SALES TAXES ON MATERALS

Houses constructed of materials purchased after July 1 will cost from $75 to $150 more than similar living units now cost, Robert A. Bready, president, Maryland Home Builders' Association, declared this week.

Mr. Bready explained that all materials and equipment, whether purchased in the State or from out-of-State, incorporated into new structures, would be subject to the sales or use taxes after July 1.

"The tax is not on the sales price of the house, but on the materials used in constructing it." Mr. Bready said. "There will be a hidden tax, too, in that purveyors of materials and builders will have an additional bookkeeping job to do, increasing their outlay for labor and boosting their operating overhead.

"Builders' profits have been pruned sharply as contrasted with prewar days, so the consumer will pay an added cost when he buys a new house or makes improvements to existing structures."

Recounting the opposition to placing the sales and use taxes on building materials, Mr. Bready charged that "logical arguments were ignored."

"It was pointed out that houses pay continuing taxes throughout their lifetime, in the course of which taxes on many dwellings amount to two to three times the original cost of construction," he explained.

Mr. Bready said the job of calculating the tax "is involved, if not difficult to arrive at," emphasizing that "the tax is not levied on labor, but rather on materials."

He cited the installation of linoleum floors in kitchens and baths and of heating systems.

"The supply houses that furnish the materials to the subcontractors for such installations will add a sales tax, and, naturally, the respective subcontractors will tack this onto their bills," Mr. Bready said.

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