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February, 2022

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## Canada Lumber Set to Pay Less U.S. Duties as Trade Spat Drags On

High import duties have added to the cost of homebuilding in the U.S., but those costs may drop if preliminary tariffs proposed Tuesday are put in place.

By: Jen Skerritt and Eric Martin, Bloomberg Report

The U.S. is setting duties on Canadian softwood lumber that would effectively lower the punitive tariffs on most producers as the long-simmering trade dispute drags on.

Average preliminary anti-dumping and countervailing duties of nearly 12% will



be levied on Canadian softwood lumber producers, the U.S. Department of Commerce said Tuesday in an email. The move follows the government's decision in late 2021 to raise the combined duty rates on shipments from Canadian companies. Producers such as Canfor Corp. will see combined duty rates drop from nearly 20% to 6.75%, and Resolute Forest Products Inc. will pay duties

of 20%, down from nearly 30%. West Fraser Timber Co. will see its rates rise to 13% from about 11%.

The final decision on rates won't be known until August, and Canadian producers will be paying average rates of 18% until then, according to British Columbia's Lumber Trade Council.

"We continue to hope that the U.S. industry will put an end to this decades-long litigation and instead work with us to meet demand for the low carbon wood products the world wants," BC Lumber Trade Council CEO Susan Yurkovich said Tuesday in a statement.

(Cover Story – Continued on page 2)

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Chain Disruptions

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Ohio BWC Distance Learning  
Stop Fetishizing Old Homes







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## From the MCHBA Office ...

Members and Friends:

First and foremost, I would like to take a moment and thank each and every one of our members for their support. These are strange times and with so many competing choices for where to invest your time and money, this organization appreciates you and wants you to know that on a local, state and national level, our organizations are fighting hard to get material prices where they should be, oversee regulations that make sense and not prohibit responsible building, and so much more to help all of us with our bottom lines.

We are planning our next annual Topgolf event for Thursday, March 24. It's the perfect member/friend/business associate fun outing. Save that date and plan on attending.

Builders ... If you can, plan to participate in our Spring Parade of Homes. We continue to have a lot of consumer interest in the Parade and we don't want to disappoint them!

Please keep in mind, if you need anything or I can be of assistance, don't hesitate to contact me.

*Susan Bloch*

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## 2022 Save The Dates

**February 8-10, 2022**

**NAHB International  
Builder Show - Orlando, FL**

**March 24, 2022**

**Topgolf Member Event**  
- Get your reservations in  
now for a fun day! Details  
on page 7.

**April 30–May 15, 2022**

**Spring Parade of Homes**  
- Plan to participate - more  
info to follow via email.



# From the Executive Director

Members and Friends:

Our next member event is Topgolf – one of our most fun annual member get-togethers which is scheduled for Thursday, March 24 ... watch your email for more information and be sure to come out, have fun and support your association and fellow members. We are encouraging you to bring potential new members as well - they even get a discounted rate!

I strongly encourage our builder members to consider entering a home or two in our Spring Parade. There is plenty of time to plan your participation so we are expecting to have a good number of participants this year, something consumers really look forward to attending. This will be a year that you should participate if at all possible - it's going to be a very competitive year so participating gets your name and your product out there in the consumers' minds and will help keep your business strong during uncertain times and certain interest rate hikes.

Included in this issue is an article starting on page 13 about the true difference of new construction versus that old, classic-style home (and why consumers need to hear and understand the importance of new construction and why they should definitely go that route if buying a home). This was shared by some of our OHBA members and is something everyone should be aware of.

As always, we appreciate and value your membership.

Respectfully:

Dave LeHotan  
Volunteer Executive Director



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COUNTY**  
Home Builders  
Association



**MEDINA  
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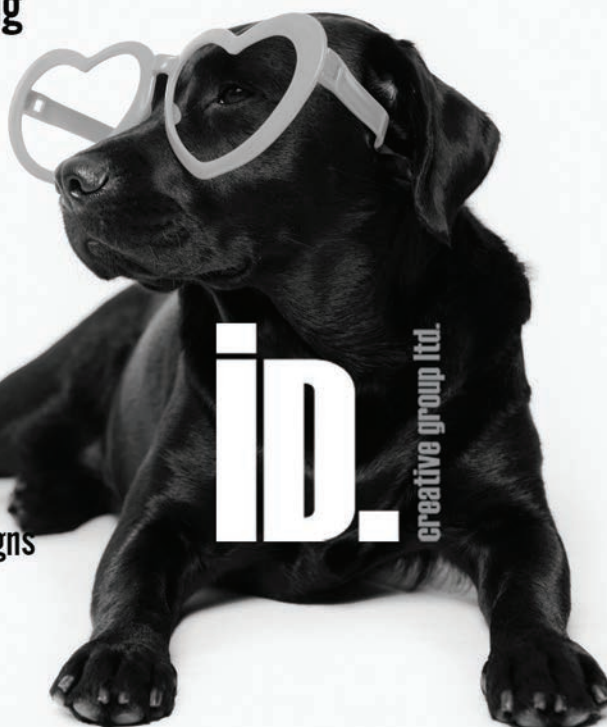
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**LOTS & ACREAGE  
FRANKLIN TWP.**

