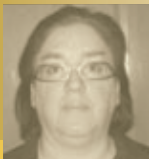




# BUILDER



THE MAGAZINE OF THE CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION



# INDUSTRY LEADERS SPEAK



Love Energy Consultants Inc.



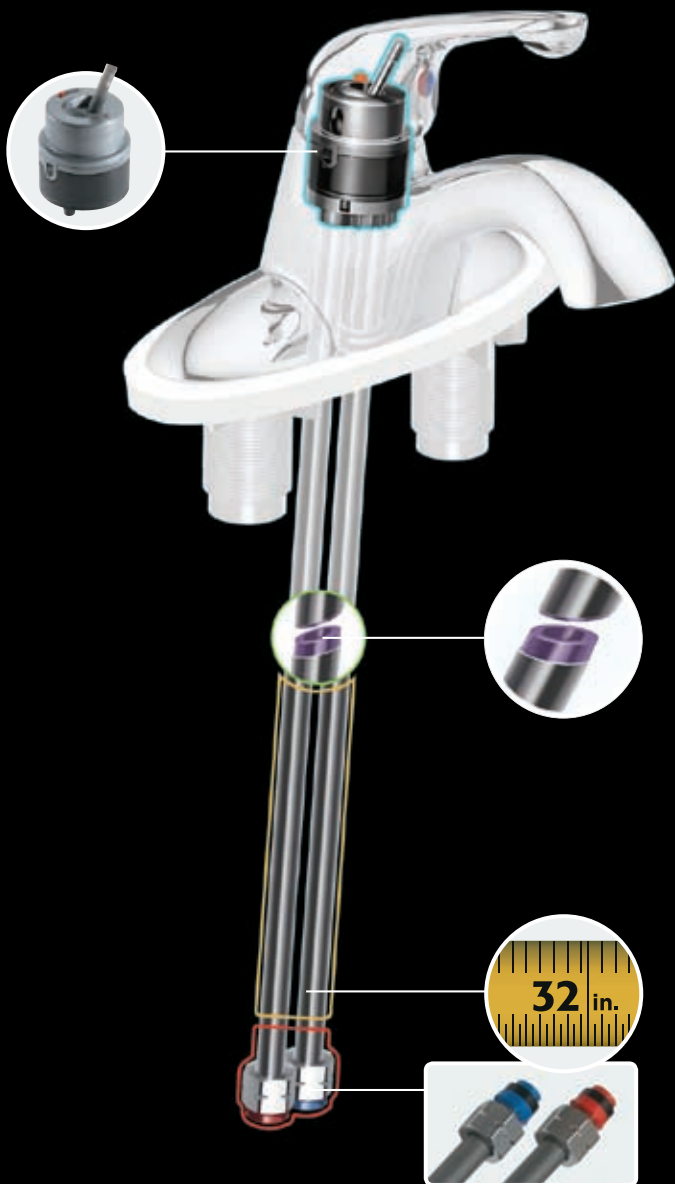
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## HomeBUILDER Magazine Buyer's Guide 2011

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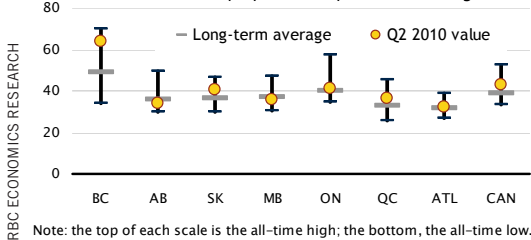
Release January, 2011. See page 31 for more information, call 514-620-2200 or e-mail homebuilder@work4.ca



## RBC Housing Affordability: Homeownership Costs Continue to Climb in Canada

### Affordability across provinces

% of HH income taken up by ownership costs of a bungalow



Note: the top of each scale is the all-time high; the bottom, the all-time low.

TORONTO, Ont. — Despite a significant slowing in resale market activity, the cost of homeownership continued to climb across Canada in the second quarter of 2010. At the national level, RBC Housing Affordability Measures rose for the fourth consecutive time, up between 1.1 and 2.1 percentage points.

The increase in homeownership costs in the second quarter was widespread. Some improvements occurred in Alberta and Saskatchewan but were confined to specific housing types (condominiums in Alberta and townhouses in Saskatchewan). Ontario

## CREA Lowers Resale Sales Activity Forecast for 2010/11

OTTAWA, Ont. — The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) has lowered its forecast for home sales activity via the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) Systems of Canadian real estate Boards and Associations for 2010 and 2011.

Sales activity in the third quarter of 2010 began on a weak footing, but gained traction as the quarter progressed. Improving momentum for home sales activity suggests the resale housing market is stabilizing, but weaker than expected third quarter activity has reduced CREA's annual forecast. [www.crea.ca](http://www.crea.ca)

and British Columbia saw the most significant deterioration in affordability. All other provinces showed some modest erosion, except for two-storey homes in Manitoba where the rise in the RBC Housing Affordability Measure was quite substantial.

By and large, the affordability situation remains within a safe range in Canada. However, there are local markets where the share of household income taken up by homeownership costs is at worrisome levels. In Vancouver, Canada's most expensive market, RBC Housing Affordability Measures are very close to their all-time high, which points to significant underlying stress and raises a red flag. Ottawa, Montreal and markets in Saskatchewan also show poor affordability levels relative to their own historical track records. Affordability in all other major markets and regions in Canada continues to be very close to long-term averages. [www.rbc.com/economics](http://www.rbc.com/economics)

## Scotiabank Launches Three National EcoLiving Awards

TORONTO, Ont. — Scotiabank has launched Scotiabank EcoLiving Awards, a Canada-wide awards program supported by Green Living Enterprises. The awards will recognize businesses, innovators and students for excellence in the development of home energy efficiency products, services and solutions:

The Scotiabank EcoLiving Business Leadership Award (\$50,000) will be awarded to a business or individual who is leading the way in home energy efficiency products, services or solutions.

The EcoLiving Innovators Award (\$15,000) will go to a business or individual who is demonstrating innovation in home energy efficient products, services and solutions.

The Scotiabank EcoLiving Student Leadership Award (\$10,000) will be awarded to a full-time college or university student who demonstrates promise for the future of home energy conservation.

Full information on the awards, including submission forms, key dates, eligibility and judging criterion are available exclusively on Scotiabank's EcoLiving website, <http://ecoliving.scotiabank.com/awards>. Submissions for award nominations will close on January 31, 2011.



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## Greer McCarthy Ranked Among Canada's Top Women Entrepreneurs

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. — **JEAN GREER MCCARTHY**, founding partner of **Greer Home Builders** in Lethbridge, has been ranked 86th in the 12th annual PROFIT W100 ranking of women entrepreneurs. Ranking is based on a composite score of size, growth rate and profitability of business.

Greer McCarthy, president of CHBA – Lethbridge Region, was recently awarded the Klaus Springer Memorial Award, as well as the Presidential Award of Honour, by CHBA Alberta; the CHBA National has named her their spokesperson to the National Housing Research Council in Ottawa. She has also been recognized as a YWCA Woman of Distinction. [www.chbaalberta.ca](http://www.chbaalberta.ca).



Jean Greer McCarthy

## Dr. Carl Turkstra Named to HHHBA Builders' Hall of Fame

HAMILTON, Ont. — The Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association (HHHBA) has welcomed local business leader Dr. **CARL TURKSTRA** into its prestigious Hall of Fame.

Turkstra is the former president of **Turkstra Lumber Ltd.**, founded in Hamilton by his father, Peter. He helmed the company for nearly two decades after his father retired in 1990. The company is now run by his son Peter, representing the third generation of the family run business. Turkstra becomes the 30th person to be named into the Hall of Fame in its 20-year history. [www.hhhba.ca](http://www.hhhba.ca)

## Allan J. Klassen Named to CHBA – Alberta Hall of Fame

CALGARY, Alta. — The Canadian Home Builders Association – Alberta has inducted **ALLAN J. KLASSEN**, president and managing partner of luxury lifestyle builder **Albi Homes Ltd.**, into their Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have contributed and made a difference in the home building industry in Alberta over the years.

Prior to his induction, Klassen held numerous industry responsibilities including President of the CHBA Calgary in 2004/05 and President of CHBA-Alberta in 2005/06. In 2007, he was awarded the George Frieser Award, the highest level of recognition given for a volunteer at the provincial level. [www.crhba.com](http://www.crhba.com).



Allan J. Klassen



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By Peter Norman

## Weaker Times Ahead for Housing

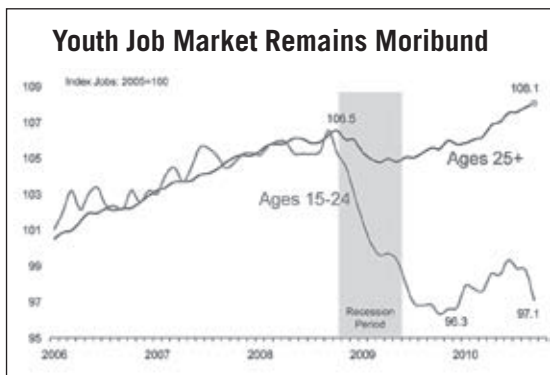
Darker clouds have moved in on the housing market in Canada; builders should tread cautiously when making decisions about the next 18 months or so.

Housing starts data are certainly pointing to a general slowdown in demand. Total Canada-wide housing starts moderated to 190,700 units seasonally adjusted at annual rates (SAAR) in the third quarter of 2010, according to CMHC, down about 5 per cent from the second quarter.

