

National Edition

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Hello everyone,

While CPBH has worked tirelessly for almost two decades to raise the profile of the problems with the regime for new home construction and warranty, nationally, provincially and municipally, we are of two minds about the current housing crisis in Canada.

We are deeply saddened that the situation had to reach crisis proportions to command the attention it needs. The pandemic, with its global and national effects on supply chains, economies, labour and more has no doubt precipitated the housing crisis in Canada to new heights, but the cracks in the system have been there for a very long time. The context is beyond national. It's global. The World Economic Forum provides background on that: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/how-to-fix-global-housing-crisis/> .

Painful as this transition is, a transition is comprised of change, something we have been advocating for from day one. For that we are hopeful. Luckily, change is a subject about which we happen to know a few things.

Through the public discourse, a large audience gains an opportunity to learn many things about new home construction in Canada. This is helpful.

We keep seeing, in that discussion, the staggering numbers of homes of all kinds that need to be built at breakneck speed together with measures to help that happen. But an important element keeps

getting left out of the story. The worst possible outcomes may be realized if the **quantity** of homes is the only focus. No one is talking about the **quality** of homes that need to be built.

What is the definition of quality in new home construction? We've asked, but we've found no government official in Canada who can define it, including Canada Mortgage and Housing (CMHC). What we do have is building codes.

These codes are the minimum standard for a dwelling to meet so that the health and safety of occupants is preserved. That means occupants will not hurt themselves or become sick from living in the home. It's that basic: running water, heat, ventilation, insulation, safe stairs with handrails, a roof and foundation that don't leak, and so on. What we know for sure is that the current system of building code enforcement – relying on municipalities to inspect during construction and enforce the code – doesn't work. If that problem in the system is not dealt with, building faster will be a disaster for many, many people.

We've seen lots of finger-pointing going on. There are challenges at every level of the fractured construction regime.

It has been CPBH's stated position for some time now that the federal government is the only one with the depth and breadth of ability and national perspective to address the housing crisis. They have taken on that mantle, and this is a positive step.

The new federal Minister of Housing, Sean Fraser, had this to say on September 11, 2023: "If we rely on stick-built homes by contractors across this country, we won't be able to solve this problem." The Minister has a small army of professionals and financial resources within and beyond government, he's got a huge mandate to deliver. He also said on that day, "Expect more from me that is going to help change the financial equation for builders...to continue to build affordable housing stock for low-income families...to demand that provinces and municipalities change the way that they build...in addition to the industrial strategy (training and immigration of building skilled workers)...". All positive. But we need to hear about quality. We have written to the Minister and given him our perspective.

We need a new national housing model for Canadians. The model must respond to the needs of consumers, not just industry. Let's not let a sea of non-code compliant homes flood the country, with the resulting nightmares that will produce for consumers for years to come. Let's get to work and get it right by building to code. Canadians deserve that from their governments.

Karen Somerville and Alan Greenberg

Canadians for Properly Built Homes Co-founders

*#EnforceTheCode #ConsumerProtection #HealthAndSafety #NeverGiveUp #NoUSEDfurnaces
#RadonAction #Don'tStopBelievin' #YouAreNotAlone*

PS If you have not had the opportunity, we strongly recommend once again the article by Duff Conacher of Democracy Watch, which exposes weaknesses in the Canadian system that underlie many of the problems CPBH contends with every day: *Canada's lobbying and ethics laws a sad joke that favours corporations over ordinary people* by Democracy Watch's Duff Conacher for details on why and how: <https://canadiansforproperlybuiltinhomes.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Jan.-19-2023-National-Observer-Canadas-lobbying-and-ethics-laws-a-sad-joke-that-favours-corporations-over-ordinary-people.pdf>





Can you help?

Yes, it's that time again. We are asking you to help us.

Please help us continue our work at this most critical juncture in the evolution of housing policy in Canada. Our advocacy for a fair and equitable housing model for consumers is sorely needed now more than ever.

The consumers who come to us in trouble get our help, always for free. We can only do that with your kind support because we don't take funds from government or the building industry to maintain our independence.

Everyone at CPBH works for free, but some costs can't be avoided. We're proud of our work and we hope you are too!

Donations in any amount will be gratefully accepted. Please donate today:
<http://canadiansforproperlybuilt homes.com/what-you-can-do/donate/>



Planning for Our 20th Anniversary

We're so proud to tell you that we are coming up to 20 years of consumer assistance and advocacy in 2024. We are inspired by the thousands of consumers who have come to us for help over the years and they make us ever more determined to pursue every avenue related to CPBH's Mission and Vision in our advocacy. Planning is underway celebrate this anniversary and we will provide more information to you as we get closer.



A Message of Support for CPBH

We received a very kind statement about our work recently that we would like to share that with you:

"To advocate and support a person who has been wronged in their new home purchases is one thing – a difficult thing at that. To do the same at a systemic level, to lobby and push an adversarial industry and too-often indifferent legislative or administrative bodies – this is an extraordinarily difficult thing. CPBH has grown, learned, connected and supported untold thousands of Canadians across two decades. For that, they should be rightly proud of a hard job done well. For that we – the members of the public – should be immensely grateful. Still so much to do – so here's to the next years of fighting the good fight!"

Christopher Arnold, Barrister & Solicitor

Thank you, Chris!



About CPBH

Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) is an independent, national not for profit corporation dedicated to healthy, safe, durable, energy efficient residential housing for Canadians, and is the only organization of its kind in Canada. Working for consumer awareness and protection, CPBH is run by a volunteer Board of Directors and is supported by a volunteer Advisory Council of industry experts and other key stakeholders. CPBH earned "partner" status with the Canadian Consumer Information Gateway (Industry Canada). Follow us:



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