



Some Praise for New Federal Budget – Earlier this month, the CHBA complimented Finance Minister Jim Flaherty on a budget that will create the conditions needed to meet the economic and fiscal challenges facing the country. “Today’s budget provides a responsible transition from stimulus spending towards creating the conditions that will renew private sector demand and job creation,” said CHBA President Vince Laberge. The CHBA was pleased to see the Harper Government moving to fulfill commitments made during the election and that the budget focused on responsible fiscal management and job creation. Mr. Laberge applauded the government’s decision to renew the ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes Program which complements the government’s ongoing support for the R-2000 initiative, the EnerGuide Rating System and ENERGY STAR for New Homes, all of which contribute significantly to the overall environmental performance of Canadian homes. Mr. Laberge welcomed the government’s commitment to municipal infrastructure investment and to human resources development; the CHBA welcomed the federal government’s action to extend the tuition tax credit for examination fees, to introduce a hiring credit for small business and to identify ways to assist immigrants to cover the cost of credential recognition. Going forward, the CHBA will be looking for opportunities to work with the government to ensure federal tax and regulatory policies support housing affordability and choice. This is particularly true with respect to the HST/GST as it applies to new homes and renovations.

Leading on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emission – The residential construction industry continues to be a leader in the field of improved energy efficiency and dealing with greenhouse gas emissions according to a new CHBA report. Between 1990 and 2008, 4.4 million new homes were built in Canada — a 33% net increase and yet total energy use in housing grew by only 14.3%. Moreover, greenhouse gas emissions from Canadian homes during the period rose by only 0.3% — in sharp contrast to increases in many other sectors of the economy. By comparison, the commercial/institutional sector grew more slowly in the period and its emissions increased by more than 36%. Richard Lind, CHBA’s Corporate Secretary for Environmental Affairs, told the Board of Directors that the actual levels of improved energy efficiency varies from year to year owing to weather conditions primarily. “New homes are more energy efficient than older homes and most household appliances and fuel-fired residential heating equipment have seen significant increases in efficiency,” said Lind. He also noted that homeowners continue to invest in improving the energy efficiency of existing homes and that a significant number of older, less energy-efficient homes have been removed from the housing stock. On balance, Lind said, “all of these factors play a role in making the residential sector a leader in energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission reduction.”

Expensive Requirement Dropped from the 2011 Energy Code - The Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC) has accepted the CHBA’s recommendation to remove a requirement for heat recovery in dwelling units with self-contained mechanical systems in the warmer climate zones that had been proposed for the new National Energy Code for (large) Buildings. The CHBA had argued that the proposed requirement was not cost effective and was incorrectly labeled as a “no-cost” item during the public review last fall. The CCBFC also agreed with the CHBA that the policy of “one-size-fits-all” when it comes to window area needs to be revisited and has made it a priority in the next code cycle. The new Code will be published in late 2011.

CHBA Says Energy Code Should Come Before Adding More - The CHBA has written to the CCBFC calling for policy direction to guide the future work on the National Energy Code for (large) Buildings. Now that the 2011 edition of this Code has been finalized, the Standing Committee on Energy Efficiency in Buildings has started work on future changes. The CHBA letter recommends a moratorium on new measures until the 2011 edition is adopted by the provinces and the industry has gained some experience with this Code.

CHBA National SAMs – Everything you need to get an early start on the 2011 CHBA National SAM Awards is now available. The competition is open to all CHBA new home builder, renovator and developer members with the entry forms, category listings, tips and guidelines available online at www.chba.ca/SAMS. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the summer months to arrange for photos and begin the work of putting together materials. The deadline for entries is November 4.