The decline in total housing starts was spread across both single-family and apartment units. By region, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec accounted for most of the softening. A modest decline also emerged in Atlantic Canada, which saw buoyant activity in New Brunswick more than offset by a setback in Newfoundland.

Existing home sales continued to subside from the recent peak in Q4 2009, as SAAR dipped below the 400,000-unit mark, nearing the recessionary lows of early 2009.

The general expectation for the final quarter of 2010 and going into 2011 are for modestly lower housing starts across most of the country, primarily from the exhaustion of pent-up demand and the effects of pulled forward sales earlier in 2010.



SOURCE: ALTUS GROUP ECONOMIC CONSULTING BASED ON STATISTICS CANADA LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

### Youth Job Market Remains a Risk

Canada's economy is turning in a mixed performance in recent months; a combination of the slowing economic conditions, compounded by the growing uncertainty around conditions in the months ahead, is likely to weigh in heavily on the way business and consumers will make decisions.

Economic growth, for example, sprang out of the blocks at the beginning of the year with a strong 5.8 per cent annualized growth rate, but slowed significantly in the second quarter and may have stalled in the third (the economy retreated modestly in the month of July).

On the job front, headline data are more encouraging. Some 328,000 net new jobs (on a seasonally adjusted basis) have been created since the end of 2009, and the Canadian workforce finally surpassed its pre-recession peak in August.

But the composition of job growth remains uneven. Job gains among adult men have been strong and steady, but the youth job market — which took the biggest hit during the recession — remains moribund. The component of the workforce under the age of 25 (normally about 15 per cent of the workforce) accounted for half of all the jobs lost in the recession. Moreover, despite the general recovery in the workforce, this demographic has seen

almost no job gain.

The youth cohort is important in terms of housing market impacts, since this group plays a key role in the housing demand cycle by forming households. Young households are often renters, but distressed economic conditions within this group could affect first-time buying decisions in the years ahead.

### Consumers May Be Retreating

Business and consumer confidence are vital to housing demand, but are a difficult economic variable to measure. Several sources try to gauge consumer confidence through surveys, and in most of these, it appears that confidence is declining. The RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index fell significantly in September after being mostly flat since January 2010. The Conference Board's index of consumer confidence also continued its downward trend in September. In addition, monthly business monitor index put out by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business fell for the fourth consecutive month in September.

Both home buying and renovation intentions, as measured by the Altus Group/Ipsos Reid FIRM residential mortgage survey, softened further in the third quarter.

Most major measures of business and consumer confidence appear to be headed in a downward direction. Weaker confidence is likely reflective both of slower economic growth and growing uncertainty.

### Household Debt Watch

The amount of debt taken on by Canadian households is an emerging issue for the housing market. The Bank of Canada recently highlighted that Canadian households are taking on larger amounts of debt in relation to underlying incomes. Rising debt-to-income ratios implies a greater proportion of household are likely becoming vulnerable to events, such as a weak labour market, or higher interest rates.

Builders may need to worry about emerging household debt issue for two reasons: first, rising indebtedness may directly be influencing the erosion of consumer confidence. Second, concerns over indebtedness expressed by the Bank of Canada and Finance Canada could lead to further tightening of mortgage rules.

### On Balance, Lower Housing Starts

All told, recent softening in housing market data from the resale market and in terms of housing starts is suggestive of weaker times ahead for housing. Weaker consumer confidence, slower economic growth and emerging issues such as youth unemployment and rising household debt are also concerns. We expect housing starts to soften further through the fourth quarter of 2010 and to come in at the 165,000 to 170,000 range in 2011. ■

Peter Norman is a member of the CHBA Economic Research Committee and is Senior Director of Economic Consulting at Altus Group (formerly Clayton Research), a firm of urban and real estate economists.



By Fanis Grammenos

Driving uses  
as much  
as or more  
energy as  
all other  
household  
needs for it  
combined.

Fanis Grammenos is a principal of Urban Pattern Associates and was a senior researcher at CMHC for 20 years. He can be reached at fanis.grammenos@gmail.com, and you can see his planning work at [www.fusedgrid.ca](http://www.fusedgrid.ca)

## Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Read any magazine, newspaper, municipal pamphlet or provincial/federal report, and you are likely to encounter two well-meaning initiatives that, because of frequent and careless repetition, have almost lost all meaning: “sustainable development” and “smart growth.”

While principles, policies and guidelines proliferate, examples that put them in practice are rare, certainly far fewer than would first appear from the press coverage. That’s because numerous developments claim the brand but lack the essential attributes to deserve it.

There’s an old adage: “One swallow does not make a summer...” The same can be said of those projects that may take credit for the brand, yet essentially stop at one or two good ideas. But, with an overflow of claims and labels, how does one decipher which “must have” elements can move a project into the advanced ranks, deserving of the brand? One of the best ways is to learn from the laureates.

### Five Bold Steps

Few projects have been recognized internationally, and multiple times, for the bold, decisive steps they took — even against prevailing wisdom — as Vauban. A suburb of Freiburg, Germany, Vauban is one of the most renowned and acclaimed recent developments. So let’s take a virtual pilgrimage, and learn from this laureate.

Vauban’s creators recognize that reducing consumption of all dwindling resources is the cornerstone of environmental sustainability: doing more with less. Energy use is the obvious place to start, and driving dominates the consumption pie chart. Incredible as it may seem, driving uses as much as or more energy as all other household needs for it combined.

**Bold step one:** Reduce driving within or from and to Vauban. As of 2009, only about 30 per cent of residents own a private car. Some don’t want or need them at all, others only sporadically and, when they do, borrow one of the shared cars for a fee. There are no parking spots on the narrow streets or attached to the houses; you can stop by a house but cannot park. Parking is at walking distance from all homes in a structure. As a direct result, infrastructure is less expensive and land consumption is reduced.

Getting around Vauban is easy on foot and bike. The layout of the streets, paths and parks ensures that it is faster and more enjoyable to walk and bike than to drive. In a U-turn from prevalent rulebooks, the plan uses connected loops and cul-de-sacs for its residential streets, supplemented by a dense network of paths. This approach reduces street length and asphalt, while leaving more land for development and green space. But it also does something else very important: It changes the character of the streets.

**Bold step two:** Rail for getting to and from town. A tramway serving the 5,000 residents of this suburb



came with the development, not after it, providing a convenient, comfortable 15-minute connection to the Freiburg city centre. Additionally, a one-year free transit pass comes with the purchase of a home and a car-share club membership.

**Bold step three:** Urban density at about 15 units per acre spells frequent transit service and begets a farmers market and a small shopping centre at a convenient walking distance. The result: more kids in the park, more people on the paths walking and customers at the local store, a community that buzzes with visible activity and participants. With these benefits also comes lower land consumption per person. Add 600 jobs to the recipe, almost one for every two households, and a healthy mix emerges that infuses more activity within the neighbourhood.

**Bold step four:** Passive and active solar and a district co-generation plant. All units are built to consume half the energy of a typical newly-built German house. Fifty of the units apply passive solar techniques; about 100 are net energy exporters. About 4,500 sq. ft. of solar panels have been installed and connected to the grid. More are planned. The co-generation plant burns wood-chip waste and is plugged into the district electrical grid, an example of waste-to-resource conversion.

**Bold step five:** Rain infiltration. Through site plan design, build form and green roofs, 80 per cent of the residential area acts as an absorbing surface with little, if any, runoff.

What do these bold innovations mean? It amounts to removing about 2,000 cars from the roads, not counting side benefits. Now “environmentally sustainable” makes sense.

Can such sustainable suburbs be built in Canada? Perhaps not exact copies, but variations are already on their way under the CMHC/NRCan Equilibrium Communities initiative. ■

For more information on the community of Vauban, visit [www.vauban.de/info/abstract.html](http://www.vauban.de/info/abstract.html)



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**Financing Services**



By John Burrows

## Summary of Key Changes to 2010 NBC Part 9

The 2010 National Building Code (NBC) of Canada is scheduled for release on November 29, 2010. Although not all provinces and territories will be immediately affected by the changes introduced, progressive builders will be interested in knowing how codes are evolving. This article summarizes the major changes in the 2010 NBC that will affect housing construction.

### Secondary Suites

New requirements have been introduced to accommodate the construction of secondary suites at a reasonable cost without compromising the health and safety of occupants. Previously, secondary suites were addressed in the 2005 NBC using the same provisions as for duplexes and semi-detached dwelling units (two-unit residential buildings). These provisions often imposed additional requirements in terms of fire and sound protection, egress and exiting when compared to requirements for single-family dwellings. The 2010 NBC will provide clearer direction on the measures to be taken for secondary suites in houses.

### Lateral Loads

New provisions for bracing and lateral load resistance have been introduced to enable buildings in certain regions to withstand earthquakes and high winds. For areas where the risk is low to moderate (the vast majority of locations), no new requirements have been added.

For areas of high risk, mainly the Pacific Coast of British Columbia, prescriptive requirements have been added so that builders can incorporate adequate lateral load resistance without the need for further structural engineering design. Most solutions involve the construction of interior and exterior walls using "braced wall panels" in "braced wall bands" that are continuous horizontally and vertically throughout the building, and that extend from the top of the foundation, slab or subfloor to the roof framing.

In a limited number of regions where risk is extreme, engineering design in accordance with 2010 NBC Part 4 or with established good engineering practice will be required.

