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Windows, doors, and so much more... our New Products issue celebrates innovation.

Main photo: Les Wold, Belgravia Green Net Zero Project, Edmonton.

Courtesy: Effect Home Builders

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Harper Government Takes Further Action to Strengthen Canada's Housing Market

OTTAWA — As part of the Federal Government's continuous efforts to strengthen Canada's housing finance system, the Honourable **JIM FLAHERTY**, Minister of Finance, today announced further adjustments to the rules for government-backed insured mortgages.

"Our Government stands behind the efforts of hard-working Canadian families to save by investing in their homes and their future," said Minister Flaherty. "The adjustments we are making today will help them realize their goals, build on the previous measures we have introduced to keep the housing market strong, and help to ensure households do not become overextended. As just one example, the reductions to the maximum amortization period since 2008 would save a typical Canadian family with a \$350,000 mortgage about \$150,000 in borrowing costs over the life of that mortgage."

The Government is announcing four measures for new government-

CREA Issues Statement on Mortgage Rule Changes

OTTAWA — In response to the Department of Finance's June 21st announcement on changes to mortgage regulations, the Canadian Real Estate Association's President **WAYNE MOEN** issued the following statement:

"We believe today's announcement is a measured response to the government's often-stated concern about household debt levels and the housing market. That being said, we would remind the government that the re-sale housing makes a significant contribution to the economy, adding an estimated \$20 billion in spin-off spending and over 165,000 jobs in 2012.

"Recent statistics from CREA indicate that the national housing market remains balanced. The impact of measures like those announced today must be closely monitored to ensure they have the anticipated impact and don't create a spillover effect and slow the economy.

"For these reasons, going forward, we would urge the government to consider the impact of further interventions in the market carefully. Realtors and the government share a common interest in the value of homeownership and its contribution to the economy and the well-being of Canadians and our communities."

backed insured mortgages with loan-to-value ratios of more than 80 per cent:

- Reduce the maximum amortization period to 25 years from 30 years. This will reduce the total interest payments Canadian families make on their mortgages, helping them build up equity in their homes more quickly and pay off their mortgages sooner. The maximum amortization period was set at 35 years in 2008 and further reduced to 30 years in 2011.
- Lower the maximum amount Canadians can borrow when refinancing to 80 per cent from 85 per cent of the value of their homes. This will promote saving through home ownership and encourage homeowners to prudently manage borrowings against their homes.
- Fix the maximum gross debt service ratio at 39 per cent and the maximum total debt service ratio at 44 per cent. This will better protect Canadian households that may be vulnerable to economic shocks or an increase in interest rates.
- Limit the availability of government-backed insured mortgages to homes with a purchase price of less than \$1 million.

"Investing in a home is a great way to save," said Minister Flaherty. "That is the dream that mortgage insurance was intended to support. The measures we are taking today maintain that intended purpose."

The new rules took effect on July 9, 2012.

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High Schools CTS Programs Get Boost from CHBA—Lethbridge Region

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. — Canadian Home Builders' Association—Lethbridge Region (CHBA-LR) have presented \$500 grants to Chinook High School in Lethbridge and Erle Rivers High School in Milk River.

"Our Human Resource committee works hard to support local education of construction trades; the High School grant program supports the

innovation of our schools to create valuable learning experiences for our future work force," said CHBA-LR board president **STEPHEN AMONSON**.

Chinook High School requested support for their Intermediate and Advanced students in Carpentry and Cabinet. This year, students will build a bathroom and learn exterior finishing, learning skills in plumbing, electrical, drywall, flooring, tiling, cabinetry, wall finishing and door installation. The CHBA-LR grant will go to purchasing tools and materials necessary to complete the job.

Erle Rivers High School in Milk River requested support for their shop program where students begin the year building a small project, like a chest, and finish the year building storage sheds ordered by community members. The program gives students the opportunity to experience fine wood working detail to framing to finishing. They have requested the funds to purchase necessary equipment for these projects and used the funds to purchase a band saw. www.chbaletlbridge.com. 🏠

GVHBA President & CEO Peter Simpson Announces Retirement



VANCOUVER — Announcement: It is with a heavy heart and a lump in my throat that I announce I am placing a -30- on my career.

With my life's odometer about to click over to 68, I will be retiring to spend more quality time with my wife, daughters and granddaughters. October 31 will be my last day on the job.

I have worked full time for 47 years—the first 23 as a compositor, columnist and editor with the **Toronto Telegram** and **Toronto Sun**, and the past 24 years as CEO of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association (five years) and the Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association (19).

Before I leave, I want to tell you all how much I enjoy working with you. I certainly appreciate your professionalism, dedication to your craft, insight, fairness and friendship. The Vancouver-area media do not have to take a back seat to anyone, anywhere. You are simply the best.

A national search is underway to find a suitable replacement. Once that individual has been confirmed—likely in late August—I will let you know.

With fond regards and respect,

Peter E. Simpson, BIAE

President & CEO

Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association

Geranium Hosts Hard Hat Tour for Visiting Austrian Builders



MARKHAM, Ont. — Building Industry and Land Development (BILD) Association's staff called upon "Home Builder of the Year" **Geranium Homes** when 30 members of the Austrian Homebuilder's Association requested a tour of a wood-frame construction project.

"The fact that a European home builders' association looks to the GTA as an example of quality construction practices speaks volumes about how our industry is viewed on a global scale," said BILD President and CEO **BRYAN TUCKEY**.

On June 6th, the Austrians were welcomed by Bryan Tuckey and **ANDREI ZARETSKI** of BILD, along with Geranium's **BOAZ FEINER**, **LOUIE MORIZIO**, **SUE WEBB SMITH**, **DIANA SOUSA**, and **PENNY NG**. A walkthrough of a 5,000-plus-square-foot bungalow-loft, and a completed and furnished Model Home in Ballantrae were first on the agenda. The contingent then boarded their bus for Stouffville to see a block of townhomes under construction in Phase V of The Neighbourhoods of Cardinal Point. The tour finished at two detached model homes in Cardinal Point. 🏠

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Does your regional or provincial Home Builders' Association have news or information to share? A recent survey or poll? A new program or fundraising initiative? If you have a newsworthy item that would interest other Association members across the country, please e-mail your 250-word entry to Judy Penz Sheluk at editor@work4.ca for consideration. Please put "Association to Association" in the Subject line.



By Peter Norman

The pace of housing demand will face further challenges ahead.

Uncertain Times

Fully three years out of the “great recession,” Canada’s economic and housing outlook remain uncertain and the risk environment continues to be elevated.

Total Canada-wide housing starts rose to 214,800 units seasonally adjusted at annual rate (SAAR) in the first five months of 2012, according to CMHC, up about 7.5 per cent from the 4th quarter of last year.

The rise in starts in early 2012 is entirely due to apartment units, which accelerated nearly 18 per cent off of their 4th quarter pace. By contrast, single-family starts remain on par with their 4th quarter pace, and at about 120,000 units SAAR, remain some 20 per cent below levels typical prior to the recession.

Regionally, the acceleration in housing starts activity in early 2012 is found entirely in the prairies and Ontario, with starts elsewhere falling mildly (down 2 per cent in Quebec), sharply (down 17 per cent in Atlantic Canada); or remaining flat (B.C.) relative to Q4, 2011.

Existing home sales in the first five months of 2012, at about 475,500 sales SAAR, were virtually unchanged from the 4th quarter.

Canada-wide total housing starts in 2012 are poised to top 2011, although the pace of starts is expected to cool in the 2nd half of the year. Lower starts in B.C., Quebec and Atlantic Canada are expected to be offset by higher starts elsewhere.

In 2013, total housing starts are forecast to decline, due to lower activity in the apartment sector. Housing starts in 2013 are expected to improve in Alberta, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, but decline in the remaining provinces.

While housing performance continues to be somewhat lacklustre in many parts of the country, with new housing construction—especially among single-family homes—still well below pre-recession levels, and housing prices flattening out, the pace of housing demand will face further challenges ahead.

Economic Influences

Although mortgage interest rates remain exceptionally low, and are expected to stay that way for many quarters to come, recent changes to mortgage lending rules announced by the federal government in June will offset a significant amount of this stimulus and put more families out of reach of the housing market, reducing the pool of potential buyers.

The housing outlook is also influenced by the continuing fragile nature of the broader economy. The Canadian economy is still feeling the after-effects of the recession. While the recovery in Canada continues to progress at a tepid pace, threats of a second recession in Europe, a “soft landing” in China and markedly weaker growth in the U.S. in recent months, alongside fiscal restraint at all levels of government domestically, will weigh negatively on the economic outlook.

In the first quarter of 2012, gross domestic product (GDP) posted annualized growth of 1.9 per cent, on par with the previous quarter. Investment in housing proved to be one of the few growth drivers. GDP is expected to advance at an average annual rate of about 2.0 per cent through 2012 followed by a modest improvement in 2013.

In the first five months of 2012, employment was 1.0 per cent higher than the same period in 2011, and some 148,700 net new jobs were added (seasonally adjusted) year to date. Despite these relatively favourable “headline numbers” in Canada’s labour market, most of the job growth since the recession has been among those aged 55 and older. The recovery in employment for those under age 55 has been much more prolonged, only recently reaching pre-recession levels.

Future employment growth will likely have to come from the private sector, as fiscal restraint by governments will limit job growth in the public sector. As the pace of Canadian economic growth shifts into a lower gear, employment growth is likely to follow suit. In 2012, the Canadian economy should continue to add jobs, but at a more tepid annualized pace of 1.1 per cent before increasing modestly to 1.2 per cent in 2013.

Despite the weakening environment for housing, acute land supply constraints in many markets across the country are keeping housing prices elevated. According to Statistics Canada, new housing prices in Canada rose 0.8 per cent in the first four months of 2012. Regionally, there is much discussion about falling prices in certain markets, like Vancouver, but according to the Canadian Real Estate Association’s MLS Home Price index, conducted by Altus Group, home prices are up 3.2 per cent in the past three months with gains in all markets measured, including a 2.3 per cent rise in Vancouver and as strong as 4.5 per cent in Calgary and 4.1 per cent in Toronto. The main force behind buoyant housing prices is among single-family segment, again reinforcing the effect of the land shortages.



