

# UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal  
Affairs and Housing



June 2009

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**Affordable Housing  
Strategy  
Consultations  
Launched**

**Muskoka Chair  
Receives Long-  
Standing Service  
Award**

**Peterborough  
Celebrates New  
Affordable Housing**

**Toronto Student Wins  
Greenbelt Award  
Contest**

## MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM WATSON

We want to hear creative ideas on how to make affordable housing accessible to everyone who needs it as we develop a long-term affordable housing strategy for Ontario. [Read more](#)



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSULTATIONS

The government is reaching out to housing providers, municipalities and the public to help develop a long-term affordable housing strategy for Ontario that will form a key part of the province's Poverty Reduction Strategy. [Read more](#)



## WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Since 1996, Canada and all its provinces and territories have marked Emergency Preparedness Week, an annual reminder of individual and family preparedness in an emergency. [Read more](#)



## REAL TIME UPDATES FROM THE MINISTRY ON TWITTER

Now you can follow the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on Twitter, and receive real time updates. Twitter is a free social media service for staying connected by sending and receiving short messages known as *tweets*. [Read more](#)



## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT THE HELM

This month young graduates will complete their internship at six Ontario municipalities. This year-long work experience marks the end of the second year of the Municipal Internship Program. [Read more](#)



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### Minister's Message



Welcome again to UPDATE, the e-newsletter of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Our goal is to keep you informed of developments in the municipal and housing sectors.

We are seeking assistance from the housing sector, our partners and the public as we look at ways to improve the delivery of housing programs. I am proud to have launched a province-wide consultation on how to make affordable housing more accessible to those who need it as we develop a long-term affordable housing strategy.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing joined other provincial ministries, the federal government and Emergency Management Ontario last month in celebrating Emergency Preparedness Week. This issue of UPDATE has a feature that helps remind us about individual and family preparedness for an emergency.

This issue also carries an update on the Municipal Internship Program, which is a partnership of my ministry and the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario. Five young graduates are just completing their internship at Ontario municipalities through this program, which aims to attract young graduates to careers in the municipal sector.

Please provide us with your feedback. If this issue of UPDATE has been forwarded to you and you would like to continue receiving our e-newsletter, please take the time to subscribe.

Jim Watson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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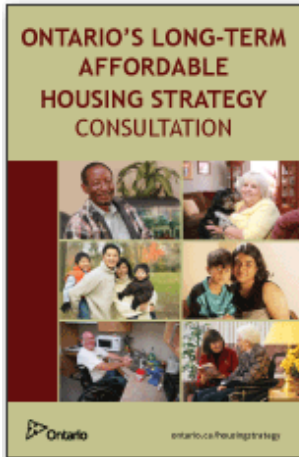
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## Launch of the Long-term Affordable Housing Strategy

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The government is reaching out to housing providers, municipalities and the public to help develop a long-term affordable housing strategy for Ontario that will form a key part of the province's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

This is an opportunity to look at the housing systems and programs already in place to make sure they work for the people who need them.

Consultation sessions will take place in Sault Ste. Marie, the Greater Toronto Area, Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, Thunder Bay, Windsor, Sudbury and Lindsay.

The consultation document is also available on-line. Anyone unable to attend a session in person is invited to share their ideas through the website.

"We want to hear creative ideas on how to make affordable housing accessible to everyone who needs it," said Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson, "We're asking for help from the housing sector, our partners and the public to look at ways to improve the delivery of housing programs."

### Good for the Community and the Economy

Investing in affordable housing stimulates the economy while providing valuable community benefits; for example, every new unit of affordable housing results in two years of construction jobs.

Decent housing provides stability, security and dignity. It creates a strong base from which to find a job, raise a family, and contribute to our communities.

### Building on our Commitments

As a step toward the long-term affordable housing strategy, the Province has provided \$100 million in grants to Service Managers to help them make urgent repairs to social housing.

The McGuinty government has committed to continuing its partnership with the federal government through a combined \$1.2 billion investment to repair social housing units, make them more efficient, to create new housing for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities, and to extend the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program and social housing infrastructure funding.

### Related Links

Participate in the consultations on-line at [www.ontario.ca/housingstrategy](http://www.ontario.ca/housingstrategy).

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## When Disaster Strikes

Since 1996, Canada and all its provinces and territories have marked Emergency Preparedness Week (EPW), an annual reminder of individual and family preparedness in an emergency.