### Spatial Separation

New requirements have been introduced for spatial separation of houses and buildings that are in proximity to one another or to the property line. Limiting distances (i.e. spatial separations) may need to be increased depending on construction type, fire department response time, and the percentage of unprotected openings in the exposed

building face. Other changes require additional protection of exposed soffits and exposed building faces in very close proximity to the property line.

### Radon

New requirements have been included to provide protection for occupants from the ingress of radon into buildings. All buildings will be required to have, at the time of construction, a rough-in for future radon mitigation systems. In addition to the prescriptive measures, performance-based language was added to facilitate the use of other radon mitigation techniques. This will allow new technologies to be used, such as in situations where clear gravel cannot be used or where it is not easily available.

### Ventilation

The risk of radon in a geographical area has been removed as a trigger for the requirements for protection from depressurization. This means that make-up air is only required to address the spillage of combustion air from solid fuel-fired appliances. It has also been clarified that all mechanically vented appliances are exempt from the make-up air requirements. Requirements for carbon monoxide detectors have been moved into a more appropriate Article.

### Windows, Doors and Skylights

A new harmonized North American fenestration standard is being referenced in Section 9.7 of the 2010 NBC. Although the required level of performance for windows, doors and skylights is not being increased, compliance with the harmonized standard and the related Canadian Supplement differs from the standards previously referenced and will require adjustment within the industry. As the harmonized standard and the Canadian supplement now address doors and skylights in addition to windows, a substantial reorganization of NBC Sections 9.6 and 9.7 became necessary.

### Low Permeance Materials in the Building Envelope

The 2010 NBC will include a simplified approach to requiring the correct position and properties for low air and vapour permeance materials in building envelopes. The new requirements will now assume normal interior conditions for dwelling units and require building envelope design only where high moisture generation takes place in the interior. The changes to NBC Section 9.25 also attempt to clarify that requirements for proper position and properties of low permeance materials are an additional requirement to insulation, vapour barriers and air barriers.

*Further information about these and other changes can be found at [www.nationalcodes.ca](http://www.nationalcodes.ca).*



The 2010 NBC (as well as the National Fire Code and National Plumbing Code) will be available in two print formats, full-size binder and soft-cover (both 8.5 x 11 in.). Electronic versions will also be available in downloadable PDF format, replacing the CD-ROM versions, and as online subscriptions. Starting on November 29, the 2010 Codes will be available at NRC's Virtual Store at [www.nrc.gc.ca/virtualstore](http://www.nrc.gc.ca/virtualstore).

John Burrows is an engineer and technical writer. This article was written under the direction of the NRC Institute for Research in Construction.



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# BUILDING QUALITY FROM Coast to Coast

BY JUDY PENZ SHELUK

Typically our Profile in each issue showcases one company or individual, but for this issue, we decided to branch out a bit. Thus, we have representation from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The question posed: Define your home building philosophy, including green initiatives or any special projects. What we discovered is that, regardless of location, size of company, or particular niche within our industry, they are to a person committed to delivering quality without compromise.

## Going Back to R-2000 Basics



Everts Lind Enterprises Ltd.,  
Bridgewater, N.S.  
Richard Lind, President



LUCKYDUCK PHOTOGRAPHY

As a custom builder, the biggest challenge now is to fit all the new products, material and processes into what the client is looking for in the new home. The clients are bombarded with information and they need someone to help them choose the features they need most.

We always start with the basics principles of an R-2000 house; it's the best place to begin. Then we look carefully at the site for best orientation for solar heat gain. We look at the site ground and choose the proper foundation. We find that ICF foundation systems work well in our region to avoid moisture problems.

## Putting Customers in the Driver's Seat

Bayside Builders, Summerside, P.E.I.  
Peter Brown, President

For over 25 years, from starter homes to multi-unit developments, the Bayside Group of companies has offered housing services to both current Islanders and aspiring ones. Founded in 1983 on a tradition of excellence in quality, design, and craftsmanship, as well as respect for our Island and its most historic landmark properties, our company believes in the great honour it is to build and manage homes.

Our expertise is complemented by a pledge to customer communication that keeps the client informed and in the driver's seat during construction; we do what it takes to make dreams come true — on time and according to budget.



Peter and his wife, Muriel, at the job site

## Green Team

All-Tech Construction Management Group, Maberly, Ont.  
Cam Allen, Managing Partner



From left: Stephen Hogeboom, Bill DeVries, Tom McCleneghan, Cam Allen, Shaun McFie and Mario Piazzi

All-Tech was formed about three years ago to market, design and build green homes and small commercial buildings. The team includes Stephen Hogeboom, owner of a 60-year-old family roofing company; Bill DeVries, an IAQ/Mold/Thermal Imaging Technician; Tom McCleneghan, a P.Eng. (civil); Shaun McFie, owner of an electrical contracting firm; Mario Piazzi, owner of a HVAC company; and Cam Allen, a semi-retired custom builder/contractor. The objective was to involve all partners in the development stages; sort of a permanent project team. So far, it's working great.

The group is especially proud of its involvement in the Central Frontenac Mature Living Townhouse Project in Sharbot Lake. As Ontario's first GreenHouse Certified Construction Townhouse, the team put the specific needs of seniors first and foremost in the design of the 4800 sq. ft., six-unit complex. By blending known energy efficient technology into a cost efficient package, we were able to provide affordable rental housing for active seniors. Building doesn't get more rewarding than that.

# Building More Than Homes



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14 ▶



## Giving Back

Stepper Custom Homes Inc.  
Dave Hooze, President and General  
Manager, Calgary, Alta.

"Our passion has been building since 1956." Our motto sums up how we do business. Each member of our Team is encouraged to be passionate about what we do. We have a balanced approach to what that looks like, but in a few words...we give back. We give to our customers by striving to be the top in customer satisfaction, and by providing award-winning and innovative plans and processes to build our customer's homes.

We give back to the environment as a Built Green builder, as well as by replanting trees to replace all the trees used to build Stepper Homes in a year. We give back to society by building homes for the homeless in partnership with Habitat for Humanity in Calgary, and by our staff actually travelling to El Salvador to build homes there. It is important that each Team member believes in what we do and has fun doing it. That, in turn, translates into a better experience for our customers.

## The Changing Reno Market

Michael J. Martin Luxury Renovations  
Mike Martin, owner, Ottawa, Ont.

Reno by Design  
Suzanne Martin, owner, Ottawa, Ont.

Baby Boomers have long been setting trends. As we approach 2011, it is apparent that the aging Boomers will once again change the face of residential housing.

In today's renovation market, there are two primary Boomer groups: empty-nesters comfortably situated in their established neighbourhoods, and ready to renovate in preparation for retirement; and

those downsizing and preparing their homes for sale.

The residual effect of the latter is the next generation of families, whose demand for renovation services involves upgrading older homes to meet the lifestyle needs of growing families, paired with an ever-increasing demand for a home office.

Fortunately, building industry professionals are in tune with new trends, including maintenance-free materials, barrier-free design elements, and the "greening" of the home-space. Hidden compartments and multi-functionality have become standard starting points for designers.

Of course, renovators and designers are frequently presented with client-sourced products found online and in magazines but, as professionals, we must be cautious. Many non-Canadian products have not yet been fully integrated into the local marketplace, nor approved for Canadian standards.

Fortunately, our industry is keeping abreast of developing trends, and our regional, provincial and national Associations add value to their member profes-



Mike and Suzanne Martin

sionals by promoting new products, business guidelines, and by acting as a forum for learning through one another.

## Logic, Function, Style

Dynamic House Design, Inc., Pritchard, B.C.  
Julie Orser, Co-owner & Designer



Julie Orser, with husband and co-owner Travis, and dogs Austin and AJ

My philosophy is to figure out what's logical, make sure it's functional, and then add the style — style is the easy part. It's amazing how many people will just pick a stock plan out of a book or off the Internet because they want to get going, and because they think they'll save a few thousand dollars.

But a new home is typically the biggest investment of someone's life, an investment in not only money, but also time, effort, inconvenience and emotion. Such an investment deserves planning, research and deep thought; a house plan that is tailored to meet lifestyle needs. It should also optimize the actual building site for design layout, landscaping, and passive solar potential. When the plan is further developed to consider such things as furniture placement, organization, traffic flow, and sightlines, it should also result in less square footage with the functionality of a larger space.

Such planning takes time. I typically spend as much time getting to know my clients as many designers spend designing an entire house. But, once I fully understand a client's lifestyle needs (and wants), the process of designing a client's house can begin — with logic, function, and style.



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# INDUSTRY LEADERS SPEAK

## TALKING POINTS

COMPILED AND EDITED BY JUDY PENZ SHELUK

### Trends and projections from A to Generation Z

Putting together editorial content for a bi-monthly, national magazine can present a challenge: how to balance the topical and timely with the interesting and educational. To that end, we've developed regular columns written by the foremost experts in their respective fields. But we also know that there are many other leaders in our industry who have something to say. We decided to give them that opportunity.

Our 'Call to Industry Leaders' started with a quarter-page notice on page 5 of the September 2010 issue, which we then followed up with targeted e-mail communications. To recap, the Talking Points were:

- Projections for new housing starts in 2011
- Trends to watch for in design, planning, building and renovation
- Energy efficiency and/or green programs: where do we go from here?
- Initiatives to encourage Generation Z into the home building industry

Here are the results, in no particular order, of that survey. We hope you enjoy reading these opinions as much as we did. And maybe next November, we'll hear from you, too.