*Average income (2 persons + household)
 † Average resale price of all dwelling types. ‡ Average price of the newly-completed single-family, major centres.
 Altus Group Economic Consulting based on data from Statistics Canada, CREA, and CMHC

Peter Norman is a member of the CHBA Economic Research Committee and is Chief Economist at Altus Group (formerly Clayton Research), the leading provider of independent real estate consulting and advisory services.



By Rob Cruickshank

Appoint a site safety manager to oversee all protocols and conduct routine inspections.

Rob Cruickshank is the Underwriting Director for Property, Construction and Engineering Insurance at RSA Canada, a leading home, auto and business insurer. Rob has over 25 years of experience in the property and casualty insurance sector and is a member of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), Canadian Construction Documents Committee (CCDC) and Nuclear Insurance Association of Canada (NIAC). Additional site safety information can be secured from your local chapter of the CCA.

Construction Site Safety: Six Building Blocks to Mitigate Potential Loss

Accidents on construction sites continue to affect the success of major construction projects across Canada. The following outlines six key risk factors and the steps you can take to mitigate potential losses:

Fire

For low-rise residential projects, fire is a leading cause of severe property damage. When working on a heat-applied rooftop, for example, fire extinguishers must be within easy reach and a team member should be tasked with “fire watch” once work is done for the day. The same applies to welding work or cutting operations.

Home builders are now using an increased number of indirect heaters outdoors where heat is ducted into the home or temporary enclosure. It is critical to maintain ample space between heating appliances and combustible materials, such as tarps used for temporary enclosures, or waste lumber and combustible insulation. A portable fire extinguisher should be readily available.

Safety

High-rise residential projects bring with them several inherent property damage and injury loss exposures. These include fall hazards within the structure, material handling over public areas or buildings, and the use of heavy equipment on a project site, such as tower or mobile cranes, excavators, loaders and trucks, each of which present unique hazards. Equipment operators must be adequately trained and all workers or visitors should be aware of equipment operations and their inherent hazards, such as blind spaces behind equipment and trucks and overhead hazards during hoisting operations.

Water Damage

High-rise residential projects are more exposed to potential water damage losses, for example, from mechanical or plumbing systems containing water and leaks. The use of full-time, qualified guard services can identify and notify key personnel of leaks that become apparent after hours or on weekends.

Testing and commissioning of the above water systems is critical for preventing water damage should testing fail; failure of a large diameter pipe under high pressure can result in thousands of gallons of water per minute escaping into the building. All workers must be advised when sprinklers are fully charged during weekly safety meetings, and an emergency call number should be posted on each floor. Key site management staff should be aware of emergency shutdown procedures for each building area.

People

Construction sites and heavy equipment are magnets

for adventurous children and curious neighbours. Adequate security, signage and fencing can ensure your site is keeping these members of the public safe in the surrounding areas. Post signs that require visitors to wear proper equipment, such as hard hat and safety footwear; this is key to protecting against liability claims, should an accident occur. To minimize risk, visitors should be prevented from wandering around the construction site.

Housekeeping

Loss control consultants pay special attention to housekeeping on a construction site. Housekeeping is a very simple thing to control and one of the easiest safety measures to put in place. It is recommended to establish this as a best practice on site. Clearing out piles of debris can help prevent flammable materials from lying around. Flammable liquids such as gasoline need to be stored safely and securely.

Site Safety Management

One of the key methods of ensuring site safety is to appoint a site safety manager to oversee all protocols and conduct routine inspections, including the proper inspection of machinery and heavy equipment. To supplement the annual inspections of a qualified engineer, and the inspections required after a repair has been done, cranes must be inspected and reported on a daily basis. All of this due diligence should be recorded in a log book for review during any site inspection.

Weather

We’ve been experiencing weather turmoil in all parts of Canada, from damage due to storms, snow, and ice build-up. Sites become more vulnerable with these severe weather patterns. Strong winds and hurricanes can cause steel frame buildings to collapse under extreme wind, putting projects on hold and resulting in major business implications for project owners. Such incidences can be easily prevented by assigning a team member to monitor the weather to ensure the site is properly braced before a storm.

Planning

A comprehensive site safety plan should be at the foundation of all construction projects. A good plan will address everything from fire prevention and weather events to site security and housekeeping, and should outline a schedule for routine inspections. Get to know the guidelines and be a champion for site safety on your worksite. Improved safety experience typically results in an insurers’ stamp of approval—potentially at a better rate. ■

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By Marianne Armstrong (above) and Michael Lacasse

Window Airtightness and Water Entry

Effective installation of windows can be achieved by designing the sill at the rough opening to facilitate drainage of incidental water entry, protecting the rough opening with flashing, and locating the wall-window seal on the interior of the wall assembly, according to an NRC article previously published in the March 2010 issue of *Home BUILDER* magazine.

Drainage of inadvertent water entry from the window sill is crucial to achieving long-term performance of the installation. However, the most critical role in water management at the wall-window interface is the location of the primary air seal within the rough opening—the seal that defines the boundary of the plane of airtightness of the wall-window assembly and continuity to the air barrier of the wall assembly.

The action of wind-driven rain on the exterior of a building brings rainwater to the windows and to the wall-window interface, but also gives rise to pressure differences (ΔP) across the assembly (Figure 1). These pressure differences can cause water to be drawn in through small deficiencies in the window frame, and into the rough opening—the space between the window and framing (Figure 1a). They can also prevent water from effectively draining from the sill area (Figure 1b). Ideally, the pressure in the rough opening and sill cavity should be equal to the outside air pressure (i.e., no pressure difference). This reduces the risk to water entry and promotes drainage.

Window installation details necessary to achieve airtightness and watertightness must take into account the possibility of the window being defective, or imperfections in the window and perimeter seal developing with age. A robust installation that accounts for these possibilities will be able to mitigate the effect of inadvertent water entry over the lifetime of the window.

NRC Construction undertook a laboratory research project to investigate the effectiveness of various wall-window interface details for managing rainwater. The robustness of window installation details to simulated wind-driven rain conditions, incorporating either box windows or windows with mounting flanges, were considered. Over 25 different wall assemblies featuring vinyl windows with flanges were exposed to wind-driven rain loads chosen to match those of significant rainfall events of 5, 15, or 30 minutes duration that might occur every 10 to 30 years.

Results showed that for windows that were functional and operated as expected (not defective), a full bead of sealant behind the flange was unlikely to greatly affect water entry into the rough opening. However, when an assembly having a defective window was subjected to

simulated wind-driven rain loads, airtightness details that increased the pressure difference across the flange (including sealant behind the flange) led to increased water entry to the sill and reduced drainage from it.

Sealing behind the flange (using a sealant or gasket) can result in an increased pressure difference from the exterior to the rough opening as compared to not sealing at this location (Figure 2a). The pressure drop at the sealed flange can be even greater if the air barrier at the inside of the rough opening is not continuous. Often, tape is used to ensure continuity of the interior air barrier; while common, this practice can cause problems if care is not taken to ensure continuity of the seal. An imperfect air barrier can allow the rough opening pressure to equalize with the interior air pressure, thereby creating a greater pressure difference across the window flange and thus a heightened risk to water entry along this seal.

A solution to the problem is to move the plane of airtightness towards the interior of the rough opening (Figure 2b). This reduces the driving force for water to enter behind the flange or through defects in the window. This can be accomplished by installing a backer rod and an approved spray polyurethane foam product or sealant between the window frame and rough opening. A gap at the sill is required to promote drainage; it also allows the pressure to equalize between the sill cavity and rough opening. The gap between the bottom window flange and the sill can be created with the use of cap nails.

By moving the plane of airtightness towards the interior, the pressure drop caused by wind thus occurs further back in the assembly, away from potentially wet surfaces. This detail also forms a space in the rough opening to allow for any water

that gets behind the flange to drain to the base of the window and out of the assembly at the sill.

Relocating the plane of airtightness results in a robust window installation that will effectively manage water throughout its lifetime. When combined with other important window-interface elements—including a slope sill, back dam, sill flashing membranes wrapping up the jambs and over the sheathing membrane at the sill, and insulation to the interior side of the sill (leaving the drainage path unobstructed)—these installation details are adequate for managing even the most significant rainfall events occurring in North America.

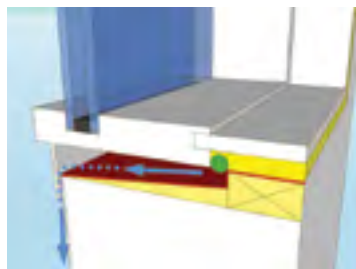
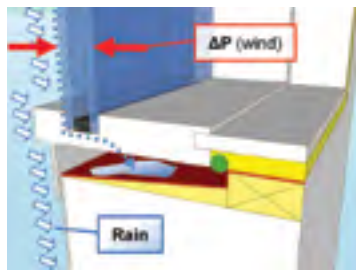


Figure 1a (top): Side section view of a window with mounting flange illustrating water entry at the base of the window and collection at the sill; Figure 1b: Water accumulating at the sill must be drained.

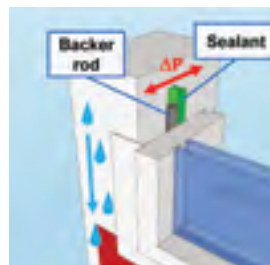
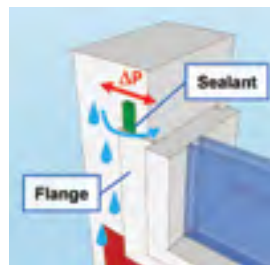


Figure 2: Detail of window at jamb illustrating that: (a) (top) Sealant behind the window flange moves the plane of airtightness toward the exterior of the wall, where water can be drawn in through small deficiencies; (b) Moving the plane of airtightness towards the interior reduces the driving force for water to enter at the flange location.

Ms. Marianne Armstrong is a research council officer and Dr. Michael Lacasse is a senior research officer in the Materials and Building Envelope Engineering Group of NRC Construction.

Ms. Armstrong can be reached at 613-991-0967, or marianne.armstrong@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca.



