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## Marketing Ideas for New Home Sales (& Builders)

*Position your company to make the most of the recovery with these tips, garnered from sales and marketing professionals at the 2013 International Builders' Show.*

By Claire Easley / Edited by Susan Bloch

While the housing market's recovery is undoubtedly a welcome development for home builders, at an education session titled "50 Marketing Ideas in 90 Minutes," held at last year's International Builders' Show, it was clear that the upswing is bringing on challenges of its own. After years of pared-down marketing efforts—during which time social media exploded into a major player on the marketing scene and shoppers increasingly took their searches online—many builders are facing a brave new world of new-home sales strategies.

To help ease the transition, a panel of sales and marketing specialists, including Robert Cowes, president at Smarttouch Interactive; Alan Daniel, CEO at Smarttouch Interactive; Jennifer Hurt, principal at Ingenuity Group; Lianne McOuat, vice president at Partnership Marketing; and David Miles, president at Miles BrandDNA, looked back on their own experiences and turned to the audience for best practices both old and new. Here are the takeaways:

### Website Design

- Think of your marketing plan as a solar system and your website as the sun, the panelists suggested. Your marketing efforts around the Web, including social media,



### In This Issue ...

Legislative News – RCAC Recap, Licensing Bill on Fast Track?, Recent Legislative Introduced & More

BWC Comp Changes Coming this Year

Parade of Homes Sponsorships Available

*(Article continued on page 3)*





Kenneth Cleveland	1,051.5*
Bob Knight	91.5
Bill Post	66.5*
Russ Sturgess	29
John Sumodi	29
Doug Leohr	20
Mark Zollinger	7.5
Ed Belair	3.0
Mike Hudak	2
Todd Scott	1
Greg Thomas	1
Ted Curran	.5

Above list has been updated via the most current NAHB Spike Club Roster Report  
 \*Current Life Spike status

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**David Pelz** | 440.829.7986 | NMLS #403766

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Payment example as of 4/15/14. Note rate 4.75% Annual Percentage Rate of 5.61%. Interest rate based on a \$237,500 loan with 5% down. 30-year mortgage would be paid in 360 monthly principal and interest installments of \$1,238.91 each. The payment example does not include amounts for taxes, homeowner's and mortgage insurance. Rates subject to change without notice. Other rates and terms available. Additional terms and conditions apply. Property insurance required. Must be a single-family, owner-occupied residence. All offers of credit are subject to credit approval.

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*(Marketing Ideas –  
Continued from front cover)*

email campaigns, and other venues, should all direct shoppers back to a well-planned site.

- Don't offer site visitors the whole story, since that allows them to make a decision without you ever having the chance to be in contact them. Instead, hold some information back, such as pricing, and experiment with different calls to action to harvest email addresses or phone numbers in an effort to follow-up with prospects.

- For the same reason that most builders wouldn't trust your average freelance writer to hang drywall, panelists suggested hiring professional writers to write website content; builders should also have their writers create content for blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, email blasts, and other outlets.

- Make sure your online ads are staying in front of prospective buyers by placing "cookies" on their computer when they visit your site. Those cookies

*(Marketing Ideas –  
Continued on page 19)*

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## RCAC RECAP

The Residential Construction Advisory Committee (RCAC) has been busy over the last few months. In addition to past interpretations issued and posted to the website, the Committee set up a subcommittee to listen to testimony on a petition from a truss manufacturer, continued its Code Review, and clarified concerns over wall bracing sections of the RCO.

**Code Change Petition:** The RCAC held a subcommittee meeting the first week of July to respond to a code change petition submitted by a truss manufacturer claiming changes in the code had negatively impacted his business. Several groups attended to provide the subcommittee with testimony on the issue. Fire officials, other truss manufacturers, sprinkler representatives, OHBA, and the American Wood Council presented its positions on the proposed changes. OHBA also provided the subcommittee with housing starts data and suggested the members consider the overall state of the industry when reviewing the business impact data submitted by the petitioner. After listening to testimony, the subcommittee will make a recommendation to the whole RCAC on whether any changes are warranted.

**Code Review:** At its June meeting, the RCAC continued to review several chapters of the code to determine if any portions of the RCO should be considered for change at the next cycle, yet to be determined. The Committee

has decided to make note of potential changes to consider further by reviewing the code chapter by chapter.

**Simplified Wall Bracing effective July 1st:** The RCAC heard from Jim Zengel on recent concerns raised around the state resulting from the wall bracing provisions adopted in the 2013 RCO. While most of the requirements found in the section are not new, there has been a substantial reorganization of the section. In addition, as Jim explained and Regina Hanshaw confirmed, the simplified version of the wall bracing standards was inadvertently left out when the RCAC adopted the 2013 RCO. After realizing the simplified version was not included as part of the wall bracing section, the RCAC moved to amend the code to include the missing section which has been included in the BBS rule package effective July 1, 2014. Thus, as of July 1st, the simplified version will become part of the 2013 RCO. A copy of the 602.12 Simplified wall bracing is included. Please see pages 12-15.