#### Green Is Gold



AVID Canada  
Paul Cardis, Founder and CEO



For the past four years, the study of home design conducted by AVID Ratings has confirmed that consumers are making the shift towards greener homes. In 2010, the "AVID Home Design Driver Report" was released at the International Builders' Show in Las Vegas. The study surveyed over 10,000 Canadian homeowners who, in the last nine years, either built a new home or purchased a newly constructed home.

The questions in this research study focused on a number of areas, including both renewable materials and energy-efficient features. Overall, the energy-efficient features were one of the highest-rated home design elements. When compared to renewable materials, it is evident that the renewable aspect of "green" has not yet penetrated consumer demand to the same degree.

Builders today should recognize the advantage of new, energy-efficient homes over the resale market. Houses that help pay for themselves through energy cost savings are a winner in the eyes of the consumer, while offering an unprecedented opportunity for the builder; some builders are outselling their competition now three to one by offering the more efficient home at a lower price. It is clear that a paradigm shift in home building is afoot; I recommend builders think about change or be left behind.

#### The New Normal: No More Hype-and-Jive



Braun/Allison Inc.  
David Allison, President



Five trends that were catalyzed by the recession will continue to crystallize, becoming the new normal throughout all aspects of our industry; from land acquisition through to handing over the keys to a new

homeowner. These trends can be summarized as: an insistence on authenticity; a demand for two-way communication; an expectation of immediate responsiveness; wariness towards mainstream advertising; and embracing digital and social media

It's time to embrace the shift away from hype-and-jive. Prospects are not looking for Tuscan-style homes, unless they live in Tuscany. This holds true for interior design, architecture, and most of all, in the way we communicate.

People want (and deserve) facts and information before they will commit to buying the most expensive thing they will ever purchase: a new home. Traditional media blended with digital and social media must be used to get the facts out to prospects. The only antidote to fear and uncertainty is truth, and plenty of it.

If I see one more real estate development advertisement with an elegantly dressed, Photoshopped woman draped over a staircase, and a headline that says something like "Luxury Lives Here," I'm going to scream. Treat people with some respect. Inform them...tell them what they need to know. At Braun/Allison, we call this Marketing Journalism, but it's really nothing more than a commitment to sell the truth.

#### The Top-Down Condo Twist



Building Industry and Land Development Association - BILD  
Stephen Dupuis, President, Chief Executive Officer

Top-down planning is having a major impact on development and building trends in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan mandates that 40 per cent of new development in any given year must be within the existing built boundary; development beyond the built boundary, but within the approved outer boundary, must be intensified.

Within the last decade, the share of the GTA housing market captured by high-rise condo developers has steadily risen from one quarter, which was considered normal, to a third, which was called the new normal, to more than 40 per cent (we called that The Year of the Condo), to the point today where slightly more than half of all new home sales annually are high-rise condos.

As this market shift has occurred, the City of Toronto has garnered an increasing share of the building activity within the GTA — at the expense of the suburban regions (the 905 area code) surrounding Toronto.

But there's a twist: the combined impact of the massive legislated Greenbelt, together with the Growth Plan's strict limits on urban boundary expansions, has severely restricted low-rise land supply in the 905 area. Between affordability constraints and the 40 per cent intensification rule, high-rise development is taking a firm hold in the 905 regions.



## Natural Born Leader

This new kind of water heater saves homeowners approximately \$320 a year\* in water heating operational cost. The footprint is similar to a standard tank model, and it uses existing water and electrical connections.

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\*Based on DOE test procedure and comparison of a 50-gallon standard electric tank water heater using 4881 kWh per year vs. the GE Hybrid water heater using 1856 kWh per year.



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18 ▶ **Understanding FlexHousing**



Canadian Home Builders' Association – PEI  
Lori Pearce, Chief Administrator

Most homes built in Canada over the past few decades have been designed to meet immediate needs. However, nothing stays the same — lives and circumstances change, people age and families grow and decrease in size. Why not give practical consideration on how to accommodate our changing needs when flexibility can be readily incorporated — at the start of the build.

FlexHousing™ is a concept of designing and building a house that allows the residents to adapt the space to meet their changing needs. Lifestyle changes have prompted Canadians to consider options in the design and use of their living space, such as improved access to entrances, wider hallways and doorways, and self-contained suites.

Examples of just how flexible and multi-functional a self-contained suite can be include: a rental unit (to help with a first time home buyer's mortgage or, perhaps, to help finance post-secondary education); a home office;

a living space for a teenager; a first time home for newly married adult children, saving for their own home; accommodations for aging parents; and a nanny suite.

FlexHousing™ is a viable option that makes it possible for people to remain in their homes while accommodating life changes and personal needs.

SOURCE: CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

**Housing Market Slowing Down**



The Conference Board of Canada  
Julie Ades, Economist

The surge in resale market and housing starts activity, bolstered in 2009 by rock-bottom mortgage rates, has now abated. Higher mortgage rates and tax increases are already limiting demand for homes. As the demand for homes in the resale market weakens, pressure on home prices is expected to fall.

As a result, growth in new housing construction is forecast to weaken in the second half of 2010, and continue doing so throughout the first half of next year. After averaging only 149,000 units in 2009, housing starts are expected to reach 191,250 units in 2010

and 175,500 units in 2011.

Notwithstanding high levels of indebtedness and rising mortgage rates, the recovering labour market should help sustain moderate demand for housing over the near term. Housing starts are expected to start recovering in the second half of 2011 and demographic demand should allow residential construction to reach more than 200,000 units in the latter years of the forecast period.

The fall in renovation spending and the decline in new real residential investment should lead to a contraction in total real residential investment in the second half of the year. On an annual basis, the surge in activity over the past six to nine months is forecast to lead to an 11 per cent gain in real residential investment this year. A decline of 2 per cent is forecast for 2011.

**Insulating Concrete Forms: Economical and Eco-Friendly**



Habitat Design + Consulting Ltd.  
Chris Mattock, Green Consultant  
Project Manager, Harmony House, Burnaby, BC

Upcoming BC Building codes are looking to the housing industry to be a leader in tackling climate change by producing homes to a Net Zero ready standard. Insulating Concrete Forms (ICF) will play a big role in helping builders meet those goals as economically as possible, while minimizing construction environmental impacts and maintaining high indoor air quality.

In the Harmony House project, the only Equilibrium home to be constructed on the west coast, and the first zero carbon building in BC, we will also incorporate a wide range of other green features such as low toxicity interior finishes, materials with recycled content, water conservation and rain water harvesting.

**2011: A Good Year for Builders and First-time Buyers**



Genworth Financial, Inc.  
Peter Vukanovich, President & COO

We are not economists at Genworth, and we don't make projections on a numbers basis. Having said that, as specialists in mortgage finance, we do closely track housing starts and inventory levels in each market across the country; these are the key factors in determining market direction.

The consensus for 2011 seems to be that starts will be marginally lower; this seems logical given the pull

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**IR** Ingersoll Rand

forward of demand into the first half of 2010 due to the threat of rising interest rates and government policy changes. I do believe a clear strength of the Canadian market is based on builders' ability to forecast local supply/demand and strict discipline to building homes that meet home buyers' needs. As a result, 2011 will be a good year for builders and first-time home buyers across the country.

**Understanding the Under-40**



Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association  
Peter Simpson, President and Chief Executive Officer



In order to attract and retain talented individuals, the residential construction industry must acknowledge and respond to the needs of the younger generations (Gen-X and Gen-Y). This year, the Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association formed a U-40 Committee, comprised of industry men and women — some experienced, some rookies — under the age of 40.

We wanted to learn how our association can remain relevant to the younger members and increase their level of participation in association activities. Topics

of discussion at U-40 meetings include social media, mentoring, service on committees and councils (including the Board), specially tailored education and training programs, and networking opportunities.

The response has been phenomenal. More than 80 U-40 members attended a recent networking evening. In attendance were young developers, builders, renovators, designers, suppliers and skilled tradespeople.

U-40 members are eager to invest considerable time and energy in the association, as long as its goals continue to be in tune with the changing times. Judging by the enthusiastic response from these leaders of tomorrow, the residential construction industry has a very bright future indeed.

**WRHBA: Partnering with Conestoga College & Home Hardware**



Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association  
Home Hardware Building Centre  
Conestoga College School of Trades and Apprenticeship  
Marie Schroeder, Executive Officer, WRHBA

Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association (WRHBA) has been working with Conestoga College School of Trades and Apprenticeships on three new

initiatives to educate students and homeowners about the building process, renovations, professionalism and the residential construction industry:

1. WRHBA is currently building its first Education House. The project is a "living classroom" for Conestoga College School of Trades and Apprenticeships students. Scheduled tours throughout the building process provide students exposure to the fundamentals for best building practices and innovative products, providing an understanding of how their education will translate to the work site. The home will be sold and portion of the proceeds will help establish an awards program for the students.

2. WRHBA and Conestoga College introduced a Student Ambassador Program for second year carpentry students. Established to educate students on what it means to be part of a professional Association, the program gives students networking opportunities with industry professionals, and the latest news in the residential construction industry. Students are required to attend a WRHBA meeting during the school year and write a report which will go towards their final credit.

3. WRHBA, in partnership with Home Hardware Building Centre and Conestoga College School of Trades and Apprenticeship, invited the public to attend the Go with a Pro Renovation Seminar on Saturday, October 30, 2010 for a free renovation seminar to help homeowners renovate with confidence.