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By Fanis Grammenos

Innovation in regulation: How Red Deer, did it

Regulation has a Jekyll-and-Hyde, split personality: attentive and autocratic. On the one hand it cares and protects, and, on the other, it restricts and confines. Abolish it, and watch people begrudge living in a place where everyone makes their own rules. Conversely, few of us wish to live by somebody else's. Where do you draw the line? There lies the dilemma that many municipalities face when they enact regulations. Between ensuring public protection and not limiting the public's choices, they are faced with a tricky juggling act.

This dilemma in planning regulations stems from the clash between tradition and innovation, between experience and exploration, and between practices that have worked and techniques that could work. Tradition asserts that something has worked, while exploration counters that a new way could deliver better results. Can a balance be struck between the assurance of past practices and the promise of something new? It can.

Fused Grid

The issue is how to give people on foot an advantage in getting to nearby destinations without restricting their choice of a place to live. Resident location preferences have been documented in market surveys that show consistently a strong desire for living on a cul-de-sac or loop-type of street. These types are a fairly recent addition to the street vocabulary, but have quickly gained enormous popularity. Distressingly, they come with a disadvantage—they limit the options for walking to nearby places.

Before the car, that limit would have been an unthinkable restriction on movement; no one would want to walk longer than absolutely necessary for a physically exerting errand. With the car around, this disadvantage seems unimportant. But, it still means limiting personal choice. The obvious solution: Return to the nineteenth century pedestrian era plan where no cul-de-sacs or loops could be found. Too simple: Such a solution would limit another personal choice (and the preferred place to live), hence the need for innovation.



Fig. 1 - Part of a larger subdivision plan, two neighbourhoods show the guideline spirit: loops and cul-de-sacs form a complete walking network by means of parks. They also become "places" centered on open space.

A newcomer to the realm of neighbourhood planning, the fused grid showed a solution to this riddle. Many developers quickly grasped the idea and embraced the fused grid model for its many advantages and, more importantly, for allowing choices for mobility AND for a place to live. A few ventured forward and applied it, but many others, mindful of existing municipal policies, have shied away from it, fearing approval delays. Delays mean unplanned and unwelcome costs; not an option in a competitive market. The result: New ideas go on the shelf, for a while, at least.

Smart Regulation

Regulating a street pattern, even if it appears ideal, could stifle innovation; it would stop evolution and adaptation to new circumstances. By contrast, regulating the public benefit and choice that patterns should provide, could become a stimulant to innovation. There may be many untried ways of achieving these benefits. A balanced, smart regulation would let them all come forward and become part of the planning vocabulary.

That's where innovation lies in Red Deer, Alberta's, approach to regulation, found in the city's *Community Planning Guidelines and Standards* document. Rather than prescribing "preferred plans" by means of sketches, the guidelines describe "preferred results" or "preferred performance." In simple terms, it says that whatever pattern you chose for your plans, mind the pedestrians and do not disadvantage them: Use paths or parks or both to shorten their trips.

Variety site-specific solutions started to emerge from developers and planners. For example, the City of Saskatoon designed collaboratively and approved a community plan that applies this very idea (Fig. 1). The plan shows, in one case, two cul-de-sacs and a loop converging on a small park; homebuyers get both mobility and street type choice and a bonus: the delight of nearby nature, tranquility and a valuable property. In another approved development, three loops converge to a park; choice, sociability, safety and delight are also present in this layout. (Fig. 2)

The *Guidelines* point the way to a pragmatic approach to regulation: one that protects residents' options and does not restrict design freedom. As more municipalities follow Red Deer's leadership, developers will turn a new page and produce walkable, delightful neighbourhoods. The *Guidelines* have changed the game rules. Inevitably, new layout ideas will emerge and propagate. 🏡

For more information, visit www.reddeer.ca or Google "Fused Grid" images.

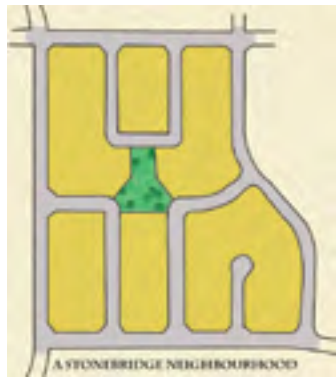


Fig. 2 - A neighbourhood of six blocks is sealed to through traffic but it favours pedestrians: any part is directly reachable on foot.

Fanis Grammenos heads Urban Pattern Associates, a planning consultancy, following a 20-year research career at CMHC. He can be reached at fanis.grammenos@gmail.com and his work viewed at: <http://blog.fusedgrid.ca/>

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Effect Home Builders, Edmonton, Alberta

Belgravia Green Net Zero Project



Les Wold (left), managing partner of Effect Home Builders, discusses Belgravia Green with local media.

BY JUDY PENZ SHELUK

An innovative project in Edmonton’s Belgravia district is proving there is more than one path to sustainability when it comes to housing design. The development, known as Belgravia Green, consists of three homes built side-by-side along a quiet, tree-lined street in the University-area neighbourhood.

The 1500-square-foot middle house, at 11536-74 Avenue, is a show home for **Effect Home Builders**, an Edmonton company known for its energy efficient houses. Flanking it on either side are two privately owned custom homes. All three are designed to approach or achieve net-zero energy status, where a house produces as much energy throughout the year as it consumes.

“Over the years we’ve been continually pushing the envelope, building homes that are more and more energy efficient, and one of the big things we’ve learned is that there are multiple ways to approach building energy efficient homes,” said **LES WOLD**, managing partner, Effect Home Builders. “Belgravia Green brings together a lot of the experience we’ve gathered over the years into one project. There are three different homes and they are all reaching towards the same goal, but approaching it with different considerations and different technologies.”

A Cohesive Whole

Collaboration was instrumental in pulling together the many disparate elements into a cohesive whole. Homeowners, local experts and Effect’s team met regularly to hammer out the best way to balance energy efficiency goals with the characteristics of the building sites, the needs of the owners, and the budgets they were working with. “Everybody had their laptops and we were bouncing ideas back and forth and really honing in on what was going to be best for the project,” said Wold.

Central to the discussion was the building envelope, the foundation of any energy efficient design. All three houses are built to be airtight, with highly efficient heat-recovery ventilation systems used to exchange stale indoor air with fresh outdoor air. The houses each have 10 centimetres of polystyrene under the basement slab to reduce heat loss, as well as three-paned windows filled with high R-value argon gas and three coats of Low Emissivity. Two of the

houses feature a 30 cm Nascor wall system that uses engineered wood and expanded polystyrene to achieve an insulation value of R-42, while the third uses 41 cm double stud wood frame to get to R-56.

Built-in Flexibility

When it came to heating systems, Effect opted for three different heating systems, utilizing electric baseboard, geothermal, and air-source heat pump technologies. “The homes are also designed to take advantage of sunlight to passively warm the house,” said Wold. “The show home has a whole bank of windows on the south-facing wall and a concrete main floor that absorbs the sun’s heat and then slowly radiates it to supply 32 per cent of yearly heating for the home.”

Sunlight also supplies the electricity the show home needs to run its heating system, lights and appliances and to heat its hot water tanks via a 12 kW solar electric system. The modules are tied into Edmonton’s electricity distribution system, allowing the house to feed any excess output onto the grid and draw from it when the solar panels aren’t producing enough to meet the home’s demand.

The other two homes at Belgravia Green are also set up to install solar systems, although the decision about when has yet to be made. ► **29**



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Alberta

The Future Remains Bright



BY JIM RIVAIT, CEO CHBA-ALBERTA



Housing markets across Alberta continue to improve in 2012 thanks to a growing economy, improving net migration and low interest rates. The main driver of economic growth in the province has been the continued investment by the energy sector. Manufacturing employment has also benefited from energy sector spending.

All of this has transferred into the residential housing market; total housing starts in the province's urban areas were up by 19 per cent to the end of May. Resale activity has also made gains over 2011 and, as markets become more balanced, prices for existing homes this year are on the rise. Analysts predict that strong growth will continue into 2013.

After five months, single-detached starts in Alberta's cities were 10 per cent above the same period in 2011. In Calgary, single-detached starts to the end of May were 21 per cent above the same period in 2011. The Capital region (in and near Edmonton) was 16 per cent above the same period last year.

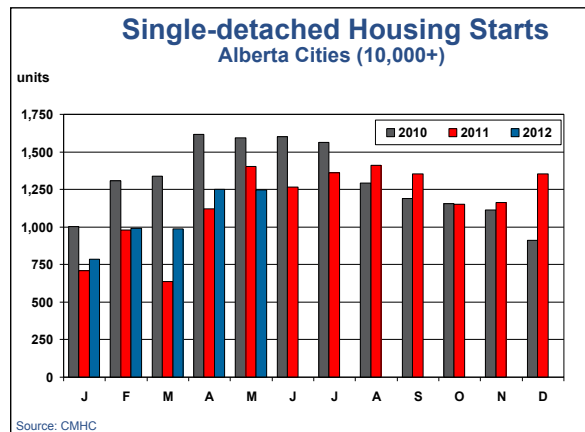
The multi-family sector is also hot and has seen the greatest increase in activity this year. Provincially, multi-family starts have more than doubled. So far this year, Calgary has seen a four-fold increase and Metro Edmonton has seen a 51 per cent increase.

Resale Market

Increases in the resale market have also been seen. In the first four months of 2012, total MLS sales across the province were 15 per cent higher than the first four months of 2011 with Calgary (21%) and Edmonton (9%)

leading the way. With market improvements, we are seeing upward pressure on resale prices and they are returning to peak levels seen six or seven years ago.

Tightening rental markets across Alberta are also boosting demand for home ownership. We have seen apartment vacancies decline in most locations and, naturally, that is pushing rents higher. As well, strong job growth and improved in-migration has spurred household formation and bolstered demand for entry-level housing including rentals. As rents increase, we will see more people choosing to buy.



Skilled Labour Shortage

Overall, the outlook for Alberta's home builders remains bright in 2012. The province's low unemployment levels and strong job creation will continue to entice newcomers and support demand for new housing. While some upward pressure in both home prices and mortgage rates can be expected in the coming year, continued job gains and rising in-migration will compensate for these impacts and uphold sales going forward.

