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### Sprinklers

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Association

## Technical Research Committee News

### Contaminated Lands

As we begin to redevelop more property instead of dealing with virgin land, we are increasingly facing the problem of toxic residues in the soil which may be present as a result of previous uses. This is becoming a serious issue, but it still needs much more work.

We've heard of a case where a truck spilled a small quantity of oil by accident. It meant the property was designated contaminated, and it led to clean-up costs of around \$40,000. The consequences can be severe. (Anybody not have a small spill of something on a job site?).

To make matters worse, there is still no clear consensus what contaminated means, and what standards have to be maintained. At the instigation of CHBA, the Hon. David Dingwall, Minister responsible for CMHC announced that there will be a Federal/Provincial housing officials meeting on April 6-7, 1994 in New Brunswick to try and come to a resolution of how this entire issue should be handled.

### CHBA Builder Manual

The latest edition of the builder manual has been substantially revised. It includes the latest information and requirements for the R-2000 Program and also environmental building considerations. The manual is now available from the CHBA office.

### Sprinklers

No, we're not talking about the garden variety, but inside buildings. This issue is not going away! Fire suppression officials are still pursuing their goal of making sprinklers mandatory everywhere.

CMHC and IRC have done more work on the cost effectiveness of sprinklers for multi-family (Part 3) buildings. The results are somewhat surprising, as they indicate that sprinklers in these building types are even *less* cost effective than for single family residences.

Another study that should be started in the near future is a case study of the experience of mandatory sprinklers in the City of Vancouver. It is hoped that this study will investigate the experience of the regulations, including:

- impacts on the building code (mandatory changes were introduced as a result of the sprinkler requirements - one estimate is \$3,000 per house in extra detailing costs),
- impact on City infrastructure (there are extra costs for the city to accommodate increased water flows),
- review operating experiences with sprinklers (what kind of problems have been experienced?)
- feedback from the insurance industry (have there been any changes on insurance rates?),
- extra costs for the city, builders, and home owners.
- review original statements in favour and against sprinklers against experience in the field
- compare impact of fire department call-outs in homes since mandatory sprinklers were required.

### CHBA Position Paper on Codes

In the last issue there was a call for comments for a position paper on the direction that codes are taking now. Many comments were received. A final version of the paper that incorporates industry thinking is being prepared, and should be circulated shortly.

### CHBA/Canada Trust Environmental Homes Initiative.

A joint venture between the CHBA and Canada Trust will showcase the latest in home building environmental technology in two communities this summer.

Two communities will be chosen shortly for a pilot project. The model homes will be built to the new R-2000 standards and incorporate a range of available, cost-effective environmental features. But unlike other demonstrations, such as the Advanced Houses and CMHC's Healthy House which featured prototype technologies, the CHBA-Canada Trust initiative will feature homes using products which are currently available on the market. These environmental features may extend the "healthy housing" features, as identified by CMHC's healthy housing initiative.

Local home builders' association will manage the initiative, with resources, research and direction from the national office of the CHBA.

After a review period in the fall, the new environmental homes will be offered for sale across the country next year.

Expressions of interest from local and/or provincial associations wishing to mount one of the two pilot demonstration projects this year are being received.

The Technical Research Committee (TRC) is the industry's forum for the exchange of information on research and development in the housing sector. Anyone with a problem, or technical question can

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