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21 ▶ Destination: 2012



EnerQuality Corporation  
Corey McBurney, President



Ontario builders take note: January 2012 is a mere 14 months away. On this milestone date, ENERGY STAR levels of energy efficiency will be in the Ontario building code. For this reason, the theme dominating green building over the next year or so is transition.

Energy efficiency has increasingly become a main-stream feature of new housing in Ontario. In 2009, 21 per cent of Ontario's new housing starts were ENERGY STAR labelled; one per cent was labelled under the premier programs of GreenHouse and R-2000. That said, transitioning 100 per cent of Ontario's new housing starts to EnerGuide 80 equivalent performance levels, starting January 1, 2012, will be no small undertaking.

Many builders are not prepared for the task at hand. At a minimum, you will have to come to terms with the new requirements and costs to be code-compliant. If you're an ENERGY STAR (or better) builder and want to maintain your leadership position, you will be moving from ENERGY STAR version 4 to version 5 — earmarked at an EnerGuide 83 (25 per cent better than code).

So, while the visionaries are driving towards net zero, and the broader sustainability conversation includes issues of land use, water and waste, most builders are just starting to grapple with the more immediate reality: 2012.

Staying Ahead of the Industry Curve



Mibroc Group of Companies  
Darryl Caunt, President of CHBA Central Interior  
CEO, Mibroc Group of Companies



Gone are the days when a junior tradesperson works under a builder for a few years and automatically becomes qualified to build an award winning home. I know a number of excellent builders who have 30 years of experience building the same style of homes and they are now being asked to build cutting-edge homes using the latest green products, released at a home show or editorialized in a magazine. The comfort zone of all builders continues to be pushed. As a result, successful building leaders have to adapt their businesses to embrace this evolving technology and consumer demand. It's not easy; building a successful business is very different from simply building a home.

To these builders I suggest taking relevant and

appropriate courses to stay ahead of the industry curve. In the end, this knowledge is tangible and can be used to promote your businesses, provide greater value for your clients, and position your companies strategically for growth. I can speak firsthand as to how my simple decision to take courses and engage building consultants has enabled me to maximize my company's growth while minimizing my potential for mistakes along the way.

Manufacturing a Sustainable Journey



GAF Materials Corporation  
Martin Grohman, Director of Sustainability



In manufacturing, sustainability is a journey, not a destination. It's really about core business concepts like efficiency and the wise use of resources. As North America's largest roofing manufacturer, GAF is continuously working to become more sustainable by evaluating the use of energy, resources, and raw materials.

One of the advantages of having a large number of plants and national reach is that it provides more opportunity for sharing ideas across locations, areas, and functions. Our team has focused on collaborative efforts between plant sites — checking in with each location to discuss ideas and best practices, and finding ways to share those ideas between sites using the company's internal Sustainability Action Center (a corporate intranet site devoted to all things green).

The success of these efforts is evidenced in GAF's recent announcement that all of its roofing plants now recycle manufacturing shingle waste, diverting thousands of tons of materials from landfills, annually. Efficiency of logistics and supply chain is also an opportunity. Sustainability improves operational flexibility, operational effect, saves logistic burden and saves costs, and delivers a wider environmental benefit.

At its core, sustainability is really about efficiency, the wise use of resources, and minimizing energy use.

Trends in Thermal Imaging



Meltech Thermal Imaging Inc.  
Gordon Melvin, CET, GSC



As a project manager, designer, home builder, renovator, and inspector in the residential and commercial/ industrial construction industry, I have been gratified to see the growing trend towards energy efficient building practices. Buyers are increasing the professional level

of pre-purchase inspections of the buildings before they purchase, and contractors and builders are required to "prove" that their building and/or renovation work is meeting local energy efficiency guidelines.

One trend is to use infra-red cameras to perform "thermal imaging." Thermal imaging can be used to ensure that there is minimal air leakage within the building envelope, no missing insulation within the cavities of the exterior walls or attic spaces, or that heat supply lines are properly sealed with no obstructions.

Thermal imaging can also detect hidden problem areas before they become expensive repairs. Examples of using thermal imaging in preventative maintenance include: Electrical equipment and panels for overloaded breakers, switches or fuses, loose or corroded connections; HVAC operating systems such as the mechanical and heating equipment and heating systems, ventilation ductwork or in-floor heating lines; building envelope items such as roofs, walls, floors and foundations for water or air leaks; rodents or ant infestations; missing, settled or damaged insulation; and mould issues.

The Next Step: Zero Energy Homes



Love Energy Consultants Inc.  
Peter Love, President



Canadian home builders have been world leaders in building energy-efficient homes, led by the many R-2000 builders from across the country who have been certifying their homes since the 1980s and continuing with the EnergyStar builders of today. It is now time to take the next step, albeit a big one, to Zero Energy Homes.

Up until just a few years ago, such off-grid homes were rare, owner-built and received relatively little publicity. But, recently, leading production builders have built about a dozen such homes across the country, from the Atlantic Provinces, to Ottawa, British Columbia, and even in Edmonton.

In the European Union, all new buildings constructed will have to be "nearly zero-energy" by 2020; in the UK, they are required to be carbon-neutral by 2016. In the US, a widely-supported coalition of building architects/experts has issued the 2030 Challenge of having all new buildings carbon-neutral.

It's time for Canadian builders to demonstrate their international leadership again. Make your next home a Zero Energy Home. Learn from this and then build a few more. And then work toward making this your own standard. Your home buyers will love you every time they open their energy bills in the future.

Next Issue: ANNUAL BUYER'S GUIDE

## Communal Living: The Multi-Generational Reality



Masco Canada  
Anita Griffin, Marketing Brand Manager



As a leader in the Canadian plumbing industry, Masco Canada continually researches how and why Canadians live the way they do. The recent shift towards several generations of families living under one roof — which will continue in the years to come — has altered what Canadians are looking for in their homes, and has greatly impacted product and home design.

The multi-generational home is the new reality for many Canadians. Grandparents, parents, grandchildren and even aunts and uncles are living under one roof. Consequently, the home is no longer about individual space, but communal living.

People are looking for, and creating, open-plan, communal spaces in their homes, where the family can gather and spend time together, while bedrooms and other private spaces are shrinking in size.

Concerns over economic uncertainty have resulted in people staying home to entertain instead of venturing out. As a result, large kitchens that open into the family's living and gathering room are in demand. Advances in the design and functionality of small appliances and fixtures make at-home entertaining and lounging more comfortable and include things like faucets with touch technology, double ovens for efficient meal preparation and built-in bars.

## Building Talent: Connecting with Generation Z



Summit Search Group BC  
Dan Brown, Consultant



Managing staffing levels presents a significant human resource challenge in most industries and sectors. For the home building industry, the challenge is compounded by continual shifts in the cost of building materials and the common practice of “employee theft” amongst competitors. With a new generation of talent emerging into the workforce, how can companies attract Generation Z into the home building industry?

Generation Z is a highly connected generation, accustomed to fast-paced communication through instant messaging, text messaging, and social media channels. With this in mind, companies need to move faster in order to attract potential young candidates. Even if a hire decision has not been made, a simple

message to update candidates on the status of the process can make a large impact.

On the flipside, the extreme connectivity of Generation Z should warrant extra due-diligence on the part of hiring managers. If a young candidate has a poor interview experience (i.e. an interviewer shows up late or lacks enthusiasm), the candidate can use their social media skills to broadcast their negative experience to large social networks. Generation Z presents new facets to recruitment — something all companies need to keep in mind when trying to attract young talent.

## Leading the Charge to Net-Zero



Net-Zero Energy Home Coalition  
Sonja Winkelmann, Executive Director



As interest in Net-Zero Energy Homes continues to grow, the efforts of the Coalition continue to respond to the needs of the residential construction industry. Watch for national projects focused on the following topics: definition and metrics; monitoring and verification; integrated design process; building envelope systems; energy simulation and design tools; renewable energy systems; training and education; market information and education; and financial framework.

The Coalition and its supporters are helping advance new economic opportunities to home builders, building product suppliers, utilities, financial institutions, real estate and mortgage companies, engineers, the architecture community and renewable energy sectors. We are looking for industry champions who will help leverage the Coalition's successes by supporting our continued outreach activities and advocacy for policies, programs and support measures that will expand demonstration projects, accelerate NZEH deployment across Canada and ultimately provide smarter and cost effective energy solutions for homeowners.

We invite you to join our growing list of industry leaders, innovators and trailblazers sharing in a vision and growing movement that has become a catalyst for transformation in Canada's residential construction marketplace.

## Withstanding Low VOC Scrutiny



Sansin Corporation  
Sjoerd Bos, Vice President



Low VOC stains, and other architectural coatings, will have an increasingly important role to play, especially as green home building programs continue to

grow, and as consumers increase demand, and are willing to pay for, a greener, healthier home environment. However, as consumers demand low-VOC and low-toxicity coatings, they will be increasingly adamant that they still perform as well or better than their more toxic counterparts.

We also see heat-treated wood growing in demand for outdoor siding, decks and other features. Heat treatment of wood reduces hygroscopicity, improves dimensional stability, and increases resistance to microbial attack and biodegradation without the use of toxic chemicals. With proper finishing and coating to protect from UV degradation and natural weathering, stunning wood exteriors can be achieved at a much lower cost.

