



## Report from the Technical Research Committee

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### ***Building Code Updates***

- ***Unintended Consequences*** – A general theme emerged during the reports from the local associations across Canada around unintended consequences related to code changes. Alberta, B.C., Ontario, and Nova Scotia noted examples in their regions of changes in code that created severe issues with implementation on the ground. In Alberta, the example was the 10-minute response time. CHBA has written to the CCBFC on the need for a meeting of provincial deputy ministers to reaffirm commitments to Code uniformity and process.
- ***National Energy Code For (large) Buildings*** – This model code is complete and is scheduled for publication by the National Research Council by November 18, 2011. It will be available for adoption by Alberta at that time.
- ***Energy Efficiency in Part 9 Buildings*** – Final comments around this code will be heard in November by the Standing Committees on Energy Efficiency in Buildings and Housing and Small Buildings. There is still some concern around availability of Energy Star windows. These proposed changes will go out for public consultation January 9 - February 24, 2012. The proposed publication date is late 2012.
- ***National Codes 2015 on Stairs*** - Proposed changes include a requirement for winders in an interior flight of stairs to be constructed with a minimum 150 mm truncation at the treads. Interior guardrails will be required to be a minimum of 1070 mm in height.
- CHBA has written to the CCBFC expressing concern about the rejection of the recommendations of two CHBA committees to exempt guards in dwelling units from the anti-climbability requirements in the Code and asking for its rationale in doing so.

### ***Radon***

Health Canada has released results of radon testing in 14,000 houses across Canada. 7% of the houses tested exceeded the minimum standards and 93% of all regions tested contained various levels of radon. In Alberta, 6.9% of homes tested above allowable limits for radon.

Home Depot has partnered with Health Canada and will be conducting information sessions in their stores over the next few weeks.

Health Canada has completed a “Radon Mitigation Guideline” designed for contractors. This brochure explains what radon is, how to test for it, and various mitigation methods. Health Canada has found that ventilation system can reduce radon levels by as much as half, and it can be useful in situations where the concentrations are just over acceptable limits. The guide can be viewed at:

<http://www.chba.ca/uploads/TRC/Oct.%202011/Radon%20Mitigation%20Guide.pdf>

### ***Fire Protection During Construction and 10-Minute Response Time***

Mark Turner presented the results of the window and fire testing that was done by CHBA – Edmonton Region. The implications of the 10-minute response times are under discussion in Nova Scotia, B.C., and Manitoba. CHBA - Alberta continues to search for a path for resolving this issue with CHBA and the Code centre.

### ***New Energy Rating System***

Revision of the new Energy Rating System for houses has progressed to the point that public review is anticipated in January 2012.

### ***R-2000 Revisions***

Revisions to the program are complete and the new standard will be published in January 2012. This standard sets energy reduction targets of 50% less than existing housing.

### ***New Standard for Drain Water Recovery Units***

A new CSA standard has been created dealing with drain water recovery units. CSA B55 will be posted for public review in January 2012.

### ***Solar Water Heating Performance***

CMHC has completed a study on occupied equilibrium houses across Canada. All of the houses are performing below modeling assumptions and are all energy consumers. Renewable energy systems are not performing as anticipated and solar water systems are significantly under-performing.

### ***Concrete Training Program***

The Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Association is offering the Concrete Technology Program in Edmonton on November 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and in Calgary on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

CRMCA have released the marketing name of the new Portland Limestone Cement (PLC). “Contempra” will be rolled out in Canada over the next few years.