**VL Summit Rd.-** Approx 40 acres, made up of 5 parcels, zoned Residential R-1 & R-3. Partially wooded & partially farmland. Fairly flat along Summit Rd and slightly rolling topography along Cline Rd. Call agent for approx. frontage info. Approx 8.5 acres of additional land available. One parcel in Brimfield Township, 3 parcels in Franklin Township. Public water & sewer in area, buyer to confirm availability & capacity. **\$2,254,000. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Tara Kleckner 330-289-1315.**

**KENT**

**5036 SR 43:** Approx. 43 acres on SR 43. Zoned G-C General Commercial. Subject to new survey per Portage Co. Sewer/Water/Gas/Electric/Cable (Buyer's responsibility to verify accessibility, capacity, etc. on all utilities). **\$665,725. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900, Tara Kleckner 330-289-1315.**

**NORTH CANTON**

**8215 Arlington Ave NW:** Approx 74 acres in Jackson Township w/approx. 2,467' of frontage (on Arlington Avenue) and 1,377' deep on the North Side. Approx 1,000 ft. of frontage on Strausser Street. Large house on property built in 1861 offering more than 5,500 sq.ft. of living space, 5 bedrooms. Connected to the house is an office building with six separate office spaces and half bathroom. Four car detached garage and storage outbuilding on property. **\$1,740,000. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900, Sarah Halsey 330-268-0102.**

**RICHFIELD  
Revere Schools**

**3526 Brecksville Rd:** - This commercial property is approx. 7.84 acres with the frontage measuring approx. 238ft and is close to I77 and 271. Public Water, Public Sewer and Gas available at the street. The property rises slightly upward from the street

then levels out. The front 4 acres (approx.) is mostly cleared w/ the remaining acreage beautifully wooded, & a peaceful stream/ravine running North/South through the property. This parcel is zoned Office/Laboratory which comes w/ a variety of permitted and conditional uses. These uses include but are not limited to the following: Office Space, Research Laboratories, Licensed Child/Adult Day Care, Nursing Home, Assisted Living Facility, Churches, Library, Museum, Art Gallery, School/College etc. **\$409,000. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Sharon Holderbaum 330-349-2599.**

**2706 Boston Mills Rd. -** 4.190 acres. Richfield Township. Revere Schools. 2 parcels available for purchase separate or together: possibility of over 8 acres together. All builders welcome! **\$481,850. Robin Pickett 330-322-3181.**

**2708 Boston Mills Rd. -** 4.480 acres. Richfield Township. Revere Schools. Wooded, Private, Pond. Bring your builder to this fantastic setting. 2 parcels available to total over 8 acres. **\$515,200. Robin Pickett 330-322-3181.**

**2884 Boston Mills Rd. -** 5.12 acres. Wooded private setting with no deed restriction or HOA. Richfield Township. Revere Schools. Wooded, Private, Walkout basement homesite. **\$481,280. Robin Pickett 330-322-3181.**

**ROOTSTOWN**

**V/L Lynn Rd. -** Here's your chance to own approximately 10.5 acres of level commercial land in the heart of Rootstown! Zoned C-3 Highway Interchange/Planned Commercial Development. Principal uses include: Drive-thru, Restaurants, Hotel/Motel, Gas Stations, Auto Service Stations, Car Wash, Telecommunications Towers, Public Safety Facilities, etc. Rapidly growing area. Close to restaurants, shopping, gas stations and more. Easy access to I-76 and State Route 44. Property

visible from I-76. Frontage is approx. 317 feet. **\$275,000. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Gina Luisi 330-814-4747.**

**SHARON TWP.  
Highland Schools**

**7022 State Rd:** Approx. 6.5 acres total on State Rd. in Sharon Township for **\$199,500.** Zoned R-1. Beautiful, wooded area with rock ledges along northern border. Moving south the property rises to the crest of a hill with ideal homesite and expansive views. Approx. 2.10 acres available for **\$105,000** and the remaining approx. 4.4 acres for **\$135,000.** Simply beautiful! **Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Gina Luisi 330-814-4747.**

**S/L 5 Jumpers Knoll Dr:** Beautiful (approx.) 2-acre lot in The Signature of Sharon. Corner lot for different house positioning. Homes in the area are exquisite with a variety of styles and builders. Magnificent entrance to the development. **\$127,500. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Gina Luisi 330-814-4747.**