There is one caveat: with the heated economy in Alberta, we will face a serious labour shortage in the next few years. CHBA-Alberta has joined a coalition more than 20 other business and industry associations, making a strong request for government action at both

the provincial and federal levels to address the pending labour shortage. We have seen some regulatory changes to the temporary foreign worker program that will be helpful, but it will be nowhere near enough to meet the needs. There are areas of Canada that have high employment and perhaps the employment insurance changes may provide an incentive for under- or unemployed Canadians to relocate to Alberta. What becomes an issue in a labour crunch is workmanship— it is difficult to get the skill and experience you need and consumers hedge their bets when they choose a CHBA builder. It is important to get the message out to consumers.

Flexibility of Funding

Like other big cities, Calgary and Edmonton believe the current funding structure does not allow for the level and flexibility of funding they need. During the recent election, the Tories committed to establishing a City Charter that will make some changes to the way big cities are funded. In June, an agreement to work on the Charter was signed by Doug Griffiths, Municipal Affairs minister and representatives from Edmonton and Calgary. A review of the Municipal Government Act will take place resulting in a new act within the next three years. Whatever occurs, hopefully municipalities will be more transparent and less likely to hide funding increases in off-site levies, assessments and downloading of traditional municipal responsibilities to builders, developers and ultimately consumers. Any new funding arrangements should force municipal politicians to be able to look the rate-payer in the eye when they raise taxes and add levies.

Renovation

Renovation activity across the province has been on the upswing since early February. A warm winter and increasing construction in the oil patch is fuelling this activity especially in the Edmonton region. Single-family infill housing is increasing in number and permit approvals move quickly. It is a different matter on multi-family infill where NIMBYism is alive and well. The process can be long and some builders and developers are questioning the investment in time and money. Cities that are clamouring for increased density have to find a solution to move projects along.

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11th Annual New Products Showcase

BY JUDY PENZ SHELUK

Cooktops, codes, cloud computing, carts, condensers, controls, collections and more—if it's new and innovative, we've tried to include it here!



Firma Bath Furniture: ME

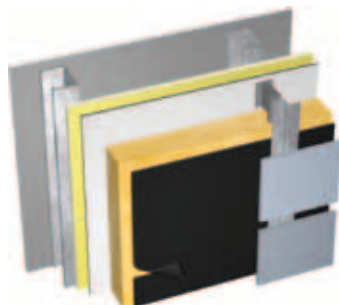
Creative, functional, ergonomic designs

Firma Bath Furniture is an award-winning Canadian company dedicated to the innovative designs for the luxury developer, builder, renovator and homeowner. Their new "VITA" line offers creative, functional, ergonomic designs in bath furniture concepts for the disabled, retirement home and long term care projects. The new "ME" line is the company's latest collection of bath furniture to be launched in early fall 2012. Available in different colours as well as various wood grains. www.firmabathfurniture.com

DELTA-FASSADE: DELTA-FASSADE S

Iron clad(ding)

DELTA-FASSADE S, highly stabilized against damage from UV exposure, is designed for use in cladding systems that have open joints of up to 2" (50 mm) wide that expose up to 40 per cent of the entire façade surface. Its excellent stability against ultra violet light means no doubling up of the membrane and no sacrificial layers. DELTA-FASSADE S acts as a durable drainage plane, channelling bulk



(liquid) water from wind-driven rain and snow to the outside of the structure. The watertight membrane helps protect the building enclosure from damaging effects of moisture vapour and is extremely tear resistant. Its high vapour permeability allows moisture within the cavity to escape swiftly. DELTA-FASSADE S is Class A fire-rated. Its performance is unaffected by surfactants, and beautifies and enhances open joint claddings, providing sustainable moisture protection for many years of service. www.delta-fassades.com



RIDGID: SeeSnake Max rM200 Camera System

The next generation inspections system in the SeeSnake line

The new RIDGID SeeSnake Max rM200 Camera System combines portability and versatility to provide plumbing professionals with an easy-to-use solution for inspecting longer and tighter lines up to 200' in length and 1-1/2" to 6" in diameter. Features include improved reel mechanics for easier passage through tight turns, an ultra-compact camera capable of providing optimal lighting through narrow spaces and an upgraded cable (200'), which provides greater abrasion resistance and allows users to push further with less effort.

The inspection system also comes with a built-in docking system for attaching upcoming viewing monitors and is compatible with the RIDGID SeeSnake CS10 and CS1000 digital recording monitors. www.RIDGID.com

Schlage: Nexia Home Intelligence

A new way to run your home

Wherever life takes you, Nexia Home Intelligence offers a new way to run your home, allowing homeowners to do everything from unlocking the front door, to adjusting heating and

cooling, and managing home security and energy use—right from your smartphone. Supported by leading household brands, Schlage and Trane, Nexia ties together the things that matter most and allows home builders to differentiate and add value for the home buyers.

Schlage Home Keypad Levers & Deadbolts: Grant access to your home when you can't be there with a scheduled code; receive texts or email alerts when your family uses their codes. Schlage Home Camera: Check in on your family or pet from the office; record live video within the home. Schlage Home Dimmer Module & Appliance Module: Brighten or dim lamps on your way home; turn lights and small appliances off after you leave the home. Trane ComfortLink & ComfortLink II Controls: Raise or lower the temperature when you're at home or away. www.nexiahome.com

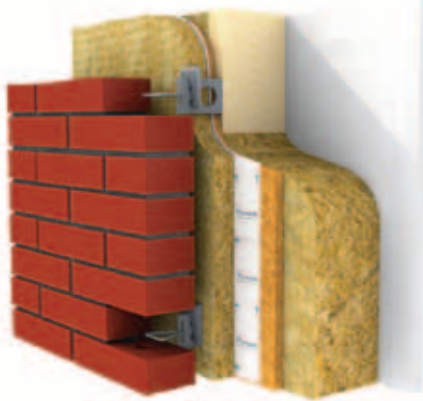


FLEXTHERM: Green Cable Surface

Heating cable installation just got easier

FLEXTHERM has released a new feature that will greatly facilitate the lives of electricians and tile layers. The floor heating systems manufacturer has introduced the first ever heating cable to indicate the length at every foot. Markings will allow any installer to better manage the installation of FLEXTHERM's Green Cable Surface thanks to a clear and simple decreasing marking. With this extra guidance, installers will always know the amount of cable that remains to be installed, enabling them to better plan buffer zones and carry out fast and uniform installations. www.flextherm.com





Roxul: ComfortBoard IS

A sustainable solution

In a typical single-family building, wood studs make up 25 per cent of the wall surface. Roxul ComfortBoard IS board is designed to be fastened to the outside face of the exterior studs in residential construction, thus providing increased thermal performance to the building envelope. An exterior non-structural insulated sheathing that provides a continuous layer of insulation around residential building envelope, ComfortBoard IS is non-combustible, water repellent, sound absorbent and it lets walls breathe. When used in conjunction with a typical 2x4 wall assembly and R14 ComfortBatt, ComfortBoard IS at 1.5" thick provides for an R-20 basement wall solution. www.roxul.com

Pfister: The Selia Collection



Versatile design

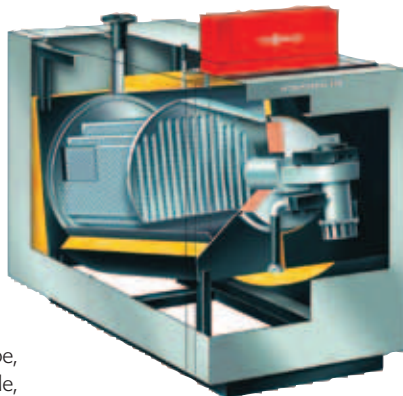
The Selia Collection from Pfister faucets combines traditional and contemporary styling creating a versatile design that complements a wide array of home décor. The Selia Collection also features Pfister's trademarked Push & Seal tool-less drain assembly to make installation simple and effortless; Pfister Connect to simplify the process of connecting water supply lines to the faucet, and Quick Install, an efficient all-in-one

tool that makes faucet installation fast and easy. The complete collection includes centerset faucet, widespread faucet and tub and shower in brushed nickel finish. www.pfisterfaucets.com

Viessmann: Vitocrossal 200, CM2 Boiler

Combining condensing technology with innovative features

The Vitocrossal 200, CM2 includes a new, fully modulating Viessmann



pre-mix cylinder burner with a wide modulation range of 5:1 turndown ratio to precisely match load. It operates with low inlet gas pressure (NG) of only four inches of water column for compatibility with efficiencies up to 94.6 per cent.

The SA240 316Ti stainless steel Inno-Crossal heat exchanger features a generous heat transfer surface/heat input ratio, allowing for maximum heat extraction while maintaining a compact size. Extremely low water pressure drop through the heat exchanger eliminates the need for a dedicated boiler pump and low-loss header, while the boiler's large water content extends burner run time and reduces cycling. www.viessmann.ca

Weiser Lock: SmartCode

No more worrying about keys

SmartCode from Weiser Lock offers a convenient, more controllable keyless entry deadbolt; with a personal code, homeowners can enter their house with just a few simple pushes of a button and lock it with just one. Homeowners also get more control over who has access to their home by assigning a temporary code which can easily be deleted as needed, totally



eliminating the need for keys. Easy to install, program and use, and operates on four AA batteries, SmartCode complements any Weiser knob, lever or handleset, while providing excellent security with its 1-inch, heavy-duty deadbolt and break-in-resistant strike plate. SmartCode: home security with the highest level of convenience and control. www.weiserlock.com

Berenson: Nancy Collection



Pink collection will support Susan G. Koman breast cancer research

Berenson, a leading national supplier of cabinet hardware, is pleased to formally launch five new collections inspired by and named after courageous breast cancer survivors. Berenson Corporation has donated a minimum of \$25,000 to Susan G. Komen for the Cure in connection to these collections. Inspired collections will be sold at retailers from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. The idea to partner with Susan G. Komen came from Nancy, a 20-year employee with Berenson who discovered she had breast cancer in 2009. Berenson created a pink finish exclusively for these collections. www.berensonhardware.ca

