

National Edition

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Happy 20th Anniversary, CPBH!

It was 2003. There was no playbook - and we weren't sure where to begin.



When we came up with the idea of CPBH in 2003, we were still facing our own newly built home crisis. But we had learned a lot in the previous three years. We told ourselves that if we helped one other homeowner to get through a newly built home nightmare, it would be worth creating CPBH.

We knew from the outset that it would be a huge challenge to take on the industry – a David and Goliath scenario. It was daunting – but we were determined.

We invited others to work with us – to volunteer their time, too.

Fortunately, they understood the need and wanted to be part of this movement. Many have been with us from the very early days of CPBH. Our dedicated volunteers, most of whom have lived the experience of homes riddled with code violations, are the fabric of CPBH. Our team is located across Canada, steadfast and happy to contribute in many ways.

We are also so grateful for others we have met along the way who have helped over these two decades – experts from various industries and professions, public servants, politicians, lawyers, engineers, home inspectors, home builders, architects, academics, medical doctors, journalists, other

consumer advocates - kind, knowledgeable and generous people we found along the way. Our search for answers about how newly built homes could be constructed without adherence to or enforcement of the building code took us to other municipalities, cities and across the country. They are out there internationally, too.

They gave us their experience, counsel and connections, and ultimately the knowledge and skills we needed to make a difference in a complex regime that few truly grasp. They gave us the ability and the tools to help the owners of newly built homes stuck with houses they could neither fix nor sell, to advocate at every level of government, to work for consumer awareness and protection.

Our education was also provided by the very people who came to us for help. We climbed out of some deep bunkers together.

Here we are 20 years later, having helped thousands of new homeowners, many of them desperate when they initially reached out to us. A great joy for us is to see people getting "unstuck", back on their feet and moving on with their lives.

So, to all of you who have contributed at any time in these 20 years, in small ways and large, to our ability to help people, our first thoughts on this 20th anniversary of Canadians for Properly Built Homes are with you. Thank you! Your contributions and support are immeasurable. We are grateful to have been able to help.

We thought that the best way to talk about CPBH as we celebrate 20 years would be to let some of these people do the talking. You may have noticed quotes from some of them recently on social media, the website and so on. We have gathered some here for you to enjoy. We will share more later in the year.

Once you've read through, please make a donation today to our spring funding campaign so we can continue the fight in this ever more challenging "build faster" environment. When you do, **you** will be helping the next homeowner in distress who contacts us. **You** will be keeping our voice strong. [Donate](#)

We are thankful for your confidence in us, and grateful for your support,

Karen Somerville and Alan Greenberg

Canadians for Properly Built Homes Co-founders

#EnforceTheCode #EndTarionMonopolyNOW #ConsumerProtection #HealthAndSafety #NeverGiveUp #NoUSEDfurnaces #RadonAction #Don'tStopBelievin' #YouAreNotAlone #MentalHealth



What they're saying!

A selection of messages CPBH has received from homeowners and other stakeholders:

"My many thanks go out to CPBH...for the good work they provided to my family and I... Without them...we would have been like a boat on a stormy sea without a sail, not knowing where we would end our quest for the rights of the New Home Owner..."

- William (Bill) K. Hillier



"Congratulations to CPBH on your 20th anniversary serving the public interest.

It is an incredible milestone and, at the same time, it's sad that it has to be reached: Canadians should expect that a new home is well built, well designed, durable and performs at high levels of quality, lasting for generations.

It is due to the hard work of CPBH that more Canadians are able to live in the homes they deserve and paid for.

It is encouraging that CPBH continues to advocate for the public interest.

It would be wonderful to have a future where more Canadians lived in well built homes, designed under better regulation and where construction is managed by regulated professionals."

Toon Dreessen, Architect, OAA, NLAA, FRAIC, RIBA, AIA, LEED AP
President, Architects DCA



"...After a 4 year battle with Tarion and now a continued push to get the builder directory accurate on the HCRA website, does not come without having a support group of caring and knowledgeable people in your corner...Knowing that you are not alone in your struggle with a new home warranty, and the volunteers at CPBH are there to offer help, was what drove us to keep pushing to get the \$300K in warranty claims completed..."

Frank McInnes



"...Thank you for your generosity and kindness...in navigating this unfortunate territory... We have a long road ahead..."

