

# Stucco leaves Ottawa homeowners stuck with repair bills

**Re-application of decorative exterior coating costs tens of thousands of dollars**

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Residents of a south Ottawa subdivision say water is leaking into their homes, which are less than a decade old, forcing an expensive re-application of stucco.

Owners of several Cardel homes in Barrhaven's Stonebridge development said they're paying tens of thousands of dollars each for the new material.

Stucco is a decorative coating for walls used as a sculptural and artistic material, often covering less visually appealing construction materials such as concrete, clay brick or cinder block.

Barrhaven homeowner Stu Jarrette is questioning the use of stucco on the exterior of his home after paying \$40,000 to fix what he found when his old stucco was pulled off.

"You could see little brown circles around every screw hole and in behind that larger area of black where the substrate had started to rot," said Jarrette, whose home is nine years old.

Jarrette's concerns are shared by Jim Waterson, whose home is just down the street. Waterson said his home is seven years old and it needed \$25,000 worth of repairs.



*Jim Waterson, left, is seen here with his neighbour Richard Renaud, who believes there are at least six homeowners having trouble with leaks. (Stu Mills/CBC)*

## Leaks are 'maintenance issue,' lawyers say

There are at least six homes with leak issues, according to neighbour Richard Renaud, who said he has been keeping track of the problems in the subdivision along Bentgrass Green Drive.

"They don't want to look and they know they have the same problem," Renaud said, referring to other homes.

Jarrette said most people in the subdivision have started to put their homes up for sale.

One resident who did not want to be identified said he is currently in a legal battle with Montreal-based Cardel Homes over the stucco on his home.

The resident said Cardel's lawyers have argued the leaks were not caused by the home builders, but the problems are actually a maintenance issue.

The company did not respond to several requests for interviews.