**STREETSBORO**

**8291 SR 14:** Gorgeous land on corner of OH14 and Diagonal Rd. This land has several spots to build your dream home. 2 large ponds and tucked back into the woods for privacy. Over 2,400' frontage, possibility of building multiple homes or doing a lot split to create multiple parcels. There is a 2-acre parcel w/frontage on Diagonal Rd. **\$555,750. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900, Matt Stouffer 330-814-4616.**

**V/L SR 43:** Approx 43.5 acres w/ approx. 682ft frontage on State Rt 43 & approx. 1600 ft frontage on Kennedy Rd, zoned Rural Residential. **\$524,900. Gary Stouffer 330-805-6900 & Sharon Holderbaum 330-349-2599.)**

**www.StoufferRealty.com**



# Member *News*

## *New Associate Members*

### **Lumen Nation**

4242 Portage Street, NW  
North Canton, OH 44720

Contact: Tom Rafferty

Phone: (234) 347-0109

Web: lumen-nation.com

Sponsor: Jen Gonzalez

*Business: Supplier of ceiling fans,  
lighting control and automation,  
lighting design, lighting fixtures,  
outdoor lighting and more*

### **Title Select**

303 E. Washington St.

Medina, OH 44256

Contact: Sarah Bittinger

Phone: (330) 835-4229

Web: titleselect.net

Sponsor: Mike Hudak

*Business: Title and escrow services*

## *Renewed Builders*

Fred Olivieri Construction

Company – North Canton

Gasser Builders, Inc. – Rittman

Hanna Homes, Inc. – Brunswick

Windridge Homes, Ltd. – Medina

## *Renewed Associates*

Owens Corning – Medina

## *Dropped Members*

Kingdom Title Solutions – Medina

**A WARM WELCOME TO  
OUR NEW MEMBERS  
AND A SINCERE THANK  
YOU TO ALL THOSE  
WHO REINVESTED!**



**MEDINA  
COUNTY**  
Home Builders  
Association



## **NAHB Supports Shipping Reform Act to Ease Supply Chain Disruptions**

NAHB sent a letter to House lawmakers on Feb. 1 supporting legislation that would address longstanding, systemic supply chain and port disruption issues for lumber and other building materials that have been raising construction costs and impacting housing affordability.

H.R. 4996, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021, is designed to move ships into and out of ports faster and address barriers to trade and challenges associated with moving goods to their final destination.

“These badly needed improvements will go a long way to ensuring needed building materials reach job sites across the country in a timely manner and as cost-effectively as possible,” the NAHB letter to lawmakers stated. “Your efforts will help ensure home builders have the tools and materials they need to make the American dream of homeownership a reality for all Americans.”

See NAHB letter page 18.

## **OFFICIAL MCHBA WARRANTY**

# **Professional Tools for our Members**

The HBA has the professional business tools you need for home sales. The MCHBA Home Construction & Limited Warranty Agreement packages are available for only \$35 each. Or, if you have your own contract

and you just need the Warranty, the warranty only with presentation folder are available for just \$25. We encourage you to use these tools for your protection, peace of mind, buyer credibility, and they make a great resource tool for your customers to keep all their pertinent home buying paperwork together. Call the HBA today and order your professional home buyer warranty tools. Just one of your advantages of being a member!



# It's Official! *everyone's*

## GAME



**Thursday, March 24**  
**Noon to 3pm**

### **Open to MCHBA Members & Guests**

**Cost: \$135 per member / \$100 per potential member**

**Includes: Game & Tournament Play, Food, Non-alcoholic Beverages, FREE Lifetime Membership & Cash Bar for Beer**

**RSVP no later than Friday, March 18**

Just email [susanb@medinacountyhba.com](mailto:susanb@medinacountyhba.com)  
or call **330-725-2371** - we'll take care of the rest!

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# Legislative

## NEWS



As you may know, the Ohio General Assembly will begin the second year of the current assembly. 2022 is an election year where all 99 members and 17 of the 33 senators must run for election to the next assembly which begins (hopefully) January 1, 2023. The process to be elected begins by taking out petitions with the corresponding board of elections with the intent to run, and have your name placed on the ballot. This is a process which has taken place for decades.

But wait.

In its January 12th opinion, the Ohio Supreme Court just nullified the proposed districts for which Ohioans may declare to be a candidate. So, a few weeks before the filing deadline there are essentially no districts to be a candidate in. The court, in its ruling, gave the apportionment committee 10 days within which to submit a new map. Never mind, the apportionment committee took months to approve the maps tossed by the court.

So, where does that leave us? Not to be too concerned, but no one really knows. The constitution was rewritten on the subject a few years ago, so there is little, if any, law on the subject. It appears the old 'seat of the pants' standard applies. Joking aside, the relations between the parties and the court are not amicable at this point. If the apportionment committee makes changes to the map and sends it back, the Court could send it back again, as not to their liking.