AZEK: AZEK VAST Permeable Pavers

An attractive option to deal with storm water runoff

AZEK VAST Pavers announces a welcome option to assist with storm water runoff problems that offers great

looks and durability. The product line's Permeable paver in 4 x 8 inch size is designed to help alleviate residential and commercial stormwater runoff issues. Made with up to 95 per cent recycled scrap tires and various plastics, AZEK VAST Permeable Pavers install on an innovative grid system up to three times faster than traditional masonry pavers. www.vastpavers.com



Slant/Fin: VSL-160 Gas-Fired Hot Water Condensing Boiler

Continuous productivity

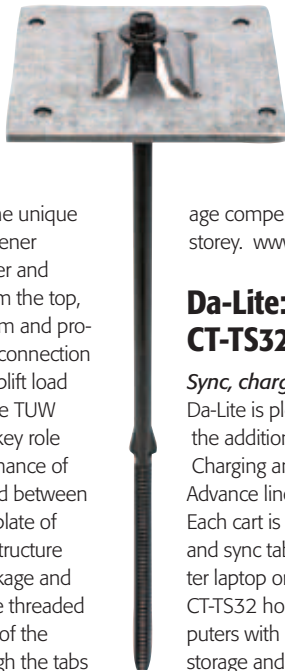
The ideal central heating unit for homeowners and multi-residence managers with hot water heating systems, Slant/Fin's new VSL-160 Condensing Gas Boiler, with available domestic hot water generator, delivers 93 per cent AFUE (Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency) efficiency. The VSL-160 features a stainless-steel pre-mix burner and an ASME stainless-steel heat exchanger. It can be field set up for use with either natural gas or propane, and can be used as a combi-unit—which also features a 2.6-gallon expansion tank, circulator, DHW heat exchanger, and diverter valve. www.slantfin.ca



21 ▶ **Simpson Strong-Tie: SDWF**

Structural wood screw designed to simplify floor-to-floor connections

Simpson Strong-Tie introduces the new SDWF structural wood screw with TUW take-up washer. The unique design of the SDWF fastener enables it to attach upper and lower walls together from the top, spanning the floor system and providing an easy-to-install connection within the continuous uplift load path of the structure. The TUW take-up washer plays a key role in the long-term performance of the SDWF when installed between the screw and the sole plate of the upper floor. As the structure settles because of shrinkage and construction loading, the threaded portion under the head of the screw ratchets up through the tabs of the TUW. The interlock between the tabs of the take-up washer and



the threads under the head of the SDWF prevent the screw from sliding back under load, providing a simple yet reliable means of shrinkage compensation up to 3.4" per storey. www.strongtie.com/fasten.

Da-Lite: CT-TS32 and CT-TS48

Sync, charging & storage carts
Da-Lite is pleased to announce the addition of two Tablet Sync, Charging and Storage Carts to its Advance line of multi media carts. Each cart is fully equipped to charge and sync tablet computers to a master laptop or desktop computer. The CT-TS32 holds up to 32 tablet computers with an additional shelf for storage and the CT-TS48 will hold up to 48 tablets. Each will charge and sync via integrated USB charging



ports. Both models feature secure access including locking drawers and locking front doors with a multi-point locking system that engages the top and bottom shelves when locked. A back panel with security screws only allows access to the power supplies and wiring. www.da-lite.com

SMARTWaste Canada: Waste Management Planning Software

Web-enabled software helps divert waste from landfill

SMARTWaste Canada software helped to make the London 2012 Olympic Games the greenest ever by diverting 98.5 per cent of all demolition and construction waste. It is now avail-

able in Canada and is tailored to the needs of building owners, Canadian construction companies, Registered Specification Writers, architects, engineers, interior designers and waste removal companies. The web-enabled software is user-friendly and makes it easy to plan, track and manage waste helping to divert waste from landfill. It helps the building industry:

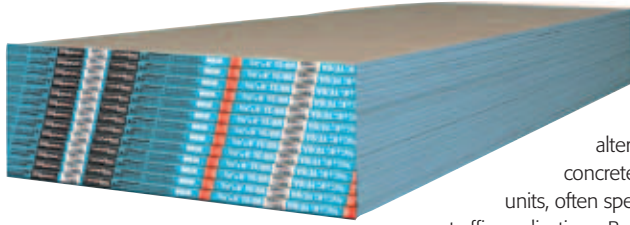
- Reduce costs by maximizing material purchases and minimizing waste disposal fees.
- Save time planning, managing and reporting.
- Build green by using the power of information to identify opportunities to reduce waste.

www.smartwastecanada.com



Three Things I've Learned: Tips from Seasoned Pros

CertainTeed Gypsum: Air Renew Extreme Impact & Extreme Abuse



Expansion rounds out AirRenew product family

CertainTeed Gypsum is broadening its groundbreaking AirRenew indoor air quality (IAQ) gypsum board product line with the addition of AirRenew Extreme Impact and AirRenew Extreme Abuse. The expansion rounds out the AirRenew product family with solutions that boast high-performance attributes, such as fire-, abuse- and impact-resistance as well as moisture and mold protection. They handle the same as regular gypsum boards and do not require special tools to install or finish. Additionally, abuse-resistant gypsum boards are cost-effective

alternatives to concrete masonry units, often specified for high-traffic applications. Both products feature M2Tech technology, which consists of 100 per cent recycled paper that is treated to protect against mold growth. www.certainteed.com

ICM Controls: SimpleComfort SC700

Fan coil thermostats designed for high voltage applications

ICM Controls, a leader in the manufacture and supply of electronic controls to the HVACR industry, has launched its new SimpleComfort SC700 series of fan coil thermostats designed for high voltage fan coil and baseboard applications.



Each of the four UL listed, non-programmable models in the SC700 series support either 24 or 115-277

VAC, 3-speed fan, 4-pipe heat/cool applications with precise comfort controls accurate to +/- 1°F. The two SC700V models are auto-changeover; the two SC710V models are manual changeover. All models feature an easy-to-use, mechanical slide bar temperature adjustment and support remote room temperature sensing. www.icmcontrols.com

Zodiac Pool Systems: iAquaLink

Wireless control for pools

Zodiac Pool Systems, Inc. has launched its new iAquaLink, which allows pool owners to harness the power of the web to monitor, adjust, and program AquaLink pool controllers. Using any web browser or custom apps for lead-



ing smartphones or tablets, pool owners can control their pool or pool/spa combo anytime, anywhere. Features are simple and intuitive graphical user interfaces, making them extremely easy to use and learn. The technology requires only one device be connected, and installation can be completed in just three steps by pool professionals or home automation specialists. www.iaqualink.com

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How does Cary Hamilton weather the challenges of building high-end homes in Steamboat Springs, Colorado? For one, he uses pointSIX Durastrand Flooring with its innovative tapered edge. Learn why, along with other insights into creating success long-term, by watching **“Three Things I’ve Learned: Tips from Seasoned Pros,”** one in a series of short high-value videos from pointSIX and Ainsworth Engineered.

www.pointsixexperts.com/cary



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VIEW VIDEO

23 ▶ **Honeywell: LYNX Touch**

Full Z-Wave integration security
Honeywell's newest LYNX Touch self-contained security system includes two alarm industry firsts that will allow installers to more easily provide local and remote services, which are increasingly popular among homeowners who want to control their security using mobile devices. The LYNX Touch 5100 is the first technology of its kind to offer Wi-Fi, as well as an alarm radio that can communicate via 4G network. The system also fully integrates with Z-Wave-enabled thermostats, locks and lighting systems to create home automation capabilities.



Other key features of the LYNX Touch 5100 include Advanced Protection Logic that allows an alarm event to report even if the system is damaged, and two-way voice over GSM radio. The system supports all Honeywell 5800 series wireless devices. www.honeywell.com/security



Zola European Windows: Lift Slide Doors

An expanse of glass
Zola European Windows has recently unveiled their Lift Slide Doors, offering the largest expanses of moving glass anywhere. With 20 feet maximum width and 8 feet high, made from just two 10 feet wide moving glass panes, they are a quintessential tool for modern, eco-friendly living offering a patio door without dividers obstructing your view. A simple turn of the premium German Roto Hardware handle gently lifts the entire door out of its seal to effortlessly glide to the side. Exterior remote controlled shading or bug screens are available as an option, and electrically roll out of sight when not in use. Available in all Zola glass and frame versions, and standard with a thermally broken, low threshold aluminum sill. Delivered directly to construction sites in Canada. www.zolawindows.com

Sage: Sage Construction Anywhere



Cloud-based accessibility
Sage Construction Anywhere is a cloud-based platform that increases accessibility to project reports, fosters collaboration, and increases operational efficiency. It is designed to help construction and real estate companies get critical project information into the hands of those who need it

most—anytime, anywhere. Designed specifically for the construction industry by the market leader in construction business management solutions, Sage Construction Anywhere uses terms and processes that are instantly familiar to builders and contractors, making it an intuitive tool. www.sageconstructionanywhere.com

Thompson's WaterSeal: Deck & House Stain

Fade-resistant formula
With more than 100 solid and semi-transparent tones of waterproofing stain to choose from, Thompson's WaterSeal Deck & House has you covered. These beautiful fade-resistant, one-coat stains are available in premium 100 VOC latex formulas and rich 250 VOC oil formulas. Thompson's WaterSeal Deck & House Waterproofing Stains prevent water damage and provide a coating that resists mildew and UV damage. They are long-lasting, scuff resistant and easily clean up with soap and water. www.thompsonswaterseal.com



Moen: Parlor Collection

Classic coordination with an innovative twist
Updating and replacing bath accessories, such as a towel bar or robe hook, can completely change the look and feel of a bathroom. The new Moen Parlor Collection, which coordinates with a variety of popular bath styles, can accomplish this new look with ease by offering a complete and



refined look. Classic design features soft curves and a perfect sphere to give the accessories a slightly vintage touch. Accessories in the Parlor collection include a pullout robe hook (this innovative feature allows each hook to be used traditionally or to hang multiple items, like belts or clothes on hangers); a pivoting paper holder; 18- and 24-inch towel bars; and towel ring. Finishes include Chrome, Brushed Nickel and Mediterranean Bronze. www.moen.ca

