



# ADVOCACY UPDATE

January 2015 | Issue 2

With the recent creation of CHBA BC's Government Relations Committee, our Association is tracking all advocacy and Government Relations activities, and will be reporting on these efforts bi-monthly via the Advocacy Update. This report has been developed to promote information-sharing, dialogue and alignment of key government relations messages for CHBA BC members.

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### Energy Code changes implemented December 19, 2014

On December 19th 2014, the BC Building Code introduced significant energy efficiency requirements for houses and small buildings. For information on the key changes and the new Section of the BC Building Code (9.36: Energy Efficiency), [click here](#).

In advance of the implementation date of the new energy provisions, CHBA BC CEO Neil Moody provided commentary to the Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Responsible for Housing, which was included in their [news release](#) formally announcing the Code changes.



To help raise awareness among the residential construction community CHBA BC has developed an [Energy Code Changes Checklist](#) listing six tools to help builders prepare for the changes. Additionally, CHBA BC has been delivering three-hour webinars, led by industry expert Richard Kadulski, which provide an overview of the key changes to prepare builders and designers to conform to Code requirements with minimum disruption to their projects. To register for the next webinar on January 21, 2015 complete the [registration form](#) and return it to [michelle@chbabc.org](mailto:michelle@chbabc.org).

### Fire Sprinklers Working Group Update

The Fire Sprinkler Working Group established by the Building and Safety Standards Branch of the Office of Housing and Construction Standards and the Office of the Fire Commissioner continues to meet as the Province is looking to create consistency in fire sprinkler regulation but recognizes that there are valid reasons for additional fire sprinkler requirements for local governments. The Working Group is to create a set of recommendations regarding fire

sprinkler regulation for local communities that will be sent to the Minister Responsible for Housing. CHBA BC is represented at the meetings by Bob Deeks of RDC Fine Homes.

### CHBA BC meetings with BC Hydro

CHBA BC and BC Hydro have been meeting to discuss service levels around new electrical connections on both large and small customer projects. An initial focus has been the Customer Build Program, which involves the use of Certified Service Providers (CSP's) who manage the process for design of private property electrical infrastructure required for underground residential developments.

[Click to register for the BC Hydro Customer Build Program Update Webinar](#)

BC Hydro has informed CHBA BC that they are implementing improvements ultimately aimed at providing a dedicated single point of contact at BC Hydro for timely project status updates and questions and improved cycle times from submission of required project information to final energization.

BC Hydro will be providing regular updates on Program changes to CHBA BC for passing on to its membership and has held forums with electrical and civil engineering consultants and civil contractors to gather input on areas for program improvements. As a first step around enhanced communication between CHBA members and BC Hydro, CHBA BC will host a Customer Build webinar on Feb. 2, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. and Feb. 4, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. where BC Hydro representatives will talk about program change and answer questions.

For more information and to register for the *BC Hydro Customer Build Program Update* webinar, [click here](#).

## Coalition of BC Businesses meets with Minister Shirley Bond on labour issues

CHBA BC participated in small business stakeholder meetings to discuss Minimum Wage Policy in BC. The meeting brought members of the business community together to discuss how to depoliticize the minimum wage issue, make increases palatable for small business owners, and still keep BC competitive. The results of the meetings were then presented in a meeting to Minister Shirley Bond and her staff on December 3<sup>rd</sup> along with a recommendation.



Coalition of BC Businesses' members, including CHBA BC CEO, Neil Moody (third from left) and Minister Shirley Bond (centre).

## CHBA BC Government Relations (GR) Committee Meetings

CHBA BC's Government Relations Committee, chaired by Ron Rapp of Morningstar Homes has been meeting monthly since September 2014. In these meeting, the Committee has been discussing and determining the Association's policy priorities, as well as developing a government relations strategy.

Key issues and objectives determined by the Committee include:

- BC Hydro service and energization wait times
- Uniform BC Building Code
- Informing Fire Sprinkler Group of CHBA BC's position against mandating Fire Sprinklers throughout BC municipalities
- Raising awareness around the negative impact of a tariff on imported rebar on BC's construction industry
- Promoting a renovation tax credit as a means to eliminate the underground economy
- Informing provincial membership of advocacy efforts and policy issues through the bi-monthly *Advocacy Update*

## Canadian International Trade Tribunal Ruling on Rebar Tariff

On January 9, 2015, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) found that dumped imports of concrete reinforcing bar (rebar) from China, South Korea and Turkey

are threatening to cause injury to Canadian rebar manufacturers in Eastern Canada and Alberta. At the CITT's hearing on December 10, 2014, the ICBA and other provincial organizations requested a regional exclusion in British Columbia, which unfortunately the [CITT did not grant](#).

CHBA BC will be working with CHBA National and provincial partner associations to collect additional information from builders in BC to evaluate the impact of the CITT's decision and next steps for sharing the findings at a public hearing. To participate in the feedback process, please contact CHBA BC Assistant Director of Government Relations and Communications, Jill Greenwood at [jill@chbabc.org](mailto:jill@chbabc.org).

For more information on the CITT's recent decision, [click here](#).

### CHBA BC weekly *Provincial Update* e-newsletter

To receive the [Provincial Update](#) and to be sure you are kept abreast of trends and issues in B.C.'s residential construction industry and the work of CHBA BC, [you must opt-in by subscribing](#).

If you have any questions, or if you are not receiving the newsletter after you opt-in, please contact Jill Greenwood for assistance at [jill@chbabc.org](mailto:jill@chbabc.org).