We believe the best and brightest are expending their brain cells as to how their party can benefit the most and gain approval by the court. Exactly how the commission will accomplish that aim in such a tight timeframe, or even who is on the commission, remain questions with which attorneys are now wrestling.

Both the House and Senate, previously scheduled to return January 19th, have canceled their sessions for next week. Stay tuned.

### **SUPREME COURT ALSO SENDS BACK CONGRESSIONAL MAP**

Minutes after legislative review #1 was sent out, breaking news came through with the Ohio Supreme Court going the same direction on the Congressional Map. The Court ordered lawmakers to resume the congressional redistricting process after ruling 4-3 the Republican-led legislature's four-year map failed to meet constitutional requirements.

The General Assembly now has 30 days to rectify the legal defects in the map identified by the court. Should

lawmakers fail, the Ohio Redistricting Commission would be reconstituted and granted its own 30-day window to craft a final map.

Stay Tuned.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREA LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE**

Senator Schuring plans to reintroduce legislation in the coming weeks which will help spur discussions and serve as a centerpiece of a variety of housing and development issues.

Under the bill, townships and municipalities are given the permissive authority to establish a Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) within their boundaries. The property tax exemptions under the legislation is 100% with local school board approval and 70% without it. For existing owner-occupied dwellings, the property exemption is for 5 years for improvements of \$10,000 or more. For new home construction, the homebuilder receives a property tax exemption for the period from when the construction begins until the time the new home is sold. The new home owner who occupies the new home subsequently receives a 10-year exemption.

OHBA is looking for input on planning, zoning, development standards, etc. which could promote housing affordability to prepare for upcoming discussions with the legislature.

### **OHBA IN LEADERSHIP AS RCAC AND BBS HOLD ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS**

At each of the initial meetings for 2022, both the Residential Construction Advisory Committee (RCAC) and Board of Building Standards (BBS), chose its respective Chair and Vice-Chair. The RCAC elected, OHBA member, Ric Johnson, to serve as the Chairman of the RCAC, and the BBS elected OHBA member, John Pavlis as

*(Legislative Review - Continued on next page)*

## Support Your Association

Remember, whenever possible, always try to do business with and patronize our Parade Sponsors, your Fellow Members and support your Medina County HBA & local community!



its Vice-Chair. Further, Bailey Stanbery has also been reappointed as the second home builder member of the board.

### **NEW HOMEBUILDER MEMBER APPOINTED TO THE RCAC**

After a vacancy opened on the RCAC, OHBA member Lindsay Bott, of Dale Yost Construction, from Loraine, Ohio, has been appointed by the Director of Commerce to serve on the committee.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE HB 304 Smoke Alarms (Baldrige, B.)** – To amend the law regarding smoke alarms in residential premises. Text/Analysis

Committee Hearing in House Commerce & Labor (1/26/2022; REPORTED)

The House Commerce and Labor Committee voted out HB 304 last week after some confusion on potential amendments to the bill. OHBA has presented language to the sponsor, and will continue to work with the Senate on changes to address areas of the bill more appropriately handled by the Residential Construction Advisory Committee (RCAC).

**SB 61 Planned Communities (Blessing, L., Antonio, N.)** – Regarding condominiums and planned community properties and to make changes to the New Community Law. Text/Analysis  
Passed in Senate Local Government & Elections (1/26/2022; 32-1 (Antani) (Earlier: REPORTED))

OHBA has been following and working with the bill's sponsor, and subject matter experts since the bill's introduction on several amendments. Each of the concerns raised have been

addressed through amendments in the committee process. Briefly, the amendments included, removal of the expansion of authority to challenge land use/zoning of adjacent property, and modification of language limiting who could serve as the majority of the board. SB 61 was voted out of the Senate and will move over to the House for further review.

Please feel free to contact OHBA with any questions or concerns.

### **OHBA SPRING ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

If you haven't signed up for OHBA Spring Organizational Meeting on Feb. 28th & March 1st now is the time to do so. The meetings will take place at the Hilton Easton in Columbus.

If you need meeting information, please email [build@ohiohba.com](mailto:build@ohiohba.com).



## **STAY SAFE ON YOUR JOBSITES DURING THE WINTER COLD**

Winter can be an especially tricky time for safety personnel on home building jobsites. With dangerous conditions outdoors, and hidden hazards inside, working in temperatures below freezing requires a plan.

Working in a cold environment forces the body to work harder to maintain optimal temperature. As temperatures drop and wind speed increases, heat leaves the body more rapidly.

Common cold induced injuries include hypothermia, which occurs when skin temperature lowers leading to declining internal body temperature (core temperature) and frostbite which is freezing of the skin and underlying tissues. This may lead to serious health problems and may even cause death.