To ensure a product can withstand extensive scrutiny, it's essential that a company invest in research and development and extensive testing. When it comes to comparing green products, we suggest to our dealers that they advise consumers to look beyond the label, and to compare apples to apples. In the case of wood stains, that means comparing alkyds to alkyds, hybrids to hybrids, and acrylic to acrylic.

## Composting Toilets Systems: Moving to the Mainstream



Sincor Industries  
Scott Smith, VP Marketing



Installing a composting toilet system is becoming more popular for applications other than just cottages and cabins — the traditional places where we tend to think of using compost toilets. But use of composting toilets in home applications, such as workshops, basements, pool cabanas, as well as commercial applications including golf courses, warehouses and construction sites, is growing.

A composting toilet system offers many benefits over other options, such as traditional plumbing or septic tank systems. They are environment-friendly, use very little water (as low as 0.2L per flush) or no water at all, and they are also easily installed without plumbing or septic, making them extremely economical (a new septic tank system can cost from \$5,000 to \$25,000; a complete composting toilet system is in the \$2,000 to \$6,000 range).

There is also rise in the use of composting toilets in non-traditional applications, like concrete slabs, largely due to innovations in the installation technology. Newer systems are also much more aesthetically-pleasing with modern ceramic bowl designs and push-button flushing. Great looks, environmental benefits and money savings are moving composting toilets toward the mainstream.

**Unlocking Z Wave Technology**



Schlage - Ingersoll Rand Residential Solutions  
Sam Russo, Marketing & Business Development Manager

Home automation technology is a growing trend among household consumers, and it's quickly becoming an important value-added feature and differentiator for home builders across Canada. To set their homes apart from the rest, progressive builders might consider looking toward Z Wave technology.

A radio frequency communication platform, Z Wave technology allows enabled devices to be securely accessed and monitored wirelessly, giving home buyers the freedom to lock and unlock the front door, reset the temperature on their thermostat, or adjust their lighting room by room — all from the convenience of an easy-to-use web or mobile interface. Take it one step further by installing web-based security cameras that allow the homeowner to monitor activities inside the home.

There are lots of ways to make your homes stand out from the competition. One way is giving home buyers the ability to manage the safety, comfort and efficiency of their homes, all from the convenience of their couch, car, or from a vacation home thousands of kilometres away.

**The 100-Year Septic System**



SoilAir Systems Canada  
Gary Sharp, P. Eng., President

It's seldom discussed, but more than 25 per cent of Canadian homes rely on septic systems to process their wastewater. So why do we build houses to last 100 years and septic systems that need to be replaced every 20 years or so? Traditionally, this has been considered normal behaviour in the septic industry. Contractors install septic systems using septic tanks that corrode with wastewater and drain fields that biologically clog over time. When they fail, contractors replace them with — you guessed it — septic tanks that corrode with wastewater and drain fields that biologically clog over time.

The key elements required to make a septic system last 100 years include: a tank that does not react with wastewater; a drain field that relies on aerobic bacteria to process the wastewater; providing a drain field ventilation to support the aerobic bacteria; monitoring the performance of the system; and providing professional, annual maintenance for the system and

all components.

Einstein said doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result was insanity. A better understanding of how septic systems work will allow us to make septic systems last as long as the houses they are connected to.

**It's Time to Look Outside the Building Envelope**



Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
Kevin Fergin, P. Eng., President of Brantford Home Builders' Association; Principal, Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Our industry has made tremendous strides over the last 10 years to advance the energy efficiency of homes and to educate the consumer on building green. We are getting to the point where energy efficiency is being pushed to "net zero," and affordability is eroding. We need to shift our focus outside the building envelope and look at energy efficiency at the community level, whether through a Plan of Condominium or a Plan of Subdivision.

Local and regional municipalities need to move beyond the philosophical approach to green, and take concrete steps to embracing the "built form" of energy efficiency. The Ministry of Environment (MOE) must also recognize that technologies and engineering approaches have evolved and that green solutions to grey water recovery/reuse, advanced wastewater treatment/reuse and heat energy recovery methods exist in the built form in Europe and areas of the US.

We need the MOE to take steps to embrace new approaches while maintaining the health and welfare interests of the public. If all levels of government get on board and work with our industry, we can create the energy efficient communities of the future, today!

**Government Stimulus Grants**



Vinyl Window Designs Ltd.  
Phil Lewin, V.P. Marketing

Compared to our southern neighbours, Canadians are more amenable to government involvement. As a result, awareness and use of stimulus grants for the purchase of energy efficient products resulted in our federal government running out of money to sustain the EcoEnergy grants far earlier than they anticipated.

The problem with this, however, is that the government has now created a financial expectation that, in the absence of grants, encourages homeowners to

wait for a new grant program before making purchases. If you want to renovate your home with energy efficient products, do you want to sign a check for payment to the contractor — only to discover the next day that you could have saved thousands of dollars from a new government program? Not likely, unless your furnace died or your windows were falling out of their openings. Otherwise, one is motivated to wait, and that is not good for the natural flow of our industry.

While we all love the excitement generated by government industry stimulus grants, we are now paying the price for that involvement. It's time for government at all levels to step up and end the uncertainty of what they are going to do or not do over the next 18 months.

**Bungalows for Baby Boomers**



Marcus Design  
Marcus Cormier, P.Tech

Bungalows have been around for a long time, although their popularity and usage has varied throughout past decades. As a house designer, I've noticed a gradual increase in bungalow construction during recent years, a trend I attribute to the first onset of the Baby Boomer generation settling into comfortable retirement.

Some retired Boomers will seek Sun Belt regions. Others will mature in place. However, many will opt to build that final home in order to downsize, prepare for future needs and accommodate an independent lifestyle.

Whether financially set or living on a fixed income, this generation will look for style without unnecessary excess. They will opt for maintenance-free materials and simple and efficient landscaping elements to minimize outdoor work.

To safeguard their independence, homes will require extra planning to accommodate possible barrier-free living, such as wider doors, extra wall reinforcing for future grab bar installation, and the elimination of stairs; an increase of slab-on-grade construction is likely to coincide. Baby Boomers will likely choose this alternative in regards to both barrier-free living and downsizing purposes.

With proper planning and a few simple considerations, builders and designers should be able to provide comfortable retreats for the Baby Boomer generation. ■

Talking Points: A Call to Industry Leaders will be back in November 2011. Stay tuned for details in an upcoming edition. Let your voice be heard.



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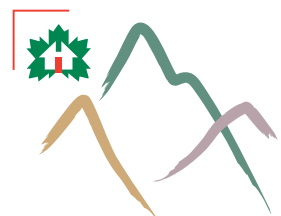
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# INSPIRE



**Victor Fiume**  
President, CHBA

We will continue to oppose “green” regulation that is not supported by proper analysis.

## Better Defining the ‘Green’ Agenda

The recent round of CHBA meetings in Ottawa provided a valuable opportunity for Association leaders from across the country to review the many issues of importance to CHBA members and their customers.

Prior to the Standing Committee, Council, and Board of Directors’ meetings, the Vision Action Committee (VAC) spent three days reviewing the CHBA strategic issues and laying out recommendations for the year ahead. The annual VAC review plays an important part in identifying areas where Association leaders need to be making representations to governments, and in refining our key messages.

The recommendations coming out of the VAC meeting also included actions to research and review how we conduct our Association’s business at all levels. These recommendations were presented to the Board of Directors, will be posted on the CHBA website, and will be reported to the membership during our Annual Meeting in Banff this coming February.

One of the themes that the Vision Action Committee focused on was the ever-growing importance of the “green agenda” for both our industry and our customers. The environment is a challenge that presents our industry with very significant opportunities.

The opportunities link to our ability, as new home builders, renovators and community developers, to provide customers with homes that are more comfortable and healthier, and which cost less to operate. As I’ve said before, the home building industry has led the way in terms of making energy efficiency a reality for Canadians — since the introduction of the R-2000 Standard in the 1980s. Today, solid building science and energy efficient construction practices are part of every new home and renovation project delivered by a CHBA member. This is something we should take pride in.

The challenges we face have to do with how others — specifically governments and special interests — fail to “get it” in terms of how the marketplace is delivering real environmental progress in housing. We continue to see ill-considered moves towards regulation of energy efficiency in homes with little or no consideration of impacts on housing affordability, or on the significant progress that has already been made.

As an Association, we will continue to oppose “green” regulation that is not supported by proper analysis, or meaningful consultation with affected parties, and which imposes risks and unjustified costs on new home buyers and those wanting to renovate their homes.

When it comes to the green agenda for housing, “thoughtful and steady” is the right approach, as our industry has proven over the last few decades.

### The Next Generation of ecoENERGY

In early October, I took part in a one-day CHBA Task Group that looked at how industry and governments

can best encourage energy efficiency in existing homes, and keep up the momentum created by the federal ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes program. I joined a group of CHBA renovators from across Canada to discuss what worked, and what could have worked better, with this major federal initiative.

The ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes program generated some impressive results: 600,000+ ERS energy evaluations, some \$745 million in homeowner grants by the federal government, and a total expenditure of over \$7.5 billion by homeowners themselves. With much of the grant funding coming from Canada’s Economic Action Plan, energy efficient renovations made a significant contribution to our nation’s economic recovery in 2010.

The current ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes program ends next March, and due to high homeowner demand for grants, is no longer accepting bookings for pre-retrofit evaluations. The CHBA Task Group examined what advice the Association can provide to the federal government as it considers options for a “next generation” of the ecoENERGY initiative.