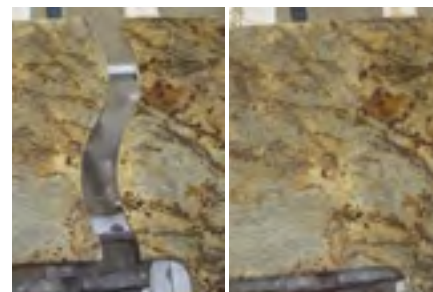


Artika Neo Splash Mocha Marble

Marble and travertine complements a wide range of K & B décor
Transform any kitchen or bathroom by updating dated tile with Artika's easy to install Neo Splash Mocha Marble mosaic tile. Each sheet combines rich taupe, beige and coffee-coloured glass for a modern look at affordable prices. The tiles are made from marble and travertine and easily complement a wide range of kitchen and bathroom décor. Artika's Neo Splash Mocha Marble mosaic tiles are available, exclusive to Costco Wholesale, \$5.99/sq.ft. <http://artikaworld.com>

Dimanti Stone Works: Serpentine Seam

A superior finishing touch for granite
As the granite industry moves more and more towards exotic patterns, old seaming techniques such as straight butterfly stone patterns are becoming less desirable as it disrupts the stone's natural pattern. Dimanti Stone Works has introduced a new seaming technology called the 'serpentine seam.' This innovative seam has a soft curve in lieu of a sharp, straight common seam. This 'S' shaped seam is the perfect finish to engage the eyes away from an area that must hold a seam. The fluid connection of a serpentine seam isn't merely an option; it is a superior finishing touch for those with discerning tastes. www.dswstone.com



Savour every moment with GE Café™



Restaurant inspired appliances

Your kitchen... the perfect place for preparing a fabulous meal, or just relaxing with friends and family. GE Café appliances offer the look and feel of a modern stainless steel restaurant kitchen, combined with the latest cooking advantages enjoyed by top chefs. Redefining at-home entertaining, GE Café satisfies the foodies' hunger for performance appliances while letting you focus on your guests!

With our large appliance line up and custom tailored programs, we make it easy to bring the best products and value to your projects. To learn more, please contact Rachelle Laforge at 1-800-307-8871



GE Appliances Commercial Sales Visit gecafe.ca



Café

Bon appétit!

24 ▶ Water Matrix: Proficiency Toilet

Ultra high efficiency with quiet flushing action

The Proficiency is the world's most efficient single flush toilet and is the first to be classified as an Ultra High Efficiency Toilet (UHET). This remarkable toilet flushes all liquid and solid waste with only 3 litres of water and outperforms toilets that use higher flush volumes. It's patented flushing system works under any level of inlet water pressure and provides a powerful yet extremely quiet flushing action.



Built into the Proficiency is a specially designed air transfer system that actually pressurizes the trap way, while the tank is filling with water. When flushed, water leaving the tank creates a vacuum which sucks the air from the trap way, depressurizing it and enhancing the siphoning flush action. The 3 Litre Proficiency toilet is available in Canada at Lowes, Rona and Home Hardware stores. www.watermatrix.com

Bosch Thermotechnology: Tronic 3000 and 5000 Tankless Water Heaters



Endless hot water supply

Bosch Thermotechnology North America's new series of electric tankless water heaters offers class-leading performance and versatility and deliver an endless hot water supply. The Tronic 3000 and 5000 electric tankless series

Allied Moulded Products: Vapour Seal - Air-Sealed Electrical Boxes



Providing energy efficient options for builders

Allied Moulded Products, Inc., an industry leader in nonmetallic electric outlet boxes, has introduced a full line of patented vapour seal electrical boxes. The boxes prevent air infiltration on walls/ceilings where "holes"

for electrical device and ceiling boxes are required and create an airtight wall opening. They also come with many standard features that reduce material and labour costs for the builder. Knockouts on fibre-glass boxes are moulded complete, which will reduce drafts, and are easily removed with wire for a no-tools installation. Supports are angled for easy installation and bright common nails fit securely. Machine tapped holes allow device screws to be started by hand and finished with battery powered screwdrivers. www.vaporseal.alliedmoulded.com



Delta: Touch20.xt

Now available for the bathroom

Delta's Touch20.xt technology is now available in the bathroom. This intuitive technology lets homeowners turn water on or off by simply approaching the faucet's 4" sensing field or tapping the faucet anywhere on the spout or handle. The faucet automatically turns itself off after hands are removed. The added convenience of hands-free activation means the faucet stays clean even when hands are messy. Touch20.xt Technology makes it convenient to turn water off while brushing teeth and shaving. Users that turn off the water every time they brush their teeth could save up to nine gallons of water every day. This technology is also the winner of the "Parent Tested, Parent Approved" Seal of Approval. Delta's Touch20.xt Technology is available in two styles: Addison and Lahara. Both models operate with six AA batteries. www.deltafaucet.ca

Logix: Platinum Series

Looks different, acts different

Logix Platinum Series is powered by BASF's patented Neopor EPS bead. Tiny graphite particles give Neopor additional R-Value and its silver/gray colour. Get more R-Value without increasing wall thickness. Plus, Logix Platinum Series is Greenguard Certified for healthier indoor air quality. www.logixicf.com



MTI: Maddux Freestanding Tubs

A muscular, minimalist edge to the modern bath

MTI has introduced the Maddux 1 and 2 modern freestanding tubs in two sizes. Right angles and flat exterior planes give the tub a masculine strength, while the interior backrest is angled for maximum comfort. The Maddux tubs include a discreet integrated overflow slot and Toe-Tap drain. The tubs are freestanding and the Maddux 1 can also fit snugly into an alcove setting due to the perfectly flat exterior.

Made with MTI's Engineered Solid-Surface material, the Maddux tubs look like they were each carved from a single block of stone. The tubs come in white or biscuit with either a matte or gloss finish. www.MTIBaths.com

Vancouver Gas Fireplace: Floating Fire Bowl

A mix of fire and nature

Imagine mixing nature and fire. This fire feature is an innovated product that combines an element of nature—in this case a boulder—with a uniquely fabricated bowl of fire. The steel bowl was designed to be bolted onto another object to create a visual illusion of a floating fire. River rocks, crushed glass or driftwood are some of the fire pit toppings available. Venting and components for the steel fire bolt can vary depending on architectural plans and the source of available gas to the home. For that reason, this product will require customization. www.vangasfireplaces.com





Ron Olson
President, CHBA

Canada's
economy
needs a
strong and
well-functioning
housing
sector.

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What the Federal Government Is Getting Right with Housing

As the world economy continues to encounter a host of challenges, businesspeople continue to be concerned about how these issues might affect us here in Canada.

In country after country, economic problems are closely linked to governments' inability, or unwillingness, to act decisively. We are fortunate that, in Canada, we don't suffer from such a lack of leadership.

The federal government, through the Minister of Finance and others, has been very clear about its economic priorities, and how housing fits into these plans. And it has shown itself willing to act, in a measured way, when it believes this is needed.

While the CHBA does not agree that the latest round of changes to mortgage rules was necessary, we do agree with the federal government that housing market stability is of paramount importance. We were disappointed that these changes were made, as housing markets appeared to be cooling on their own, and prices had been moderating in the few strong markets across the country.

The CHBA follows federal housing developments very closely, and we are in frequent contact with federal officials to make sure our industry's perspective is clear and understood. Here is the Association's brief update on what is—and isn't—happening in relation to federal housing policy and actions.

On the "big issues," the federal government continues to get most things "right."

The Focus is on "Stability"

Despite the recent introduction of more restrictive rules for mortgage lending—including the reduction to 25-year amortization for federally-insured mortgages—we continue to see the federal government take measured steps. The Minister of Finance has been very clear that the government's focus is on stability in housing markets, and avoiding precipitous actions that would undermine such stability on either the up or down side.

Consider what the Minister has said on housing market conditions and federal policy. Here are his comments to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce on May 16, 2012:

"We cannot be complacent, especially when it comes to a key aspect of our financial system, and that is the housing market . . . our government constantly monitors the housing market, ready to take prudent steps to ensure its ongoing stability, when necessary."

The Minister makes two very important points, that housing matters a great deal economically, and that market stability is key to our industry's performance.

These are precisely the key messages the CHBA has been delivering to the federal government since the world financial crisis began in 2008.

What 'stability' means in this context is clear: Canada's economy needs a strong and well-functioning housing sector, and the federal government will act to protect this from both upside and downside risks.

The federal government's actions since 2008 back this up; it introduced simulative measures and backstopped the mortgage system when markets were threatened, and subsequently tightened mortgage rules to secure confidence in Canada's mortgage lending.

Given the ongoing economic and financial crisis affecting so many other nations, having a federal government committed to housing stability is very reassuring.

I have written to Minister Flaherty following the most recent changes to federally-insured mortgage amortization requirements, pointing out the need to monitor very closely, and in consultation with our industry, how housing markets, and consumers, are impacted. The government must be prepared to rethink its actions if housing market stability is threatened by these new rules.

I have also emphasized that concerns about the level of housing-related debt Canadians are accumulating require that immediate attention be given to the high level of government-imposed costs on new housing which serve to increase this debt. This includes action to adjust the GST New Housing Rebate to reflect current new home prices.

Developments at CMHC

The CHBA has been impressed with the care and precision reflected in recent developments at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

As I've said on many occasions, CMHC fulfills a vital role in Canada's housing system, both for our industry and our customers, from providing mortgage insurance for homebuyers, to the provision of mortgage funding support (liquidity) to lenders, to technical and market research that helps CHBA members make smart business decisions.

The recent federal budget and spending reductions gave rise to speculation in some quarters that CMHC would no longer have these important roles, but this is not the case.

In relation to CMHC commercial activities (mortgage insurance and securitization), CMHC will now be under the supervision of the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI)—the federal financial "watchdog."

This is the same supervision that is already in place for Canada's three private-sector mortgage insurers.

And it is something that CMHC President Karen Kinsley welcomes, as she made clear in her recent remarks to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce.

The summer period provides local HBA leaders the opportunity to meet face-to-face with their Members of Parliament on important industry issues.

There has also been speculation in the media that CMHC will shortly hit its financial ceiling, and be unable to issue further mortgage insurance coverage, forcing it to withdraw from the market.