## RCAC CONTINUES TO ISSUE INTERPRETATIONS

Unlike the Board of Building Standards, the Residential Construction Advisory Committee has the statutory authority to issue official binding interpretations of the Residential Code of Ohio (RCO). Without having to wait until the next code change, the Committee has been able to clarify several issues brought to its attention and get interpretations issued to resolve confusion in the field. Interpretations recommended by the RCAC and adopted by the BBS include questions on residential swimming pools and clarifications of requirements found in 502.14. BBS Memos have also been issued on raised heel truss, roof replacement, protection of engineered light frame construction, blower door testing and others. The full list of RCAC interpretations and BBS Memos can be found and printed at the following link.

<http://www.com.ohio.gov/dico/bbs/memos.aspx>

*(Article continued on page 6)*



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**Blue Ridge Estates: VL 15 Irene Rd. & Osage Trail** 2 acres **\$69,000.**

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**V/L Hartman Rd.** 78 acres. Vacant land. Beautiful property. Level and open. Wooded in the back. Great location to everything. **\$2,252,000.** **Regran Leedy 330-606-3507.**

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[gstouffer@stoufferrealty.com](mailto:gstouffer@stoufferrealty.com)





with no prior discussion with OHBA. Apparently, interest in the subject began with negative news stories run on Cleveland area tv showing hardships encountered by consumers with shoddy home improvements and fraudulent transactions.

Rep. Patmon introduced HB 140 and had no discussions with us until the first hearing on the bill when committee chair Ron Young encouraged him to do so. While discussions with Rep. Patmon were brief, we expressed concern: his bill did not address multi state/local licensing, some of the penalties were excessive and more builder representation on the licensing board was necessary. For the most part, Rep. Patmon included our requests in subsequent drafts of the bill.

The Committee chair was more inclined to deal with the reported problem through registration at the Attorney General's consumer office. Additionally, the Chair wants to prescribe penalties for either not being properly registered or performing poorly. While his suggestion did not include performance standards, it would be difficult to enforce such standards.

Senator Ekland suggested last year we work on a measure which may be acceptable to us and deal with the reported problems. We have made several suggestions to him, but no bill has been introduced in the Senate.

We will be working with Chair Young to determine which proposal he will present to his committee. It appears the issue will be taken up in the House while possible action in the Senate is unknown at this time.

Our Government Affairs Committee will meet later this summer to further discuss the issue and any positions OHBA will take.

## **OHBA MEETS WITH OEPA ON WETLAND RULE PACKAGE**

Earlier in the week, OHBA met with the Deputy Director, and numerous OEPA Staff. Following initial written comments OHBA submitted on draft wetland antideg rules as part of the Common Sense Initiative Process

*(Article continued on next page)*

A request for an interpretation can be submitted to the RCAC at any time. Please contact OHBA with any questions or concerns.

## **RECENT LEGISLATION INTRODUCED**

**SB 351 – ROOFER LICENSING** (Patton, T.) To require roofing contractors to have a license.



**HB 581 – REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL** (Slesnick, S., Grossman, C.) To change the definition of "appraisal" for purposes of the Real Estate Appraiser Licensing Law, to make changes to certain procedures and the exceptions to licensure under that law, to regulate appraisal management companies, and to declare an emergency.

**SB 349 – COURT AWARDS** (Seitz, B.) To make permissive actual damages and attorney's fees, to limit certain punitive damages, to allow respondents to recover attorney's fees in certain instances, to prohibit actual or punitive damages from being awarded to a fair housing agency, and to exempt certain landlords from the housing provisions of the Ohio Civil Rights Law. Am. 4112.02 and 4112.05

## **LICENSING BILL ON THE FAST TRACK?**

A recent story (included - see pages 16-18) run in the Gongwer News indicates this may be the case. OHBA has been in contact all along with the major players. While our involvement began with an inquiry from the Senate, Rep. Bill Patmon introduced a bill

## **New Builder Member**

### **Dwight Yoder Builders**

P.O. Box 502

Uniontown, OH 44685-0250

Contact: Dwight Yoder

Phone: 330-699-9600

Email: yodergroup@gmail.com

Sponsor: John Sumodi

Business: Residential building

## **Renewed Builders**

Carrington Homes, Inc. – Hinckley

Dan Marchetta Construction Co.,  
Inc. – Akron

Markley Construction, Inc. – Seville

Pulte Homes of Ohio – Medina

Wayne Homes – New NV Co. –  
Norton

## **Renewed Associates**

ID Creative Group Ltd. – Medina /  
Valley City

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Medina

Norandex Distribution – Medina

Rex Gasser Electric, Inc. – Sterling

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Wolff Bros. Supply, Inc. – Medina

