally the superior long-term choice, though vinyl offers solid value if budget is your primary concern.

**Hardie Board Advantages in New Brunswick's Climate** Fiber cement siding excels in our freeze-thaw cycles and coastal moisture. Unlike vinyl, it won't crack in extreme cold (which Moncton sees regularly at -25°C to -30°C) and handles our spring temperature swings without expanding and contracting dramatically. The material is also fire-resistant and won't melt from BBQ heat or reflected sunlight off snow.

For a typical Moncton home (1,500-2,000 sq ft), expect **Hardie board installation costs of \$18,000-\$28,000**, including removal of old siding. The material comes pre-primed and holds paint exceptionally well in our maritime climate. You'll get 15-20 years before needing to repaint, compared to 7-10 years with vinyl replacement due to fading.

**Vinyl's Value Proposition** Quality vinyl siding runs **\$12,000-\$18,000 for the same home** and requires virtually no maintenance. Modern vinyl has improved significantly - thicker gauges (.044" or higher) resist wind damage from our Atlantic storms, and fade-resistant formulations hold color better. However, cheaper vinyl can become brittle in our winters and may crack if impacted when cold.

**Moncton-Specific Considerations** Since you're in Moncton proper, you'll need a building permit from the City of Moncton Planning & Development department (506-856-4375) for full siding replacement. The work must comply with the National Building Code 2020 edition, which became mandatory for new applications as of May 1, 2025. Ensure your contractor pulls proper permits and arranges inspections.

Given Moncton's location near the coast, salt air exposure is moderate but present. Hardie board's cement composition handles this better than vinyl's potential for chalking. If you're planning to stay in the home long-term, Hardie board's durability and superior appearance typically add more to resale value.

**Your Next Step** Get quotes from at least three contractors for both materials, ensuring they're licensed and carry WorkSafeNB coverage. Ask to see recent local installations of each product - particularly how they've held up after 3-5 New Brunswick winters.

---

### Find a General Contractors Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- Blue Energy Ltd ?

- Leger Steel Roofing ?
- RPB Construction Ltée ?

Browse all contractors ?

---

Q8

## Is engineered hardwood or laminate better for a New Brunswick home?

**Engineered hardwood is generally the better long-term choice for New Brunswick homes**, offering real wood beauty with better moisture stability than solid hardwood, though laminate can be practical for budget-conscious renovations or high-traffic areas.

**Moisture Performance in NB's Climate** New Brunswick's freeze-thaw cycles, coastal humidity, and spring flooding risks make moisture stability crucial. Engineered hardwood handles seasonal humidity changes much better than solid hardwood because its plywood core resists expansion and contraction. The real wood veneer still responds to moisture, but far less dramatically. Laminate is completely waterproof at the surface but vulnerable at seams and edges — any water penetration can cause permanent swelling and bubbling.

In older NB homes (especially 1970s-1990s builds common in Riverview, Quispamsis, and suburban Moncton), basement moisture issues are widespread due to clay soils and high water tables. For below-grade installations, luxury vinyl plank (LVP) often outperforms both options, being 100% waterproof throughout.

**Durability and Refinishing** Engineered hardwood with a 4mm+ wear layer can be sanded and refinished 2-3 times over its lifespan, making it a true long-term investment. Quality engineered floors last 25-40 years with proper care. Laminate cannot be refinished — once worn or damaged, it requires full replacement. However, modern laminate is surprisingly durable for families with pets or heavy foot traffic.

**Cost Considerations for NB Market** Laminate runs \$3-8 per square foot installed, while engineered hardwood typically costs \$8-15 per square foot in New Brunswick — reflecting our province's lower construction costs compared to Toronto or Vancouver. For a 1,000 sq ft main floor, you're looking at \$3,000-8,000 for laminate versus \$8,000-15,000 for engineered hardwood.

**Installation in Heritage and Older Homes** Many NB homes built before 1950 (common in Saint John's Uptown, Fredericton's downtown, or rural Loyalist-era properties) have uneven subfloors that require extensive prep work. Laminate's click-lock system can bridge minor imperfections better than engineered hardwood, which may require professional subfloor leveling — adding \$2-4 per square foot to the project cost.

**Practical Next Step** Measure your space and get samples of both materials to test in your home's lighting. Check your basement for any moisture issues first — if you see efflorescence, musty odors, or past water damage, address those problems before installing any flooring. A moisture meter reading above 12% in your subfloor means you need professional moisture remediation before proceeding with either option.

---

## Find a General Contractors Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- Drisdelle Homes ?
- ERIK GRAVELLE ?
- Daley's Furnishings Co. Ltd. ?

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

---

Q9

## What is the best deck material for New Brunswick weather?

**Composite decking is your best bet for New Brunswick's harsh climate** — it handles our extreme freeze-thaw cycles, heavy snow loads, and coastal moisture without the constant maintenance that wood demands.

New Brunswick's weather is particularly tough on outdoor structures. We see temperature swings from -35°C in winter to +35°C in summer, plus 250-350cm of annual snowfall depending on your location. If you're near the coast (Saint John, Shediac, Bathurst), you're also dealing with salt air that accelerates corrosion and decay.

**Composite decking** like Trex, TimberTech, or Fiberon costs \$8-15 per square foot but eliminates annual staining and sealing. These products resist moisture, won't splinter, and maintain their appearance through our brutal winters. The upfront premium pays for itself within 5-7 years when you factor in maintenance costs and time.

**Pressure-treated lumber** remains popular at \$3-6 per square foot, but requires annual cleaning and re-staining every 2-3 years in our climate. If you choose wood, go with premium grades and ensure proper ventilation underneath — our clay soils and high water tables create moisture issues that accelerate rot.

**PVC decking** (\$10-18 per square foot) offers the ultimate low-maintenance solution and won't fade, but can feel hot underfoot during summer and may show scratches more readily than composite.

For **framing and structure**, always use galvanized or stainless steel fasteners — regular steel won't survive our conditions, especially near the coast. Your deck will need to handle significant snow loads per the National Building Code 2020 (effective May 1, 2025 for new applications in NB).

**Building permits** are required for decks over 24 inches high or attached to your home. Contact your municipality if you're in an incorporated area (Moncton: 506-856-4375, Saint John: 506-658-2835, Fredericton: 506-460-2020) or your Regional Service Commission for rural properties.

Schedule installation between May and September — our 5-month exterior work window. A typical 12x16 deck runs \$8,000-20,000 installed, depending on materials and complexity.

---

## Find a Fencing Decks Contractor

New Brunswick Construction Network connects you with experienced contractors in the directory:

- Leger Steel Roofing ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- Leading Edge Homes Saint John ?

[Browse all contractors ?](#)

---

**Disclaimer:** This guide is provided for informational purposes only by New Brunswick Construction Network. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any construction or renovation project. Information is current as of April 5, 2026 and may change. Visit [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com](http://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com) for the latest answers.