CMHC has been clear that this is simply not the case. President Kinsley has said that CMHC remains fully capable of offering high-ratio mortgage insurance, and foresees no difficulty continuing to do so in the years ahead.

Finally, as part of the federal effort to constrain government spending and eliminate the deficit, CMHC has completed a thorough review of its activities and is making a number of changes.

There was concern that the Corporation would no longer be involved in the type of housing research that helps to make Canadian housing the best in the world.

Again, these fears are without foundation. CMHC has reported to the Association's Technical Research Committee that, going forward, its research and information transfer activities will have the following priorities:

- Research efforts will focus on supporting conventional and enhanced new housing: the 'nuts and bolts' research that helps builders build better homes.
- Increased effort will go into getting practical information to builders.
- CMHC will continue its efforts to inform consumers about their housing choices, and the benefits of higher-performing new homes.

This is very good news, and in line with the CHBA's view of how CMHC can best support our members and their customers. CMHC has a central and important role in Canada's housing system, and, despite the need for deficit-cutting restraint, it is reassuring to know the Corporation will continue to fulfill this role.

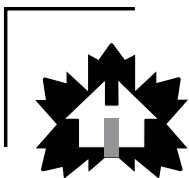
Summer MP Campaign in Full Swing

With Parliament adjourned, this summer's MP campaign is in full swing, under the able leadership of CHBA First Vice President Deep Shergill.

The summer period provides local HBA leaders the opportunity to meet face-to-face with their Members of Parliament on important industry issues. Ensuring all MPs are knowledgeable about housing plays an important part in the Association's federal representations.

For this summer's campaign, the CHBA toolkit includes briefing materials on a number of key issues: the need for a GST Home Renovation Tax Rebate, the case for adjusting GST rebates for new home buyers, and the need for effective action on the underground economy.

CHBA has also released an updated paper on the rapid deterioration of housing affordability, and the role that government-imposed costs are playing in this worrying situation. Over the summer, I hope every Home Builders' Association meets with local MPs to ensure they have a clear understanding of the risks to Canadians and to our economy if this problem is not addressed by governments.



Get Your SAM Entries Started!

Being a CHBA National SAM Award finalist or winner has tremendous benefits, including the pride generated among your building team, and increased local media coverage. SAM recognition can also add to your credibility in consumers' eyes, resulting in greater customer interest and increased sales.

The first step to winning a National SAM Award is putting your best project forward.

All of the information on this year's SAM Awards is now available on the CHBA website at www.chba.ca/SAMS. As we go into the summer period, it's an ideal time to consider which of your projects would make a great SAM Award entry this year, and to start getting your submission information and images organized.

Starting now also gives you the advantage of arranging your project photos when your new home, renovation or community is looking its best.

The National SAM Award entry deadline is November 9, 2012 and the Awards presentation will be held at the 2013 CHBA National Conference in Lake Louise next March.

Renovation Month Prize in the Works

Plans for Renovation Month in October got a big boost with the announcement of a special promotion from Home Hardware Building Centre. A Toyota "Rav4" will be given to a lucky winner who has entered the contest on-line and successfully answered questions about why they should "Get it in Writing!" when doing a renovation project. The contest page will also direct visitors to the CHBA website to find a renovator. Meanwhile, plans are underway in many local HBAs to hold events next October that deliver the message about why it pays to "Go with a Pro."

2013 National Conference in Lake Louise

Leading begins with a simple question: How can I get better at what I do?

Leading is anticipating what's coming next, recognizing the innovations and opportunities that can deliver a competitive advantage. "Leading" is the theme for the 70th National Conference at the world famous Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise nestled deep within the Rocky Mountains in the wonderland of Banff National Park. Note the new Conference schedule: Thursday evening through Saturday night, March 7-9, 2013. Register online at www.chba.ca/conference.





The Effect homes have been successfully marketed with a mix of educational tours and media coverage.

16 ▶ “Flexibility is deliberately built into the design using ‘the simple tweak of having a conduit run from the mechanical room up to the roof’ to make it easy for homeowners to add the modules when their budgets allow,” said Wold.

The Cost of Net Zero

Solar generation is only one part of the additional cost incurred when building net-zero. Wold estimates the cost is about 7-8 per cent more than a standard house to get these homes to net-zero ready, which includes everything but the solar component. “It’s manageable, and we’re constantly working to keep the cost down,” said Wold.

There is little doubt that interest in the kind of homes being built at Belgravia Green is growing. With electricity rates assumed to be \$0.08/kWh and gas at \$3 GJ the utility savings on the Belgravia Green Show Home (when compared to a standard built house) is approximately \$1,100 per year—without the solar-electric generation.



Solar generation is only one part of the additional cost incurred when building net-zero.

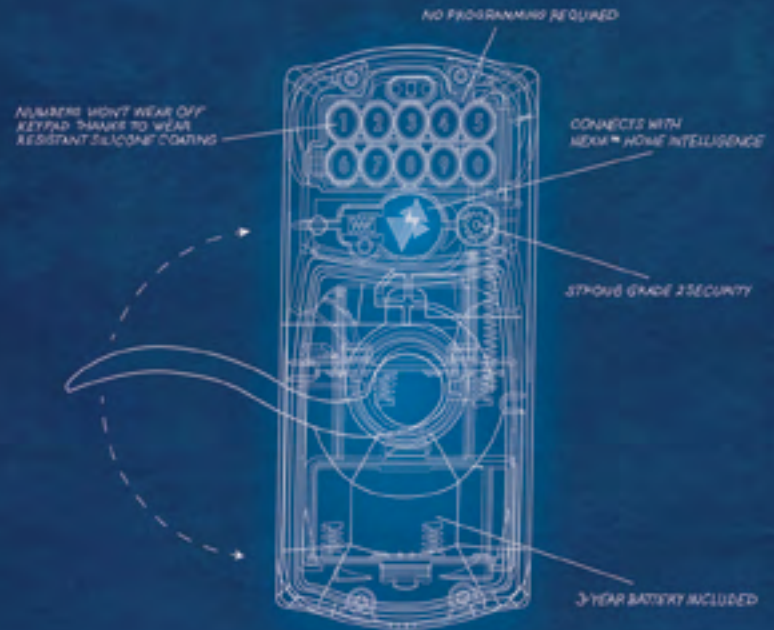
“Doing the math, to bring a 1,540 square foot house costing \$375,000 to Net Zero ready status would be approximately \$26,000,” said Wold. “If we are using \$1,100 in annual utility savings, the cost recovery payback period (with 5 per cent utility cost inflation), is approximately 15 years.”

Selling Net Zero

The Effect homes have been successfully marketed with a mix of educational tours and media coverage. “Thousands of people have visited the homes,” said Wold. “Tours were arranged for elementary, high school and post-secondary student groups, teachers, gardening groups, provincial solar society, government departments, utility companies and local media.”

It worked. The project was given broad support with participation by the MLA, as well as the mayor of Edmonton, city councillors, community league executives, the neighbouring school principal, community members and the general public.

For more information and images, visit www.effecthomes.ca. 🏠



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NEW TOOLS for the Trades

Going Brushless

With the cordless evolution, distinct battery systems have herded us into some brand loyalty just to avoid having 15 different chargers and different sets of batteries. Most manufacturers are finally providing combo chargers to charge most of their batteries in one unit.

The real change is that the move has begun toward greater power in smaller packages that comes with the combination of Lithium Ion batteries and Brushless motors. While Ni-Cad was a vanilla commodity generally supplied by one or two battery companies, Lithium Ion batteries vary greatly in quality and performance and are seriously enhanced by new fine-tuned electronic controllers that protect both the motor and the batteries.

Brushless has been around for a long time (ELU tools circa 1970—my favourite circular saw ever) but is just now getting integrated with Lithium Ion battery technology. Yes, it does cost more to produce. Real performance of this year's tools have complex and serious differences that will probably only be sorted out on the job sites (because advertising claims are almost impossible to sort through). The quality and performance of brushless motors vary greatly from manufacturer to manufacturer—and month to month as this technology is evolving rapidly.

Across the brands, don't be surprised to see some future 12-volt tools outperforming current 18-volt tools.

Brushless Tools on the Shelves Now

High Capacity Hammer Drill/Drivers



Makita: LXRH01Z - 18v brushless SDS

This 3-mode rotary hammer comes in at only 6 pounds with a low 16m/s² vibration level and 0-950 RPM with 0-4,700 BPM. Its brushless DC motor stands out with less heat build up, making it ideal for prolonged use in high production applications.



Bosch: RHH180-01 - 18v brushless SDS

Bosch: RHH180-01 - 18v brushless SDS

This 2-mode rotary hammer with a pneumatic hammer mechanism comes in at 5.7 pounds and delivers 360 in-lb torque, 0-1,400 RPM with 0-4,500 BPM. The brushless motor is helping to achieve a 30 per cent increase in run time.

Compact Hammer Drill/Drivers

Milwaukee: 2604-22 - 1/2" brushless 18v

I reviewed this breakthrough tool last month. It is not only about the power of the relatively small tool, but about the smooth way the whole brushless system delivers that power to the toughest job I threw at it. Until I see better, this is my compact hammer drill of choice.



Milwaukee:
2604-22 - 1/2" brushless 18v

Compact Drill/Drivers

Milwaukee: 2603-22 - 1/2" Brushless 18v

This is the same tool as the Milwaukee 2604-22 - 1/2", just without the hammer action.

Impact drivers

Milwaukee: 2653-20 - brushless 1/4" hex 18v

After impressing me with their Hammer drill/driver, they have blown me away with this little impact wrench. Just by the size of its rotor and generally robust design, plus electronics that will not let you destroy either the motor or the battery, this tool will stand up to the excessive abuse we tend to give impact wrenches on our construction sites.



DeWalt: DCF895B - brushless 1/4" hex 20v



This is DeWalt's first entry into the brushless competition. It is a respectable tool but they haven't caught up to the whole systems development shown by Milwaukee and Makita. It is certainly an improvement over all the standard impact drivers in your tool box today.

