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Canadian
Home Builders'
Association



Association canadienne
des constructeurs
d'habitations

To: CHBA Members
From: Richard Lind, CHBA President
Date: February 22, 2008
RE: CHBA'S ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

Issues related to the environment are having an increasing impact on home builders, developers and their customers. CHBA is committed to providing environmental leadership for our industry, and to acting to ensure that the environmental actions and policies of government are disciplined, balanced and appropriate. This letter updates you on CHBA's actions on the environmental front. Specifically, I want to alert you to issues and developments of critical importance to you in your business.

First, the CHBA has a well-defined plan for dealing with environmental issues and priorities. This plan was recently updated by the Vision Action Committee in its report, [Addressing the Environmental Agenda](#), which you can download from the Members' Area of the CHBA website. The recommendations in this report have been approved by the Association's Board of Directors. Please review the report – it presents the Association's environmental agenda in detail. I think you will agree that, in terms of environmental leadership, we are “on top of it”.

An important current activity is the CHBA's work updating the R-2000 Initiative to ensure that it remains the premier “green” standard for new homes in Canada. Additionally, we are strongly supportive of industry-led regional new home labeling initiatives, such as Built Green™ and Energy Star®.

Unfortunately, we are seeing developments that make no sense. I want to alert you to two such developments – the encroachment of LEED® into the residential sector, and the use of the EnerGuide Rating System as a regulatory instrument. The CHBA is strongly opposed to both of these developments and it is important for member builders to be aware of the threat they pose.

The Association is alarmed about the potential for LEED® to be used as the basis for “backdoor” regulation by municipal governments, circumventing Canada's system of codes and standards, and forcing builders and their customers to absorb significant costs. The full CHBA report, entitled, [LEED® – An Assessment](#), can be downloaded from the Association website.

My second alert concerns the move by Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and British Columbia to use the EnerGuide Rating System (ERS) as a building code requirement. The CHBA strongly opposes the use of the ERS as a regulatory instrument on a number of technical grounds. Simply put, the ERS was not developed for this purpose, and its use within provincial building codes will cause significant problems, including increased liability for builders. The CHBA's report, [An Assessment of EnerGuide as a Requirement for New Homes](#), can be downloaded from the website. Please take time to review this report.

Since the mid-1980s when CHBA championed the development of the R-2000 Initiative, our Association has been an environmental leader. CHBA members have put this commitment into action and, as a result, the residential sector leads all others in terms of energy conservation and greenhouse gas emission reduction. We intend to maintain this leadership moving forward, through sound and disciplined action that makes good business sense and assists member builders in meeting the needs of their customers.