

Alberta promises action on shoddy building practices

Legislation may be introduced next spring, minister says

By Archie McLean, edmontonjournal.com August 19, 2010 [Comments \(8\)](#)

EDMONTON — Municipal Affairs Minister Hector Goudreau says he will bring recommendations to caucus this fall to protect homeowners from poor building practices, and could introduce legislation next spring.

The rules could include new homeowner warranties, Goudreau said.

"It's one of the tools we're looking at, but the new home warranty program by itself won't, in my opinion, magically solve housing construction problems."

Goudreau has been under fire this week for not acting on a 2008 government report that said some houses and condos were not being built to provincial standards. It suggested immediate action is needed to shield buyers from poor building practices.

Goudreau said the government is ready to act, but still needs input from those who will be affected.

"We're trying to find a solution that's going to be acceptable by a number of individuals -- homeowners themselves, municipalities, the builders and tradespeople, all of us."

Goudreau said new home warranties could add roughly \$2,000 to the cost of a new house. But he said that any changes to the building code could add much more.

"We're still trying to balance things here with good protection for the buyers, but at the same time affordability."

Some Alberta homeowners have found themselves on the hook for pricey repairs for leaky or otherwise poorly built houses and condos.

The Liberals have called for a public inquiry into why it has taken the government so long to act on a problem they have known about since at least 2003.