While they are often necessary, home builders should always remember that the use of space heaters inside structures presents an elevated fire risk, so be careful while using them.

OSHA also has guidance for workers on jobsites during the winter that includes: Be aware of weather forecasts. Employers should watch the local weather and check the National Weather Service. If possible, schedule work during the warmest part of the day.

Limit exposure to the elements. Consider breaking up larger projects into smaller tasks or providing short, frequent breaks in a warm environment such as a heated trailer or a tent with portable heaters.

Require proper gear. Employers should require all workers to wear clothing and gear — including boots, heavy coats, gloves, hats — that will keep them warm

and dry to prevent hypothermia and frostbite.

Review work sites every day. Snow and ice on overhangs and rooftops should be regularly cleared to prevent falling to the ground level. Snow can also hide dangerous materials that can fall to a lower level and injure a worker.

Remove snow and ice. Before work is started on a site, employers should ensure snow is removed, salt or sand is put down, and large patches of ice are chipped away. And, no matter how time sensitive the construction job is, workers should avoid working on scaffolding in ice and snow.

Educate workers on the signs of frostbite and hypothermia. Supervisors and workers need to know the symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite so that if anyone shows these signs, they can receive immediate medical attention.

Freezing temperatures require advanced planning, but taking reasonable steps before work can protect workers and projects.

*Article provided by NAHB.*



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## Ohio Safety Congress & Expo

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) will host their Ohio Safety Congress & Expo March 9-10, 2022, as an online-only event with dozens of learning sessions and a digital expo, allowing participants to chat virtually with vendors about new and existing products and services.

By attending the safety congress, you will learn to:

- Prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
- Achieve better outcomes for injured workers
- Reduce workers' compensation claims costs
- Keep Ohio's work force healthy and productive

BWC recently announced its [educational offerings](#) for the 2022 Ohio Safety Congress & Expo (OSC22). With the online format, attendees can attend sessions from anywhere.

OSC22 online will deliver more than 30 live sessions on March 9 and 10. A dozen on-demand sessions are available to view anytime March 9 through March 31, offering more choice and more convenience than ever before. If you're an environmental specialist, consider also attending the Ohio EPA's education day on March 8.

OSC22 is the largest free work-safe event in the U.S. Registration is free and available now. [Click here to register](#). If you have any questions, please call BWC at 1-800-644-6292.





## **ATTENTION BUILDER MEMBERS**

EVENT DATES:  
**Saturday, April 30, 2022  
thru  
Sunday, May 15, 2022**

*Scattered Site Event  
Featuring New Homes  
& New Developments*

Plan now to  
participate and watch  
your email for more  
information.



BWC provides at least one webinar on different safety and health topics each month. Subject matter experts share their knowledge and provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions. These lessons engage students with a variety of interactive methodologies, including whiteboard activities, polling, and chat discussions. To obtain BWC program credit, participants must complete a short knowledge assessment within the BWC Learning Management System after the webinar and earn a passing score. If the webinar provides credits, the host will provide further details regarding requirements for those seeking BWC program credit or Continuing Education Units (CEU)s during each webinar.

Webinar	Date	Time
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Safety Teams	Feb. 8	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Managing the Risk and Safety of Contractors Working in YOUR Facility	Feb. 8	1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Recordkeeping 201: Pitfalls in OSHA Recordkeeping	Feb. 17	1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
OSHA On-Site Consultation: Ohio's Best-Kept Secret	Feb. 22	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

[Click here for 7 Habits of Safety Teams](#)

[Click here for Managing the Risk](#)

[Click here for Recordkeeping 201](#)

[Click here for OSHA On-Site](#)

### Webinar Recording Replays

If you miss a webinar, just search "replay" in the [BWC Learning Management System](#).

1. Go to [www.bwclearningcenter.com](http://www.bwclearningcenter.com).
2. Log in or create a new account.
3. Type "replay" in the "Search Catalog" field and click the magnifying glass to search.
4. Review recordings of past webinars (no credits provided).

### Virtual Training Classes (VTC)

As an alternative to in-person classes, which have been canceled due to the pandemic, BWC is providing a limited number of virtual classes to meet more in-depth learning needs. Virtual classes provide the opportunity for participation and interaction consistent with the BWC classroom experience. All BWC program credits associated with a normal classroom experience are available with virtual class completion. System and participation requirements are outlined in more detail in the link for more information below.

