

# Few splash out on pools



Palladio Homes managing director Brad Fullin has seen a big reduction in pools Photo: DAVID CLARK

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POOL sales in new homes are down as much as 80 per cent in two years as block sizes decrease and home owners worry about over-capitalising.

Palladio Homes managing director Brad Fullin said only 10 per cent of the houses he built now had pools, down from 50 per cent two years ago.

"There has been a real move away from swimming pools," he said. "Blocks are getting smaller and that is a big part of it."

"I also don't think people want to worry about maintenance."

Kirra Homes managing director Joey Hart agreed, saying the average block size on the Gold Coast had shrunk significantly in a few years, which meant there was less room for a pool.

"People can't afford a big block," he said.

"We have noticed that older people particularly do not want a pool."

Mr Hart and Mr Fullin said instead of installing pools, people now wanted larger alfresco areas and were no longer satisfied with just a barbecue out the back.

"We are conscious with our new homes that we have to deliver a good sized alfresco," said Mr Hart.

He said those who lived in housing estates were less likely to want pools since many developers now included them as part of the communal recreation facilities.

GC Pools and Landscaping owner-manager Troy Hibbens said his business, which has been operating on the Gold Coast for 16 years, had gone quiet since Christmas.

"The size of blocks is part of it, but it is also the fact that people

are concerned about over-capitalising," he said.

"Inquiries have picked up in the past couple of months but people are not committing."

Mr Hibbens said when people did go ahead, they were keen to do more than just put a pool in and wanted extensive landscaping as well.

Kirra Homes has just completed the smallest home the company has built – a 220sq m home on a 377sq m block at the Gainsborough Greens estate.

Prodap Property Market Research said there were lots on the Coast smaller than 300sq m.

It said the average for new estates was 500sq m, down from 700sq m five years ago.

Mr Hibbens said his pool business was faring much worse than before the global financial crisis.

"In those days, there was as much work as you wanted on the Gold Coast," he said.