One thing we all recognized was the considerable momentum created in the marketplace as a result of government energy efficiency incentives. Coupled with the success of the Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC), federal incentives got millions of Canadian homeowners ‘off the fence’ in terms of upgrading their homes. The renovators agreed that today’s consumer is much better informed about home energy efficiency, and about the array of products and materials we use to deliver a more energy efficient home.

This is a real “positive,” and one that future federal programs need to build on. A better informed and more knowledgeable consumer represents a better potential client for professional renovators. Effective consumer education needs to be a major focus for any future ecoENERGY initiative.

In terms of financial incentives, these continue to be an important tool for getting consumers to look at energy efficiency upgrading when they plan a renovation project, and governments need to look at maintaining an appropriate level of incentives in the coming years. At the same time, we all recognize that the long-term goal must be to make energy efficiency simply a normal part of consumers’ thinking whenever they consider work on their home.

In conjunction with next year’s Federal Budget, I expect we’ll see what form the “next generation” of the ecoENERGY program is going to take.

### CHBA’s ICES Report

Integrated Community Energy Solutions — or ICES — involves a range of technologies and community development approaches that aim to create more efficient neighbourhoods and communities. ICES “solutions” can

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National Office, Ottawa, ON

If done properly, integrated energy systems can deliver significant efficiency gains.

27 ▶ range from district heating to the use of industrial or commercial waste energy, to new heat and power technologies.

Through integrating energy systems at a larger scale, there is real potential to meet homeowners' needs more efficiently, and – hopefully – find ways to deliver infrastructure that are more cost-effective.

This spring, a Task Group of CHBA new home builders and developers spent time examining the business case for ICES, and identifying what needs to happen to make this business case clearer. The Task Group report was presented to the CHBA Board of Directors at its recent Ottawa meeting, and can be found in the Members' Area of the CHBA website.

The trend toward increased development density and compactness, especially in urban redevelopment situations, is something we are all aware of. As density increases, integration of systems at the neighbourhood and community scale becomes more and more practical.

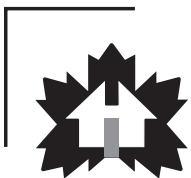
If done properly, integrated energy systems can deliver significant efficiency gains. From our industry's perspective, this approach should also be able to deliver some cost efficiencies, and create new business partnership opportunities for utilities and others with a stake in delivering energy services.

The CHBA ICES Task Group focused its attention on the questions that need to be addressed if this potential business opportunity is to be realized. As with any major innovation, it takes more than a "good idea" to make it happen. There is a wide array of potential regulatory barriers to ICES deployment, and we need new financial models to support this type of project.

The technology for ICES is available today, and governments seem to agree that this is an important area of innovation. Building the business case has got to be the next step, and the CHBA Task Group presented some concrete ideas for moving this forward.

### February 25 to 27, 2011 – Mark Your Calendar Today!

The 2011 CHBA National Conference in Banff, Alberta is just a few months away. If you haven't already done so, mark your calendar today, and go online to [www.chba.ca/conference](http://www.chba.ca/conference) for complete information and online registration. This is going to be a tremendous industry event, with great presentations, some spectacular social events, the 2010 SAM Awards, and much more. And it's being held in an inspiring location — the historic Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel. I'm looking forward to seeing you in Banff!



*Victor Fiume*

### CHBA Speaks to Commons Finance Committee

In the build-up to the next Federal Budget, CHBA leaders appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance.

CHBA President Victor Fiume and First Vice-President Vince Laberge presented the industry's views on market conditions and the uncertain period that lies ahead. CMHC has forecasted between 146,900 and 210,500 starts in 2011, with a point forecast of 176,900 starts. At a recent meeting of CHBA's Economic Research Committee, builders estimated 165,000 starts next year, which serves to underline the concerns the industry has going forward.

In the presentation, they also pointed out that the Governor of the Bank of Canada has observed that there is "the potential of a more pronounced correction."

It was also noted that the industry's working capital and reserves were seriously depleted last year and the industry remains in a weakened state. Although employment levels have rebounded from pre-recession levels, there has not been a recovery in employment for younger workers ages 15 to 24 and these are tomorrow's first-time home buyers.

The presentation emphasized that with respect to house prices, a major element in price increases are the costs imposed by governments through taxes, fees, levies and other development-related charges. Over time, reduced housing affordability will inevitably lead to lower housing activity and reduced job creation.

The CHBA leaders outlined three specific and inter-related recommendations for the federal government:

- Adopt a single threshold/full rebate treatment of GST on new home purchases, and commit to review and adjust the threshold over time;
- Introduce a permanent 2.5 percent GST Home Renovation Tax Rebate available to all homeowners; and
- Tackle the underground "cash" economy — both to raise government revenues and to protect consumers.



CHBA Leaders appear House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, Vince Laberge, CHBA First Vice-President (L), CHBA President Victor Fiume and Committee Chair, James Rajotte, MP (Edmonton-Leduc).



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*Avalon Discovery 3 Project, Red Deer, Alberta*

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Housing initiative is demonstrating technologies and practices that address occupant health and comfort, energy efficiency, renewable energy production, resource conservation, environmental impact, and affordability.



For more information on the initiative and visiting an EQilibrium™ home, visit [www.cmhc.ca/eqhousing](http://www.cmhc.ca/eqhousing).

# Yes, Tools Do Change

I was truly impressed with the degree of innovation shown in these tools: there was some really new and exciting stuff to talk about. Maybe it's a sign that the economy really is coming back.



## Nailing the Rapid Fire Finish

Cordless finishing nailers have always been a dream: no compressors, no hoses, no gas cylinders to buy, just batteries to recharge. But the killer has always been the tool weight and the tremendous drain on the battery. The advent of lighter, more powerful lithium ion batteries has allowed **Senco** to come into the competition with the Fusion 15, a beautiful little machine weighing in at 6.2 pounds—still much heavier than a pneumatic nailer (if you don't count the hose), but a full 30 per cent lighter than the equivalent **DeWalt** cordless nailer, and with a rapid 15-minute recharge time.

For those who want to know what's inside, there are no air compressors or flywheels. A permanently sealed nitrogen gas cylinder is what drives the nail with the force of standard pneumatics. The battery simply forces the piston back into place, recompressing the nitrogen in a fraction of a second. Firing 1-1/4 to 2-1/2 inch finishing nails, repeat firing is possible as the cylinder head jumps rapidly back into place—there is no delay to build up pressure. [www.FusionPowerTools.com](http://www.FusionPowerTools.com)

## A Tighter Mitre

Yes, there's finally a new development in sliding mitre saws. **Bosch** has invented an articulated arm with 12 sealed ball bearings rather than the sliding guide bars: the Bosch Axial-Glide system. Precision is actually increased, there are no more rails to gum up



and need cleaning, and you can back this baby right up to a wall because nothing needs to run out the back side, making it easier to transport and easier to use in tight spaces. One detail that I really appreciate is the Glide Damper that allows me to control the resistance on the glide. The GCM 12SD is a 12-inch saw with increased reach, mitre bevel capacity and all the controls up front. [www.BoschTools.com](http://www.BoschTools.com)

## Revolutionary Red

**Milwaukee** has just redefined the field of battery technology with what they call RED-LITHIUM. Old Ni-Cad battery technology was rather generic—everyone had much the same battery. With the advent of the Lithium Ion batteries, there is apparently room for each company to go off in radically different directions, which is why we have seen lots of innovation and competition in this field. The new REDLITHIUM batteries provide up to 40 per cent more run-time, 20 per cent more power and 50 per cent more recharges than other Lithium products. They operate beautifully down to -18°C. They are fully back-compatible with all Milwaukee 12- and 18-volt tools and will shortly be standard on all their new tools.



An interesting side note is that by increasing power in the 12-volt range of tools, we will be seeing more and more small, light and compact tools doing what heavy 18-volt tools used to do. [www.MilwaukeeTool.com](http://www.MilwaukeeTool.com)

## Clean Cuts

The dust from cutting fibre cement siding is always a problem. Nibblers certainly do a cleaner job, but how about a large guillotine from **Malco**? The large blade allows for cutting boards square or all the way down to 3/12 pitch angles—and very quickly. Designed to be used



on a low bench or on the ground, there is serious leverage in that handle and no dust from the operation. [www.MalcoProducts.com](http://www.MalcoProducts.com)

## Bits & Blades

### This month's drill:

**Bosch** has innovated with a new carbide tip design shaped to maximize the penetrating effect of the hammer action on a drill. The Speed-X bit breaks up concrete and masonry and pulls out the dust faster than anything yet made—performing especially well in deep drilling applications. In addition, it doesn't wander at the beginning of the operation. [www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com)



### This month's blade:

**Milwaukee** takes the honours this month with a truly revolutionary new reciprocal saw blade: the AX. The blade tip has a fang tooth very specifically designed for demolition plunge cutting—and it pulls the saw right in like I have never seen before. The rest of the teeth have a depth riser that prevents nails from getting deep enough into the gullet to break any teeth. Even that up-front fang has the same overbite protection. The end result: a very aggressive blade that cuts fast and lasts an incredibly long time in heavy demolition and renovation work. [www.MilwaukeeTool.com](http://www.MilwaukeeTool.com)



Montreal-based TV broadcaster, author, home renovation and tool expert Jon Eakes provides a tool feature in each edition of Home BUILDER. [www.JonEakes.com](http://www.JonEakes.com)

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Ensure your inclusion by promptly returning the forms we mailed you. New companies can also be included by contacting us immediately.