Virtual Training Class	Date	Time
Improving Hazard Recognition through Visual Literacy	Feb. 1-2	9:00 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Series Module 3: Respiratory Protection and PPE	Feb. 7	9:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
Electrical Safety in the Workplace through Insight and Implementation of NFPA 70E	Feb. 8-9	9:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Job Safety Analysis	Feb. 10	9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Lockout/Tagout and Safety-Related Work Practices	Feb. 15	9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Emergency Preparedness Planning Half-day Workshop	Feb. 16	1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Trenching and Excavation	Feb. 16-18	9:30 a.m. - 1:35 p.m.
Safety for the Non-Safety Professional	Feb. 22-23	9:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Crisis De-escalation Tactics and Safe Practices Workshop	Feb. 24	9:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Series Module 4: Air Monitoring, Work Zones	Feb. 28	9:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

[Click here for VTC information](#)

[Click here for details about our 9-part HAZWOPER Series presented Jan.- Mar. 2022](#)

Designed to meet HAZWOPER TECHNICIAN and HAZWOPER 40 training requirements.

### Online E-Courses

These on-demand courses cover topics including Bloodborne Pathogens, Developing a Safety Culture, OSHA Recordkeeping 101, and others. Online course times range from 30 minutes to approximately two hours and provide the ultimate in convenience for learning at your pace and at your desired time.

[Click here for more information](#)



# Stop Fetishizing Old Homes

**Whatever your aesthetic preferences, new construction is better on nearly every conceivable measure.**

By M. Nolan Gray

*(About the author: M. Nolan Gray is a professional city planner and a housing researcher at UCLA. He is the author of *Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It.*)*

IN EARLY AUGUST, 254 Tamarisk Drive went on the Bay Area housing market asking \$850,000, and it sparked a bidding war that topped out at \$1 million. The 1968 four-bedroom ranch, clad with half-century-old fixtures and set behind a patchy lawn, was not only unremarkable but had actually been “fire charred” before it was put up for sale. And yet its buyers likely got a good deal: According to the real-estate-listing site Redfin, the home could now be worth as much as \$1.36 million.



This extreme case highlights a housing market in crisis: Americans are paying ever more exorbitant prices for old housing that is, at best, subpar and, at worst, unsafe. Indeed, the real-estate market in the U.S. now resembles the car market in Cuba: A stagnant supply of junkers is being forced into service long after its intended life span.

In housing circles, one hears a lot of self-righteous discussion about the need for more preservation. And many American homes doubtless deserve to stick around. But the truth is that we fetishize old homes. Whatever your aesthetic preferences, new construction is better on nearly every conceivable measure, and if we want to ensure universal access to decent housing, we should be building a lot more of it.

ACCORDING TO CENSUS BUREAU data compiled by House Method, the median home nationwide is now 39 years old, up nearly 20 percent over the past decade alone. In the northeastern states of New York and Massachusetts, the median is much higher, at 63 and 59, respectively, while out West, in Nevada and Arizona, your typical home is still barely old enough to rent a car.



This isn't an East-West thing, however: The median home in California is roughly 50 percent older than that in the Carolinas. A typical home in San Francisco is now 15 years older than its New Orleans counterpart, not because San Francisco is older than New Orleans, but

because the former is so slow to permit new development.

Across the country—but particularly along the coasts—barriers to construction mean that housing production has plummeted, such that we now face a national demand-supply gap of 6.8 million homes. To break even over the next 10 years, the National Association of Realtors found, we would need to build at least 700,000 new homes each year.

In the meantime, we're stuck with a lot of old housing that, to put it bluntly, just kind of sucks. A stately Victorian manor in the Berkshires is one thing. But if you live in a Boston triple-decker, a kit-built San Jose bungalow, or a Chicago greystone, your home is the cheap housing of generations past. These structures were built to last a half century—at most, with diligent maintenance—at which point the developers understood they would require substantial rehabilitation. Generally speaking, however, the



maintenance hasn't been diligent, the rehabilitation isn't forthcoming, and any form of redevelopment is illegal thanks to overzealous zoning.

You might think uneven floors or steep stairwells have “character.” You'll get no argument here. But more often than not, old housing is simply less safe. Until 1978, lead was common in house paint, and until the 1980s, in water pipes. Although the substance has

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## Destination Excellence

This program encourages an employer's focus on safety and return-to-work for injured workers, and fosters efficient management of accounts and cost control efforts. The Destination Excellence program includes Administrative rebates, Safety Council rebates, an Industry Specific Safety bonus, a Drug Free Safety incentive program and a Transitional Work Grant program and bonus.

### **Savings options**

#### **Go Green**

A rebate (1% of premium, which includes any assessments, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per policy period) is granted to employers who elect to utilize the BWC's website at [www.bwc.ohio.gov](http://www.bwc.ohio.gov) to conduct business electronically. BWC will apply the rebate automatically; no application is required. Online transactions consist of reporting payroll; payment of premium no later than the due date; and any additional transactions that BWC expands to online account management and communications.

#### **Lapse Free**

A rebate (1% of premium, which includes any assessments, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per policy period) is granted to employers with an active policy for at least 5 years and no lapses during that time. "One Time Forgiveness" may be utilized to remove a lapse to become eligible. Predecessor policy lapses do not transfer to successor policy but successor policy must be active for at least 5 years to be eligible. Employers reporting zero payroll in current payroll period, state agencies and self-insured employers are not eligible for this discount.