Email to CPBH from purchaser of a newly built home, March 2024



"...Karen Somerville and Alan Greenberg started out as disappointed buyers and ended up creating a consumer group that has helped many thousands of Canadians. I think they do a marvellous job and I want to celebrate this big 20th anniversary milestone. With all the government's haste to build housing ASAP, many more buyers will find themselves looking for help and advice on dealing with a recalcitrant builder. And CPBH will be there at their side. Congratulations on your persistence!"

Ellen Roseman, consumer advocacy journalist, continuing education instructor and host of the MoneySaver podcast



"...CPBH helped me because they cared about getting a resolution for my family and getting our home built properly! If it was not for their tenacity and advocacy, we would not have been able to get a resolution for the issues we experienced with our home!..."

Jeffrey Ferland



"I was proud to have worked with CPBH, a totally independent organization whose only mandate is to protect consumers with their biggest purchase – a home.

Congratulations on 20 years! Keep up your amazing advocacy!"

Reverend Dr. Cheri Dinovo, C.M.



"...If it were not for CPBH my home would have never been repaired. We would have been more psychologically and physically damaged. They literally saved my life..."

C. B.



"This small group of volunteers, led by the Dynamo known as Dr. Karen, deserves a lot more credit than it receives.

Kudos to everyone!"

Bill Mullen, Past President of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors



"...CPBH's work is important because consumers do not appreciate that the national framework protecting their single most important purchase in their lifetime is fragile at best. Their rights and interests must be vigorously represented against pressures to reduce oversight and cut corners. No other national voice is doing this as effectively as CPBH.

...congratulations on 20 years of service to Canadians!"

Sean Tracey, Deputy Chief, Ottawa Fire Service (Retired)



"I saw you on the CBC news. It's important that the media keeps you on their radar...and gives you airtime.

We need you. Thank you from so many of us..."

E.D. to CPBH Feb. 2024



"CPBH's work is important because senior governments across Canada continue to relegate homeowners and those who aspire to be homeowners to oblivion. In 2017, the \$40 billion 10-year Housing strategy was introduced. "How many homes did this provide and how has this improved housing quality for Canadians? Where exactly has the money been spent to far, because I certainly don't see any improvement to homelessness or improved housing quality?"

J.G., Port Moody, BC



"...If not for CPBH, homeowners like myself would be left vulnerable to subpar construction practices and potential risks to our families' safety and financial stability. CPBH serves as a beacon of hope, empowering homeowners to demand the quality and accountability they deserve in every home they invest in from their builders, the HCRA & Tarion..."

T.N.



"Congratulations to Canada's national not-for-profit Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) on their 20th anniversary! This amazing volunteer-run organization has been one of the most active and effective voices for consumers across the country and that voice has assisted and supported many Canadians who struggle with issues surrounding newly built homes.

CPBH inspires all of us in our own advocacy while doing the work to improve regulations and drawing attention to the various issues around enforcement to ensure Canadians across the country can trust in the quality and safety of the homes we buy."

Rhona DesRoches

Chair, FAIR Association of Victims for Accident Insurance Reform



"Every Canadian who buys a house in this country, especially a residence that is newly-built, deserves a properly built home. Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) was founded at around the same time that my family was fighting for that right: to feel secure in the largest, most complicated and frightening purchase of our lives. Our house was riddled with not only construction deficiencies but serious building code violations.

When we heard about CPBH, they became a knowledgeable sounding board, an ally and understanding supporter; people who know where to seek help, to navigate municipal departments and the provincial ministries; to enlighten about the Tribunals and the Courts, and to tackle the terrible Tarion. The selfless service of CPBH as advocates for consumer protection grew into a powerhouse from their own devastating experiences, constantly trying to persuade authorities to genuinely listen and not just pretend to hear the horrible stories before turning a blind eye to the serious problems..."

Krista Shuman



"...CPBH's work is important because so many new home purchasers are going through the same ordeal with their builder and Tarion. With homes not built to code and nowhere to turn for support or resources..."

J.M.



"...Thank you for your never-ending support. Canadians are blessed to have you advocating for them..."

Note to CPBH, Dec. 2023



"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





Show your support today for consumer protection through enforced building codes, effective warranties and fair dispute resolution.

[DONATE TODAY!](#)



About CPBH

Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) is an independent, national not for profit, consumer advocacy 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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