



September 2015

DATES TO NOTE

- September 1: OHBA Conference Early Bird Pricing Ends
- September 27-29: [OHBA Conference – Deerhurst Resort](#)
- September 28: OHBA Conference – Annual Meeting of Members
- September 28: OHBA Conference – Awards of Distinction
- September 29: OHBA Conference – President’s Gala

OHBA 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Join us at the beautiful Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville for OHBA’s 2015 Annual Conference from September 27 to 29th. Space is limited, so register soon for three awesome days you won’t want to miss!

Highlights for this year’s conference include:

- **Business sessions:** Expect insightful, interesting and engaging business sessions including: Fire Safety for Six-Storey Wood-Frame Residential Construction; The Builders’ Den; Tarion Update; a WSIB Rate Frame Review; Building Leadership; Report on Canada Home Buyers Preference Study; a trade show and much more!
- **Haliburton County for all Seasons!** The Haliburton County HBA is hosting an exciting opening reception where we will experience the thrill of Canada’s changing seasons in one evening! Come dressed in theme to your favourite season—winter, spring, summer or fall (and everything in-between)—and remember that hunting is a season!
- **Awards of Distinction 2015:** Set for Monday, September 28th and hosted by Dave Hemstad from CBC’s *The Debaters*. Enjoy a fun celebratory dinner and cheer on the winners!
- **President’s Gala:** The conference will conclude with the President’s Gala to welcome our new president, John Meinen, from the Stratford & Area Builders’ Association (SABA).
- **Additional Activities:** Choose among these Monday afternoon events to really enjoy your stay in cottage country:
 - OHBA’s Annual Golf Tournament at Deerhurst Highlands Golf Course. Register for your chance to **win a trip for two to the Dominican Republic!**
 - Taste of Haliburton County bus tour exploring the culinary and brewery/ winery culture in the region.
 - Spa afternoon at Shizen, Horseback Trail Ride or a Hike through Algonquin.



Visit www.ohbaconference.ca to register!

CO-ORDINATED REVIEWS: GREENBELT, GROWTH PLAN, OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ, NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

In February, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced the launch of a Co-ordinated Review of the Greenbelt and the Growth Plan. An expert panel, chaired by former Toronto Mayor David Crombie, will be responsible for a report to the government at the end of the Phase One process. OHBA and a number of our locals met with the expert panel in June to present our recommendations to improve and enhance the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

OHBA and our resource group have continued to meet with key officials and support research throughout the summer in anticipation of the launch of Phase Two of the review process this fall. OHBA met formally with Premier Kathleen Wynne on August 25th to discuss our recommendations for the review and OHBA will meet again with Chair Crombie in September. [OHBA has made a submission](#) to the provincial government as part of the first phase of the Co-ordinated Review.

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES DETAILS ON PENSION PLAN

The province has released new details on the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP), including information on [compatible workplace retirement plans](#) and [transition details](#). As proposed the plan will mandate a 1.9 per cent contribution from both the employee and employer, up to \$90,000, if the employer does not have a comparable plan. For a workplace defined contribution plan to be considered comparable it must have a minimum total contribution of eight per cent of base salary earnings. Employers will be required to contribute at least 50 per cent of the total minimum contribution — or at least four per cent.

Type of employer	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Wave 1: large employers with 500+ employees without registered workplace plans	0.80%	1.60%	1.90%	1.90%	1.90%
Wave 2: medium employers with 50-499 employees without registered workplace plans	0%	0.80%	1.60%	1.90%	1.90%
Wave 3: Small employers with 50 or fewer employees without registered workplace plans	0%	0%	0.80%	1.60%	1.90%
Wave 4: employers with registered plans that do not meet test	0%	0%	0%	1.90%	1.90%

OHBA is also pleased that the government has adjusted implementation to meet the concerns of small business. The announced plan would see small employers with 50 or fewer employees without a comparable plan start contributing January 1, 2019 and has also provided a phase-in period of three years.

While OHBA is supportive of these changes, we agree with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) that the ORPP, in its current form, will have a negative impact on business competitiveness. OHBA is working with the [OCC](#) and other employer associations to advocate for changes to the ORPP by continued dialogue with government to find solutions to address the retirement savings challenge that don’t impose significant new costs on small employers.

WSIB MAINTAINS HIGH RATES FOR 2016

The WSIB announced that [rates would maintain at the current premium rate](#) in 2016, with the maximum insurable earnings amount going up 3.3 per cent to \$88,000. Home building rate group pays \$9.10 in premiums for every \$100 in a workers income; this is the highest rate in Canada and more than double the Canadian average for the home building sector. The WSIB has significantly lowered the unfunded liability, which has declined by \$4.1 billion in the last recorded 12 months alone and is on track to eliminate the UFL well before their target date of 2027. [OHBA continues to advocate](#) for a consolidated rate group structure and is supportive of many of the principles in the [Rate Framework Review](#).