### **Safety & return-to-work options**

#### **Industry Specific Safety Program**

A 3% bonus of the employer's premium is given at the close of the program year to encourage an employer's focus on safety in the workplace. Employer must complete an online safety management self assessment and completion of one, two or three loss prevention activities depending on payroll. Loss prevention activities include industry-specific training classes, attendance at BWC's Ohio Safety Congress & Expo and/or onsite field consulting with a BWC safety and health expert.

#### **Drug Free Safety Program**

A premium bonus is given for the implementation of a program promoting occupational safety and health for workers which addresses the use and misuse of alcohol and drugs in the workplace. An employer may choose between basic (4% bonus) or advanced (7% bonus) level programs to help their organization prevent on-the-job injuries and illness by integrating drug-free efforts.

#### **Safety Council**

This is an incentive program that enables employers to receive a rebate of 2% of their annual workers' compensation premium through program participation and an additional 2% performance bonus based on the reduction of the frequency or severity of claims (reduction of 10% or more compared to the previous year's frequency or severity or maintaining both frequency and severity at zero). Regular attendance at meetings (requirement of 10 meetings or events between July 1 - June 30 annually)



provides an organization with the latest in safety, workers' compensation and risk management information, techniques, products and services.

#### Transitional Work

This is a grant for employers to establish a transitional work plan and a bonus for employers who use the plan in returning injured workers to work. An effective transitional work program helps injured workers return to productivity in the workplace by providing modified job duties and other methods that accommodate medical restrictions. The injured worker receives a full paycheck with the goal of returning to his/her original job while the employer reduces the costs associated with long-term claims and improves productivity. Grants are 3-to-1 matching grants for companies ranging from \$2,900 to \$6,300 from 11 to 200+ employees. Up to a 10% bonus available for employers who utilize an established and approved program applicable to claims with dates of injury within the policy year.

For more information, contact our Sedgwick program manager, Bob Nicoll at (330) 418-1824 or [robert.nicoll@sedgwick.com](mailto:robert.nicoll@sedgwick.com)

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been banned in new housing, the CDC estimates that 24 million old homes are still coated in lead paint—including the many Levittown homes built in the 1950s—while an estimated 9.2 million homes still receive water through lead pipes.

Or take fire safety: Electrical fires alone account for one in 10 residential fires, killing nearly 500 Americans each year. These fires are mostly a function of improper and aging wiring, which is endemic in older homes. Worse yet, many older homes lack the materials needed to stop a blaze once it starts; back in 2016, a single misplaced cigarette might have been what sent San Francisco's Graywood Hotel—a 116-year-old single-room-occupancy building that housed approximately 77 people—up in flames.

Even when old housing is not killing its occupants, much of it is exclusionary



by design. Before the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act and recent amendments to the Fair Housing Act, standard elements such as ramps and elevators—as well as more subtle accessibility features such as automatic doors and wheelchair-friendly units—were not required, and so were rarely

provided. As a result, old housing typologies like New York City's walk-up tenements end up trapping many thousands of seniors in place, while limiting housing opportunities for many thousands more.

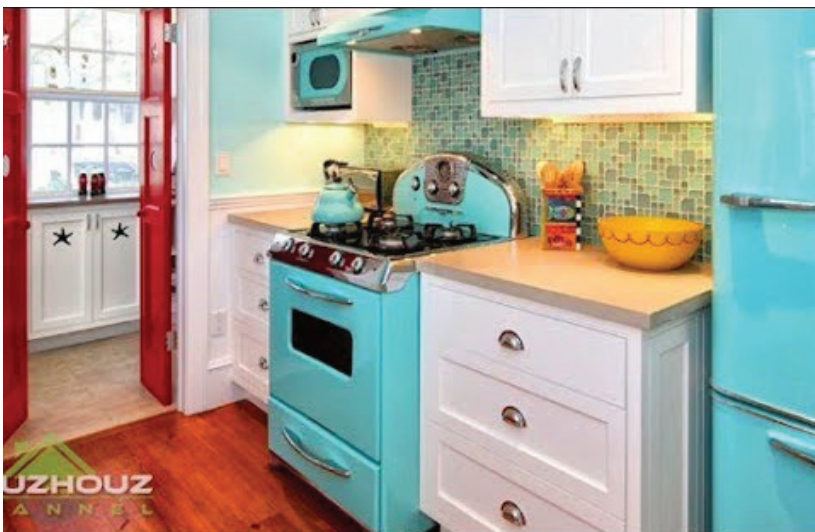
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HERE IN LOS ANGELES, we are busy retrofitting nearly 14,000 dingbats, those low-slung, 1950s apartment buildings that could very well collapse with the next earthquake. Like many Angelenos, I've come to appreciate their charms. But those resources could have been better spent replacing pedestrian-hostile carports and aging units with the street-level storefronts and additional apartments that our city so desperately needs.

