

UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing



March 2010

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**Minister of Municipal
Affairs and Housing Jim
Bradley**

**Donna Cansfield,
Parliamentary Assistant
to the Minister of
Municipal Affairs and
Housing (Housing)**

**Ontario's Greenbelt is
Five Years Old**

**Governments of Canada
and Ontario Announce
Energy Efficient
Upgrades for Affordable
Housing**

**2010 Municipal Elections
Guide**

**Progress Report Shows
Ontarians Working
Together**

**Accessibility Standard
Coming Into Force For
Public Sector**

**New Ministry of Training,
Colleges and Universities
Stakeholder Newsletter**

MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM BRADLEY

I am pleased to introduce myself to the readers of UPDATE. I was excited when Premier McGuinty appointed me Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. [Read more](#)



ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY - CONFERENCE THEME

The annual combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association saw mayors, councillors, municipal officials and ministers and staff from the Ontario government gather in Toronto last month. [Read more](#)



EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Ontario government has introduced new standards that affect how it responds to those using government services. The new standards came into effect on January 1, 2010. [Read more](#)



STREAMLINING BUILDING PERMIT APPROVALS

New amendments to the Building Code Act, 1992 support Ontario's businesses, promote public safety and enhance consumer protection. The changes, which relate to reviews of building permit applications, illegal builders not registered with Tarion Warranty Corporation and prosecuting offences under the BCA, were included in the Good Government Act, 2009. [Read more](#)



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Minister's Message

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I am pleased for the first time to welcome readers to UPDATE, the e-newsletter of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

I was excited when Premier McGuinty appointed me Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. My task is to help ensure that Ontario is home to safe and strong urban and rural communities with dynamic local economies, abundant greenspace and quality, affordable housing.

I was looking forward to this year's combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) in Toronto because I want to take advantage of every opportunity to meet with the representatives of the municipal sector. This issue of our e-newsletter provides an overview of last month's OGRA/ROMA Combined Conference.

Fareed Amin has been appointed Deputy Minister of Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure. During his time as Deputy Minister with our ministry, Fareed and our management team have worked on the development and implementation of a number of important initiatives including the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy; laying the groundwork for future Greenbelt expansion and strengthening relations with municipalities and our ministry stakeholders. Dana Richardson has been appointed interim Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and I am looking forward to working with her over the coming months.

In this issue of UPDATE we also are providing information on some new amendments to the Building Code Act, 1992. This act is the legislative framework that governs the construction, renovation and change of use of buildings in Ontario.

This UPDATE also provides an overview of the customer service standards our ministry has recently introduced. These standards also are published on our [website](#) so you can view them and provide feedback on how we are doing.

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 Bradley
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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On the Road to Recovery - Conference Theme

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The annual combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association saw mayors, councillors, municipal officials and ministers and staff from the Ontario government gather in Toronto last month.

The conference was hosted by Eric Rutherford of the Ontario Good Roads Association and Allen Taylor of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association.

Premier and Ministers Addressed Conference

"On The Road To Recovery" was the theme for this year's event.

Premier Dalton McGuinty told delegates that to him this means the province knows where it is going. "We're not there yet and we have a lot of work to do," he said, "but we know we're headed in the right direction."

Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Bradley spoke during the first day of the conference. He talked about the strength of the provincial-municipal partnership, working together to help Ontario grow stronger

Energy and Infrastructure Minister Brad Duguid, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Carol Mitchell and Transport Minister Kathleen Wynne also addressed the annual gathering.

Joint Conference Since 2000

The Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the [Rural Ontario Municipal Association](#) (ROMA) combined their respective conferences in 2000.

Since then, the OGRA/ROMA Combined Conference has become one of the largest municipal conferences in the country.

The Ontario Good Roads Association represents the infrastructure interests of municipalities through advocacy, education, consultation, training and other services.

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association is the rural municipal voice of the province and is an integral part of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. ROMA has, for decades, ensured that matters affecting rural communities are brought to the attention of the provincial and federal governments.

Related links:



Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Bradley at the annual conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association.

- [Rural Ontario Municipal Association \(ROMA\)](#)

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The Ontario government has introduced new standards that affect how it responds to those using government services.

The new standards came into effect on January 1, 2010.

As a result, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is committing itself to meeting or exceeding Ontarians' rising expectations for reliable and accurate services. They are to be delivered in a timely, professional and courteous manner.

The New Service Standards

Ministries were required to create service standards in each of their program areas, incorporating:

- the Ontario Human Rights Code
- the accessibility requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (including Ontario Regulation 429/07 on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service)
- the French Language Services Act 1986
- the information access and privacy provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Health Information Protection Act.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has initiated six service standards. These standards are posted on our [website](#).

Service Principles

In addition to the government-wide Common Service Principles – Accessible, Responsible, Reliable, Caring and Accountable – the ministry has adopted the following service principles:

- Professional - We will provide services in a professional and courteous manner
- Available - We will ensure that our services are up-to-date and easily accessible to everyone
- Trustworthy - We will provide reliable services and be responsive to feedback and suggestions
- Timely - We will provide services in a timely manner
- Accessible - We will provide our services and communicate to our customers in a manner that takes into account a person's abilities.

Client Feedback

The Ministry encourages clients to provide [feedback](#) on the new service standards and delivery so they can be adjusted to reflect client needs and expectations.



New customer service standards

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Streamlining Building Permit Approvals

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New amendments to the Building Code Act, 1992 (BCA) support Ontario's businesses, promote public safety and enhance consumer protection.

The changes, which relate to reviews of building permit applications, illegal builders not registered with Tarion Warranty Corporation and prosecuting offences under the BCA, were included in the Good Government Act, 2009.

The BCA is the legislative framework that governs the construction, renovation and change of use of buildings in Ontario.

Timeframes for building permit application review

The legislation amended the BCA to clarify the requirements for building permit applications that are subject to full review within the timeframes set out in the Building Code.

Clearer requirements for complete building permit applications are intended to promote more uniform enforcement and increase certainty in the permit process.

These changes will come into force on January 1, 2011.

Identifying Illegal Builders

Provincial law requires that Tarion Warranty Corporation provide warranty coverage for new homes. Some new home builders, however, do not register with Tarion, or fail to enrol all the houses they build.

The BCA has been amended to require that municipalities provide certain building permit information to Tarion so that Tarion can take enforcement action against illegal builders.

The changes, which will come into force on a date to be proclaimed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, will improve consumer protection and support a level playing field for builders who are already following the rules.

The implementation date of these provisions will allow municipalities, Tarion and other affected parties time to prepare.

Enhancing Municipal Enforcement of the BCA



Amendments to the Building Code Act, 1992

Previously, prosecution of offences under the BCA were subject to a limitation period of one year from the time when the subject matter of the proceedings arose.

The BCA has been amended to change the limitation period for municipalities to prosecute offences under the BCA to one year from the date of discovery of the offence.

This amendment responds to recommendations from the Building Advisory Council and enforcement officials and will come into force on July 1, 2010.

Related Links:

- [December 2009 Building Code Act and Building Code Changes](#)

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