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT

The *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act*, introduced this spring, proposes to amend both the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act. The OHBA submission and recommendations to improve the *Smart Growth For Our Communities Act (EBR 012-3651)* is [available here](#). Both OHBA and BILD have had volunteer members appointed to a Planning Act stakeholders working group and to the Development Charges Act Steering Committee as well as three technical DC sub-groups that met regularly throughout the summer. Following the conclusion of the working group process, the Minister will consider regulations to support the implementation of an amended Planning Act and Development Charges Act (following the anticipated passage of the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act* in late 2015). OHBA met formally with Premier Wynne on August 25th to discuss key aspects of the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act* as well as with Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Ted McMeekin on August 31st to discuss proposed development charges changes. OHBA is currently working with local associations and members to prepare Standing Committee presentations on the proposed legislation this fall at Queen's Park.

WETLAND CONSERVATION IN ONTARIO

In 2014, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry was given a mandate to work with other ministries, municipalities and partners to review Ontario's broad wetland framework and identify opportunities to strengthen policies and stop the net loss of wetlands. To achieve this mandate, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is proposing the development of a Strategic Plan for Ontario's Wetlands which will identify a provincial vision, goals and objectives for wetlands.

As a first step in this process, [Wetland Conservation in Ontario: A Discussion Paper](#), has been posted on [Ontario's Environmental Registry \(012-4464\)](#). OHBA is working closely with a number of stakeholder groups including: Canadian Solar Industries Association, Ducks Unlimited, Ontario Stone Sand & Gravel Association, Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Water Association to co-ordinated industry responses. The public review and comment period for the Discussion Paper extends until October 30, 2015 – OHBA is seeking member feedback – please send comments to mikecw@ohba.ca and/or directly to the Ministry ConservingWetlands@ontario.ca.

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT REVIEW

The provincial government has initiated a review of the Conservation Authorities Act. [A discussion paper](#) has been posted on the [environmental registry \(012-4509\)](#) until October 19, 2015 to identify opportunities to improve the existing legislative, regulatory and policy framework that currently governs Conservation Authorities and the programs and services they provide. The purpose of the discussion paper is to seek feedback in the following three areas:

- Governance – the processes, structures, and accountability frameworks within the Act which direct Conservation Authority decision-making and operations;
- Funding Mechanisms – the mechanisms put in place by the Act to fund conservation authorities;
- Roles and Responsibilities – the roles and associated responsibilities that the Act enables Conservation Authorities to undertake.

Working in conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry there will be two important consultation opportunities for OHBA members to engage directly with the Ministry:

- A facilitated development sector listening session scheduled for Monday, September 14th at the Marden Community Centre, 30 Wellington Road, Guelph, Ontario from 1pm to 4pm. The Ministry will be hosting this session and have requested OHBA members attending to RSVP - mnrwaterpolicy@ontario.ca
- A Joint OHBA Land Development Committee / BILD Land Council meeting on **Tuesday, October 6th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at the Westin Prince Hotel (900 York Mills Road) in which OHBA and BILD will be co-hosting the Ministry for a presentation and consultation with our members. Please RSVP to mikecw@ohba.ca

Comments with respect to Conservation Authorities can be sent directly to the Ministry at mnrwaterpolicy@ontario.ca or by submitting answers to the Ministry to the questions outlined in the discussion paper. OHBA is seeking input from members and location associations – if you have comments, questions, recommendations or would like to volunteer to be involved in the review and OHBA submission – please direct them to mikecw@ohba.ca. OHBA strongly encourages members to attend the consultation sessions.

NEW BUILDER EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1ST

EXISTING TARION LICENSED BUILDERS/VENDORS OR BUILDERS REGISTERING UNDER AN EXISTING REGISTERED UMBRELLA GROUP: THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS WILL NOT APPLY TO YOUR CURRENT TARION LICENSE OR ANNUAL RENEWAL PROCESS.

As of September 1, 2015, Tarion will begin phasing in new education criteria that all **NEW NON-REGISTERED** builders will need to meet as a condition of earning a Tarion license in Ontario. As Tarion has explained, the new requirements will enhance Tarion's existing qualification standards for new builders applying for a Tarion license to build in Ontario.

The new educational requirements for **NEW NON-REGISTERED** builders will be implemented in two phases:

- The first phase will commence September 1, 2015. Builders registering on or after that date must attain the core competencies prior to their next renewal.
- The second phase will commence September 1, 2016. After that date, achieving the core competencies will be a pre-requisite for registration.

For existing Tarion licensed Builders/Vendors applying **for a Tarion license outside of an existing umbrella builder/vendor group, you will be subject to the new requirements**. However, Tarion may grant exemptions for some of the education requirements on the basis of an applicant's prior experience or education. Exemptions will be considered for the following categories:

- Applicants who were Principals, Officers, or Directors for five or more years with a registered builder;
- Applicants who were employees engaged in the customer service, construction or business management of a registered builder, and who have five or more years in that capacity;
- Applicants who have obtained comparable core competencies with another Canadian Warranty Program;
- Applicants who have achieved a professional designation or obtained formal education in an area related to an area of competency;
- Applicants who have achieved Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing recognition for competency in Part 9 of the Building Code.

Exemption requests will be evaluated by Tarion on a case by case basis. If you think your experience and professional qualification may be eligible for an exemption, [click here](#). To learn more about the new builder education criteria [click here](#).