Yet like most U.S. cities, Los Angeles has made redeveloping much of its aging housing stock all but impossible. Between apartment bans, strict density limits, and minimum parking requirements, taking an old home and turning it into an apartment building, or even two or three modern townhouses, is in many cases illegal. Much of this flows from our national prejudice against new housing, especially if it's billed as "luxury." Attend a hearing for any given housing proposal and you're sure to hear baseless speculation that new housing is shoddily constructed or unsafe.

The fact is that those much-lamented cookie-cutter five-over-one apartment buildings cropping up across the U.S. solve the problems of old housing and then some.

Modern building codes require sprinkler systems and elevators, and they disallow lead paint. New buildings rarely burn down, rarely poison their residents, and nearly always include at least one or two units designed to accommodate people in wheelchairs.



And despite what old-home snobs may believe, new housing is also just plain nice to live in—in many ways an objective improvement on what came before.

Noise is now appropriately recognized as one of the biggest quality-of-life issues in cities. As I write this in the living room of my 1958 Los Angeles dingbat, I can hear the neighbor on my right shouting over the phone and the neighbor on my left enjoying reggaeton at maximum volume. The distant hum of the 405 is forever in the background. Back when I lived in a mid-2000s apartment building in D.C.—a relatively old building in our pro-growth capital—I had no such distractions. Double-paned windows kept out virtually all street noise, even on a busy downtown intersection, while fiberglass insulation kept neighbors from bothering one another. I wasn't even certain that I had neighbors until we bumped into each other several months after I moved in.

Modern homes and apartment buildings are not only far better insulated—they also feature modern HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning) technologies,

such that homes can be warmed and cooled without using nearly as much energy as their older counterparts. Given that heating and cooling account for nearly half of all household energy use in the U.S., the savings from new housing could have serious implications for climate change. That little space heater struggling to keep your drafty old apartment warm—to say nothing of your window AC unit—isn't just unsightly. It's also a climate failure.

In smaller ways, too, new construction is nicer. Bathrooms and closets are larger, as are kitchens, which are no longer walled off from the rest of the home. Modern windows let you bathe a unit in natural light, without temperature or noise concerns. Smaller unit sizes—think studios and one-bedrooms—better reflect shrinking households. And in-unit laundry is more common now, as are balconies—amenities that have only grown in value amid recurring COVID-related shutdowns.

FOR COMPARISON'S SAKE, consider the Japanese approach. The average Japanese home is demolished 30 years after construction, the realistic life span of a typical cheaply built structure. The Japanese have virtually no "used home" market: Fully 87 percent of Japanese home sales are new, compared with 11 to 34 percent in the West. As a result, most Japanese households enjoy a new house or apartment with all the modern amenities and design innovation that entails, including ever-improving earthquake standards. And this steady supply of new housing has helped make Tokyo one of the most affordable cities in the world, despite a growing population.

All that construction consumes a fair share of resources, and housing in Japan doesn't double as an investment vehicle. But I, for one, would take that trade-off.





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**Government Affairs**

James W. Tobin III  
Executive Vice President & Chief Lobbyist  
Government Affairs and Communications Group

February 1, 2022

The Honorable John Garamendi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2368 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dusty Johnson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1714 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Garamendi and Johnson:

On behalf of the more than 140,000 members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), I write to share with you our strong support for H.R. 4996, the *Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021* (OSRA21). We believe the reforms included in OSRA21 will help address longstanding, systemic supply chain and port disruption issues which have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ongoing supply chain challenges facing the nation's importers and exporters are having a significant effect on our building material supply chain. From record high lumber prices to severe shortages of myriad building materials, the result has been lengthy construction delays or postponement of projects, along with dramatic price increases. This is further harming housing affordability at a time when we already face an ongoing housing affordability crisis. Until we address all of the underlying causes of the crisis, millions of households are denied the American dream of homeownership, and millions more are rent burdened.

At the core of today's building materials supply chain issues are two fundamental problems – barriers to trade and challenges associated with moving goods to their final destination. The *Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021* will provide critical modernization to key provisions of the Ocean Shipping Reform Act, which has not been updated in over two decades. These badly needed improvements will go a long way to ensuring needed building materials reach job sites across the country in a timely manner and as cost-effectively as possible.

We thank you for your leadership in working to address ongoing supply chain disruptions and port congestion issues. Your efforts will help ensure home builders have the tools and materials they need to make the American dream of homeownership a reality for all Americans. With H.R. 4996 successfully passed out of the House, we look forward to working with you to ensure this important legislation is considered in the Senate.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Tobin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James W. Tobin III





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