### *Don't Miss It!*

Information updates for the free listings are due: December 8, 2010  
For display ads and products announcements: January 3, 2011

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For more information, contact:  
**Home Hardware Building Centre**  
[www.homehardware.ca](http://www.homehardware.ca)



## Energy Efficiency Training

TORONTO, Ont. – The Ontario Power Authority's Conservation Fund has committed funding to EnerQuality Corporation to develop a new Renovator Energy Efficiency Training Pilot program. The project targets the need to build the capabilities of renovators and trade contractors to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades into their current project portfolio, thereby make a significant contribution to improving energy efficiency in Ontario's existing housing stock. This project, in partnership with the Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) and the Building Industry & Land Development Association (BILD) and other key stakeholders (manufacturers and suppliers/retailers) proposes to develop the framework for a sustainable, market-based training and accreditation program designed specifically for renovators and trade contractors. EnerQuality Corporation will develop and pilot a curriculum of five introductory (Level 1) workshops that address the specific needs of renovators' for practical and useful knowledge regarding energy efficiency, building science and green options suitable for a variety of project sizes and types. [www.enerquality.ca](http://www.enerquality.ca).

## SAWDAC Announces RenoConnect Training Conference

CAMBRIDGE, Ont.— The Siding and Window Dealers Association of Canada (SAWDAC) has announced their ninth RenoConnect Training Conference will be held in Toronto at the Toronto Airport Sheraton Hotel on Dixon Road, February 23 and 24, 2011.

RenoConnect attracts home improvement dealers from across Canada. The 2011 conference starts off with an open forum featuring two industry pioneers, **GEORGE KENT** and **BARRY ABELSON**. Attendees can also discuss renovations with Tool Talk's Jon Eakes, who will attend Day One of the conference. Eakes promises to challenge some old attitudes in his after dinner address. There will also be an abundance of interactive sales and marketing seminars, a Habitat for Humanity presentation, and hospitality rooms. [www.sawdac.com](http://www.sawdac.com) or 1-800-813-9616.

## RenoMark Brought to CHBA-Lethbridge Region


LETHBRIDGE, Alta. — The Canadian Home Builders' Association-Lethbridge Region (CHBA-LR) has announced that the RenoMark program has been brought to Lethbridge and is being offered through the CHBA-LR.

RenoMark is a nation-wide renovation program currently being offered in numerous provinces, as well as other Alberta cities. The program focuses on two areas: renovators and consumers. For renovators, the focus is on ensuring members act with professionalism and integrity. For consumers, the focus is on education, information, and how to hire a professional contractor. To become a member of the program, renovators must meet and adhere to a RenoMark code of conduct, educational requirements, and CHBA-LR membership requirements, such as warranty, WCB coverage, safety certification, and insurance. Individual CHBA-LR members that wish to be listed as a renovation company with the Association must be a member of RenoMark. [www.renomark.ca](http://www.renomark.ca) and [www.chbaletbridge.com](http://www.chbaletbridge.com).



## Working Together for Healthy Homes

BURFORD, Ont. — 2010 has been declared the Year of the Lung by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies. To commemorate this initiative, Beauti-Tone and The Canadian Lung Association have announced a new partnership. Through 'Working Together for Healthy Homes,' the two organizations will generate awareness and educate Canadians about the importance of maintaining air quality inside the home.

Beauti-Tone Paint and Home Hardware Stores Limited have developed the Natura brand, which is VOC free. Special signage in Home Hardware paint departments across Canada will identify Beauti-Tone Natura as a "lung healthy" paint choice. 

## SRC Unveils New Energy-Saving Heat and Power System

REGINA, Sask. — The Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) has unveiled a pilot project that can efficiently and cost-effectively provide both electricity and heat energy to commercial and residential buildings.



With a combined \$204,000 in support from SaskEnergy and SaskPower, as well as \$165,000 from Natural Resources Canada's Distributed Heat Program, SRC is installing and testing a unique combined heat and power (CHP) system. In conventional power plants, heat from electricity generation is released into the atmosphere in combustion exhaust. CHP systems capture this heat and use it to warm spaces or provide hot water in a building.

Developed in conjunction with Advanced Engine Technology, the pilot CHP system was officially launched in late September 2010 at Inland Metal, a Regina-based manufacturer of building ventilation products. Company officials cite potential improvements in power, heat efficiency, and reduction of greenhouse gases as the motivation to install the pilot CHP system in its 3,657-square-metre facility.

While CHP technologies have been around for years, they have predominantly been used in large industrial plants. SRC is now testing equipment for small-scale business and residential use. The goal is to monitor each CHP unit for one year to establish the technology's costs, benefits and barriers to better understand the value proposition in Saskatchewan. 

## CALENDAR

For the latest updates, visit [www.HomeBuilderCanada.com](http://www.HomeBuilderCanada.com) EVENTS CALENDAR

### December 2

OHBA Economic Forecast 2011  
Ontario Home Builders' Association  
Toronto, ON  
[www.ohba.ca](http://www.ohba.ca)

### December 6-7

Solar Canada 2010  
CanSIA  
Toronto, ON  
[www.cansia.ca](http://www.cansia.ca)

### December 7

Trends 2011  
Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association  
Burnaby, BC  
[www.gvhba.org](http://www.gvhba.org)

### December 9 - 10

2nd Annual Retrofitting and Planning Sustainable Suburbs  
Toronto, ON  
[www.sustainablesuburbs.ca](http://www.sustainablesuburbs.ca)



The Canadian Home Builders' Association salutes these companies and organizations for their support of the 68th National Conference.

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Canadian Home Builders' Association - Manufacturers' Council  
Canadian Home Warranty Council  
Canadian Manufactured Housing Institute  
Canadian Ready Mixed Concrete Association  
Canadian Wood Council  
Cement Association of Canada  
CertainTeed Gypsum Canada, Inc.  
Cosella-Dörken Products Inc.  
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DuPont Building Innovations  
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Genworth Financial Canada  
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**A Concrete Solution**

Prince George, B.C. — British Columbia is facing a big question: what to do with the billions of trees killed by the mountain pine beetle? **SORIN PASCA** didn't have the whole answer but in 2007, he did have a concrete suggestion: Beetlecrete. A University of Northern British Columbia research team, comprised of Pasca and Professors **RON THRING** and **IAN HARTLEY**, discovered that mountain pine beetle (MPB) wood actually works as an excellent ingredient as an aggregate for producing

concrete, creating a hybrid material between ordinary concrete and wood particle board. Sorin has been product prototyping and market research testing wood concrete for the past couple of years. Currently, Beetlecrete is being employed in smaller home decorative products such as countertops, tiles and garden blocks that do not require building standards testing. Research into structural applications is underway at UNBC. [www.unbc.ca/woodconcrete](http://www.unbc.ca/woodconcrete).

**TD Canada Trust Repeat Home Buyers Report: Fully-detached is still the dream**

TORONTO, Ont. — According to a recent TD Canada Trust Repeat Home Buyers Report, one in five repeat buyers have owned more than five homes. Twenty-three per cent of those surveyed expect to move again within six years; less than one-third say their next move will be their last.

Top factors that influence the decision to move are retirement (29 per cent), boredom with current home (16 per cent), investment opportunities (15 per cent); and market conditions (15 per cent).

Canadians are split on whether their next home will be larger or smaller (49 vs. 51 per cent), and 70 per cent of repeat home buyers are looking for a fully-detached home — even those currently living in condos, townhouses or semi-detached homes — for their next purchase.

**Homes in Northern Canada in Need of Fixing Up**

OTTAWA, Ont. — According to The Conference Board of Canada, residents in the three territories and the northern parts of seven provinces are between two and four times more likely to be living in homes needing major repairs than Canadians living in the south. Homes in Northern Manitoba and Northern Saskatchewan are in particularly dire condition.

The Conference Board of Canada map, Needs Major Repairs, is based on data collected in the 2006 census. According to Statistics Canada, major repairs are defined as “in the judgment of the respondent, the housing they occupy requires the repair of defective plumbing or electrical wiring, structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings, etc.”

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## Website Specifically Designed for Consumers



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Every home buyer is different. Different incomes, different goals, different personalities. That is why Genworth Financial Canada created homeownership.ca, a website specifically designed for consumers providing them with information on mortgage lending and the home buying process. Once a consumer enters the site they are encouraged to take a short survey that determines which information will be of most use to them.

This site is a one-stop resource to help homebuyers through every step of the journey with common-sense advice and information. Whether they're looking for budgeting tips, expert advice – even if they're new to Canada – Genworth Financial Canada's homeownership microsite site breaks the home buying process down in easy-to-understand terms.

For more information, visit:  
www.homeownership.ca  
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Phone: 1-800-511-8888

## Introducing the New GE Hybrid Water Heater

To create the next generation of water heaters, GE rethought every aspect of this appliance from the ground up. The result is an innovative new product that can reduce water heater operating cost up to 62% and save the average household \$320\* per year. With advanced heat pump technology combined with traditional electric elements, this new GeoSpring hybrid electric heat pump water heater has been designed with maximum energy efficiency in mind. GE is leading the way by developing a solution that offers the same amount of hot water, while using significantly less energy than a standard water heater.



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\*Based on DOE test procedure and comparison of a 50-gallon standard electric tank water heater using 4879 kWh per year vs. the GeoSpring hybrid heat pump water heater using 1856 kWh per year.

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