



About the CHBA

NEWS RELEASE

New CHBA President makes environment his top priority

WHISTLER, B.C., April 5, 2008 - The Incoming President of the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) today outlined plans to build on the industry's achievements in improving the energy and environmental performance of Canadian homes.

In his Inaugural Address to the 65th CHBA National Conference, John Hrynkow of Edmonton said "the energy efficiency of the homes we build and the environmental responsibility of our industry" is first among four priorities on his agenda.

Mr. Hrynkow said action to update the R-2000 Standard of energy efficiency for homes is long overdue. The Association will be asking the federal government for remedial action over the coming year. He said the CHBA will also press the Canadian Commission for Building and Fire Codes to refurbish the Model National Energy Code for Houses.

Mr. Hrynkow announced the CHBA has published Guidelines for the Development of Environmentally Responsible Communities to help its members create communities that demand less from the environment.

The guidelines cover a comprehensive range of issues that are at play in community development - its form, location and type, natural areas, infrastructure, buildings and landscaping.

In addition to the environment, Mr. Hrynkow outlined three other priorities for his term as president: the shortage of skilled people; infrastructure investment; and government-imposed-costs.

He said the industry continues to deal with a chronic and growing shortage of skilled people. He welcomed the new federal market labour plan and changes to the immigration system but "a great deal remains to be done."

The full range of residential construction trades must be recognized in federal-provincial agreements and federal apprenticeship training programs.

Mr. Hrynkow said the current immigration points system is a barrier to skilled and experienced people coming to Canada to work in the industry. On infrastructure, the CHBA will advocate that the federal government report on "who is paying for what" and seek regular reviews of the state of infrastructure as a way of assessing progress and identifying outstanding needs. As well, the association favors a comprehensive national strategy that will accelerate innovation.

Mr. Hrynkow said government-imposed costs have played a major part in the decline of housing affordability. Indexing the GST new housing rebate thresholds "is the single most important action the federal government can take to ensure that the GST does not continue to erode the housing rebate."

He said fewer than one per cent of Vancouver home buyers qualify for the full GST rebate today, compared to 75 per cent in 1991. "Without indexation, it won't be long before no home buyer will receive a full, or even partial, GST rebate."

Mr. Hrynkow promised to "redouble our efforts to encourage the federal government to take meaningful action to combat cash operators" fuelling the underground economy.

He called on Ottawa to require all firms and individuals in business to register for a GST number and take other measures to clamp down on the contractors who work for cash outside the tax system.

Background Notes

1. R-2000 is made-in-Canada home building technology with a worldwide reputation for energy efficiency and environmental responsibility. The R-2000 Initiative was created in 1981 as a partnership between the Canadian Home Builders' Association and Natural Resources Canada.

2. Government statistics show that between 1990 and 2004, increased energy efficiency cut the growth of energy use in homes by more than two-thirds. This is a better performance than any other sector of the economy. Today, the level of greenhouse gas emissions being released by all homes, is around five per cent lower than in 1990. This has been achieved while the housing stock has grown by more than 25 per cent.

3. CHBA is proposing an initiative that would update the R-2000 Standard to secure its position as the most energy-efficient and environmentally responsible standard in the market.

John Hrynkow is Chief Executive Officer of Park Royal Homes, Edmonton. The Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) is the national voice of the residential construction industry, representing more than 8,000 member firms across the country. Membership comprises new home builders, renovators, developers, trade contractors, building material manufacturers and suppliers, lenders and other professionals in the housing sector.

- 30 -

For more information:
John Kenward
(613) 230-3060
kenward@chba.ca

back to [news](#)