This year's EPW was celebrated from May 3 through May 9.

The staff and regional offices of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing have been in the forefront of emergency preparedness, emphasizing the importance of individual preparedness as well as municipal readiness for any unexpected event.

### Toronto

The Ministry joined other provincial ministries, the federal government and Emergency Management Ontario in an outdoor exhibit and barbecue in Toronto to kick-off EPW.

At the event Ministry staff handed out pamphlets about the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program (ODRAP), which provides assistance to municipalities, individuals and businesses in the event of a natural disaster. Pamphlets about workshops on nuclear emergency and workplace preparedness were also distributed at the event.

### Across Ontario

In London, Ontario regional staff spoke about preparing for severe weather events at a Ministry exhibit booth at Saunders Secondary School. At Fanshawe College staff spoke to lessons learned in emergency response in communities.

In Thunder Bay, ministry staff participated in EPW with an exhibit at the regional office and a display at the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario's sector meeting.

### Emergency Plans

All individuals, families and municipalities are encouraged to have an emergency plan for an unforeseen event. For people with special needs and seniors, [Emergency Management Ontario: Disabilities/Special Needs](#) has guidelines about emergency preparation.

### Related Links

- [Disaster Relief and Emergency Management](#).
- [Emergency Management Ontario: Disabilities/Special Needs](#)



Shireen Mohammed, Meghan Coleman and Kim Coleman at Queen's Park open-air Emergency Preparedness Week exhibit.





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## Real time Updates from the Ministry on Twitter

Now you can follow the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on Twitter, and receive real time updates.

### What is Twitter?

Twitter is a free social media service for staying connected by sending and receiving short messages known as tweets.

It is also called microblogging – tweets must be short (limited to 140 characters) but can be as frequent as you wish.

Twitter combines social networking, blogging and texting.

### How to follow the ministry on Twitter?

First you need a Twitter account. Simply go to [twitter.com](http://twitter.com) and select Get started - Join, and choose a username.

Then search for OntMMAH and select follow. To follow someone on Twitter means to subscribe and receive their updates.

Your Twitter page is a stream of messages coming from all the people you follow.

Twitter allows you to quickly keep up with your social or professional circles.

### Other Ontario Government Twitter Accounts

Here are a few other government Twitter accounts you may want to follow:

- MMAH: [twitter.com/OntMMAH](http://twitter.com/OntMMAH)
- MNR Flood warnings: [twitter.com/MNRcentral](http://twitter.com/MNRcentral)
- Foodland Ontario: [twitter.com/FoodlandOnt](http://twitter.com/FoodlandOnt)



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## Young Professionals at the Helm

This month young graduates will complete their internship at six Ontario municipalities.

This year-long work experience marks the end of the second year of the Municipal Internship Program, a partnership of the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO).

The program, which was introduced in 2007, aims to attract young graduates to careers in the municipal sector and build a core of trained professionals to assist with succession planning.

Successful applicants are matched with individual host municipalities where the office of the Chief Administrative Officer supervises the respective intern's orientation to municipal management and administration.

Intern Kate Graham called her recent experience working for the City of London "an unparalleled opportunity to learn about municipal administration in a practical, hands-on environment." She says, "I am confident it will assist me throughout the rest of my career in municipal administration."

A one-month placement at Ministry regional offices introduces the interns to the relationship between the Province and municipalities.

Here's what the 2008-2009 interns had to say about their work experience at the regional offices.

"I thank the staff and manager of Central Municipal Services Office (MSO) for their hard work and dedication in creating a fulsome and challenging work plan that led to an outstanding experience with the regional office," says Amy Agulay, a Regional Municipality of Peel intern, who was assigned to the Central MSO in Toronto.

"The time I spent learning about planning and housing exposed me to unfamiliar policy and management areas," says Jonathan Hall, a Township of Schreiber intern, who was assigned to MSO Northwest.

On his work assignments during his month-long stay at MSO East, City of Kawartha Lakes intern Joel Lemoyre, said: "I was honoured to work with staff in gathering financial data on local governments, completing Integrated Community Profiles and learning about affordable housing projects."

### Related Links

- [Municipal Intern Program](#)



Interns Jonathan Hall, Kate Graham, Stephen O'Brien and Joel Lemoyre with Betteanne Cadman, the former president of the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, and John Burke, former Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