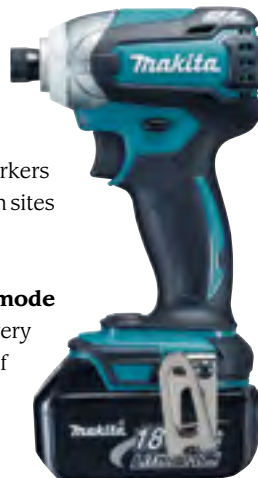


Makita: LXDT01Z - brushless 1/4" hex 18v

Makita gets the credit for bringing the brushless into cordless power tools. Its lighter design is perfect for HVAC and other sheet metal workers but lacks the meat in the rotor for our wood construction sites which tend to task these tools much more.

Makita: LXDT06 - brushless 1/4" hex 18v w/TEK mode

This is basically the same tool as above with a very unique feature in the computerized control side of the tool—the TEK mode gives it a soft landing at the end of a sheet metal drive—avoiding over torque stripping the screw out of the metal.



New DeWalt TOUGHSYSTEM™

Three different sized lockable waterproof tool cases which stack on a wheel rack—that's taking your whole tool box to the job site and not losing it.

More New Tools for the Trades



Fein Oscillating Tool: Same Power as the MultiMaster

Although Fein was the original inventor of the oscillating tool, they refused to bring out a cordless version for a long time. When I asked them why they finally bent to the competition and brought out the 14.4v AFMM they replied that they refused to do it until they could promise the exact same power and durability as the corded MultiMaster, meaning that they have a cordless tool capable of working all day with Fein's large wood working blades. This is not a hobby tool or a copy that cannot stand up to the high stress gear demands of an oscillating tool. By the way, don't forget that as powerful as these tools are, Fein has an even more powerful industrial version called the SuperCut, primarily used as a window de-glazer in automotive and high rise window applications, but they do sell wood and metal cutting blades for it as well.

Don't forget that I have 22 videos on www.JonEakes.com showing how to get good cuts with an oscillating tool.

Saw Stop

This is the saw you have heard about that stops with an explosive charge when the blade touches skin. The photo shows a blade that I took home from a sausage cutting demonstration (they never did get through the sausage). The blade is actually fused into the aluminum block in the break. When it trips, you scrap both the blade and the stop break, but save your hand—an economical trade off. Yes we do sometimes have to work on wet wood, so there is a test function to see if you should turn off the break before cutting into something wetter than your skin. This is probably not the best saw for an open (and often wet) construction site, but is fantastic for any workshop or factory type of setting.

Saw Stop made the very intelligent decision to not only have a great blade stopping mechanism, but to build the saw itself to top quality which is allowing it to quickly move in on all the competition. www.sawstop.ca.



Bosch D-Tect 150 Wall/Floor Scanner

Ultra-Wide Band (UWB) Radar Technology is what Bosch is calling their "x-ray" machine. It will display material type, depth and width information for ferrous and non-ferrous metal, not-metal objects including wooden studs and plastic pipes and live AC—all in concrete, wet concrete, deep concrete, in-floor heating, drywall and metal. No calibration required! One



Cleanable Nut Driver from DeWalt

The sleeve slides down to allow wiping the magnet clean in a second, assuring that hex head and high hat screws hold tightly to the magnet every time despite metal shavings falling from overhead.



**Metabo Angle
Grinder Safety:
WEPBA14-125
& 150**

31 ▶

but don't think much about angle grinders. Metabo is proud of their second break stop and a slip clutch to prevent kickback when the wheel is bound or pinched. Electronics give them a soft start and electronic speed stabilization under load. Grinders are condemned to the reality that their blades are constantly wearing away, often causing tiring vibrations. Metabo's auto-balance technology uses a double set of ball bearings to dynamically offset out-of-balance conditions.

Bit of the Month

Fein: First hand-held core drilling system for heavy metal work

The HSS pilot bit only drills as long as necessary to accurately centre the hole and

then disengages and pulls back into the drill as soon as the core bit meets the material. Now the entire feed pressure can be applied to the core drilling. At material breakthrough, a spring pushes the pilot bit forward into its unfinished centre hole, and ejects the core. It is really worth watching the video demonstration at www.fein-kbh25.com/en_ca/#/3



Blade of the month

Milwaukee: Flush Cut Sawzall blade

This flexible blade will get in just about anyplace and bend to flush—but of particular note is the offset from the tang will bring the teeth right to the floor in a basement when cutting out framing. Note the two sections with no



teeth, designed to slide on concrete and save the teeth at the conclusion of a stringer cut-out. You can cut all the way to the concrete and not dull your blade.



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

Heat Mirror is a registered trademark of Southwall Technologies, Inc.



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* Center of glass.

GVHBA Home Renovation Seminar Offered Free Advice

GREATER VANCOUVER — To help homeowners make informed renovation decisions, the Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association (GVHBA), in partnership with BC Hydro, Canada Mortgage & Housing Corp. (CMHC) and FortisBC, presented its popular annual spring home renovation seminar recently in Vancouver.

GVHBA President and CEO **PETER SIMPSON** said \$7.8 billion will be spent on home renovation and improvement in B.C. this year, the lion's share of that in Metro Vancouver, so it is crucial that homeowners do their homework before they sign a contract with a qualified renovation contractor.

More than 350 homeowners were guided through the various stages of the renovation process, including design and planning, legal and contracts, selecting a renovator, municipal permits and inspections, and living through a renovation. Presenters included renovators, construction lawyer, municipal building official, and a CMHC technical expert who shared the latest in green renovations.

"There is no shortage of fly-by-night operators taking advantage of trusting homeowners," said Simpson. "Dealing in the cash-only underground economy exposes homeowners to personal liability and close scrutiny from municipal bylaw officials, provincial safety-compliance authorities and others.

Although the seminar was free, attendees contributed food items to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. 🏠

Canadians Scale Back Plans for Spending in 2012

TORONTO — According to the *Annual BMO Home Renovation Report*, fewer Canadians are planning home renovations this year but are choosing projects with the greatest returns—a sign that consumers are scaling back and becoming more strategic on spending amid rising concern about household debt.

Half of Canadian homeowners (51 per cent) plan to renovate their homes in the next year, compared with 62 per cent in 2011. Single family homeowners far out-pace their condo-dwelling counterparts (62 per cent versus 41 per cent respectively).

Plans for Home Renovations in 2012

	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	QC	ATL	Total
Yes (%)	50	52	67	55	37	59	51
No (%)	50	47	33	44	61	39	48

"The scaled-back plans for home renovations likely reflect increased caution on the part of households as they continue to reduce discretionary spending to rein in debt," said **SAL GUATIERI**, Senior Economist, BMO Capital Markets. "After averaging 9 per cent in the past decade, consumer loan growth has slowed to almost 2 per cent recently, suggesting Canadians are taking recent debt warnings to heart."

The study, conducted by **Leger Marketing**, also revealed the top five renovation plans for Canadians: kitchen: 39 per cent; bathroom: 35 per cent; basement: 16 per cent; bedroom: 11 per cent; and family room: 10 per cent. 🏠

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JELD-WEN Canada Named 2012 Energy Star Manufacturer of the Year

WINNIPEG — ENERGY STAR, the symbol of energy efficiency, has named **JELD-WEN Windows and Doors** as the 2012 Manufacturer of the Year in the Fenestration Product category. Founded in 1960, and currently employing more than 1,200 Canadians, JELD-WEN has won ENERGY STAR Recognition Awards previously, notably the Sustained Excellence Award in 2010 and the Participant of the Year in 2009.

To celebrate their 2012 ENERGY STAR Manufacturer of the Year Award, JELD-WEN will make a donation to the David Suzuki Foundation for each unique visitor to the www.en.jeldwen.ca/energystar/ website for the entire month of June. 🏠

New Solar Thermal Technology

SITTARD, THE NETHERLANDS — Customers in the future will benefit from lighter weight, more efficient and lower cost solar thermal panels as a result of an exclusive, worldwide agreement between SABIC and VU University Amsterdam (VU). The objective of the collaboration is to develop and commercialize the university's technology invention to keep the temperature in solar energy collectors under control.

By the end of 2011, over 50 gigawatts of PV systems and 26 gigawatts (solar thermal energy) had been installed in Europe (enough to supply electricity to over 15 million households and provide domestic hot water to 12.5 million households with an average sized solar thermal system).

SABIC and the VU University are collaborating to develop a new, more efficient solar thermal technology to harness sunlight to collect heat. The energy from sunlight generates temperatures in solar energy collectors that often exceed the melting point of plastic materials, requiring the collectors to be constructed from expensive metals and glass that are heavy and restrictive in their design freedom.

The concept developed and patented by VU University uses an "optical switch" by creating a prismatic structure of the thermoplastic panels made from SABIC's Lexan polycarbonate sheet in such a way that the sunlight can be reflected before the panels get too hot. 🏠

Changes to the Fisheries Act Likely to Impact Residential Land Development

OTTAWA — With the passage of the Budget implementation Bill C-38 there are major amendments to the federal Fisheries Act. Under the previous Act, regulations for fisheries habitat protection could ensnare virtually any project with surface water running within or adjacent to it, even when these impacts were trivial. The amended Act focuses habitat protection on the prevention of "serious harm to fish that are part of a commercial, recreational or Aboriginal fishery, or to fish that support such a fishery"—a narrower and better-defined scope.

Amendments to the Act will take effect in two stages: a number of more minor changes are in force immediately, other significant changes (including specific regulations related to habitat protection) will be set by later through more detailed regulations. These future changes are more likely to impact residential land development directly, and the CHBA will follow developments closely and advise provincial and local Associations when these regulations are introduced. 🏠

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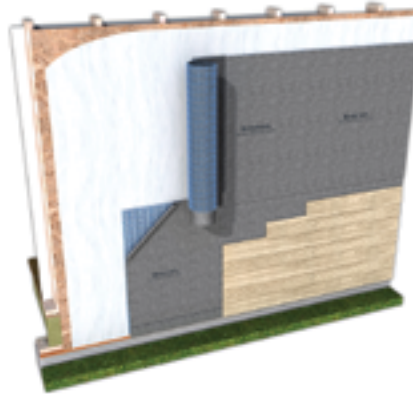
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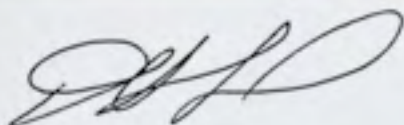
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