## **Dropped Members**

Alside Supply Center – Cleveland

Kimble Plumbing & Heating –  
LaGrange

Lowe's Home Improvement –  
Wadsworth

Maat Cement Contractors Co., Inc.  
– Medina



(CSI), the OEPA requested a follow up meeting with OHBA to discuss the draft language. Vince Messerly attended also being invited to provide valuable expertise on a variety of issues with the draft rule. OHBA and Vince Messerly requested several changes explaining how modifications would make the rules more clear and predictable. Additionally, OHBA pointed out areas where no federal mandate exists and questioned the need to adopt a more stringent standard for Ohio. The agency seemed receptive to a few of the suggestions for this rule filing, and Karl Gebhardt, Deputy Director of Water Resources, made sure to emphasize his open door policy that he initially explained at his Summer OHBA Board Meeting presentation. OHBA is looking for feedback from engineers, developers who may have additional comments to share with Karl and his staff. This was a very productive meeting, which OHBA is working to ensure takes place even earlier in the rule making process.

Please contact OHBA with any questions or concerns.

### **OHBA FALL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

Mark your calendar for November 12, 2014 for OHBA's Fall Board of Trustees Meeting at the Hilton Easton in Columbus. All meetings will take place on the 12th and conclude with the awards recognition dinner. There will be rooms available for the 11th and 12th at the Hilton Easton.

Contact OHBA with any questions you may have at (800)282-3403 ext. 1.



## From the Executive Director

Members and Friends:

I don't often use this space to speak to you about an individual member but this month I am going to do just that. I would like to Congratulate and Thank your current and record four-term President, John Sumodi, Legacy Homes of Medina, Inc.

John has steadfastly and tirelessly worked to protect and promote our home building industry in Medina County through all of our events, especially our twice a year Parade of Homes. More recently, he spent many hours working on our behalf to help prevent an unnecessary and costly hazard caused by the relocation of water boxes on previously platted lots, especially cluster lots.

John epitomizes a builder that is solidly committed to his industry so make sure you congratulate him the next time you see him. Our association is very lucky to have John as both our president and a highly active builder member.

Be sure to get your Parade materials in as soon as you can to make this fall's event a successful one. Any questions, you can contact Sharon at the HBA office 330-725-2371 or Susan at ID Creative at 330-723-4324. Have a great rest of your summer!

Respectfully:

Dave LeHotan  
Volunteer Executive Director



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## Important Bureau of Workers Compensation Changes Coming This Year

The Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation (BWC) will implement some important changes this year and in 2015 that will affect your business planning. These changes will concern workers' compensation group rating enrollment time frames and premium payment cycles.

Beginning this year, BWC is changing the traditional and retrospective workers' compensation group rating filing deadlines for the 2015 rate year. The traditional group rating enrollment deadline is being moved up to November 30th from the February 28th filing deadline that businesses have been accustomed to. As well, the retrospective group rating enrollment deadline is being moved up to January 31st from April 30th.

In order to accommodate the new enrollment deadlines, businesses will see group rating marketing kick off earlier this year. Members applying for CareWorks Consultants, Inc. (CCI) group rating quotes can expect proposals early this summer.

Another BWC change that you will be hearing about in the upcoming months will be regarding the method you pay your workers' compensation premiums. BWC is transitioning from a retrospective premium payment method to a prospective premium payment model beginning in July 2015. Starting in July 2015, businesses will begin paying their premiums in advance based on estimated future payrolls instead of paying their premiums in arrears using the prior six months of payroll. Current plans are

for BWC to offer various new payment options to help businesses under this new payment model.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact Bob Nicoll, your CareWorks Consultants Program Manager, with any questions. Bob can be reached at 800.837.3200, ext. 8595 or robert.nicoll@ccitpa.com. ■

## Thank you Ken Cleveland For Continuing to Make a Difference on Behalf of the Medina County Home Builders Association!

Ken Cleveland recently made a second very generous donation to the Medina County Home Builders Association.

Ken is a charter member of our association and one of the founding fathers which helped create the Medina County HBA back in 1973 - 40 years ago. Ken Cleveland is our top spike member and has shown unending support for our association and all it stands for. Without his support over the years, the organization may not have survived - for which we are grateful!

We congratulate Ken Cleveland for his support of our Association and sincerely thank him for his generous donations.



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## 2014 Dates To Remember

**October 4th-19th, 2014**

**Medina County Parade of  
Homes** – More information to  
come. Associate members -  
sponsorships will be available  
– be sure to support your  
fellow builder members.



# ATTN: MEMBERS Should You Sponsor the Fall Parade of Homes?



To schedule your  
Sponsorship, contact:

**Medina County HBA**  
Sharon Brock, Admin.  
4083 N. Jefferson St.  
Medina, OH 44256  
330.725.2371

## Why wouldn't you?

If you work with builders and want to help them build and sell homes in 2014 and beyond, you can't afford to not participate. In fact, this year's Spring Parade event alone yielded *over \$4 million* in sales (over 50% of the homes entered).

With that in mind, here's the lowdown:

- Your business name and logo on the MCHBA website as a supporter of the event
- Your logo on the MCHBA website links to your website
- Your name is listed in all press releases that go out to the media
- Your logo is on the map/model handout (both printed and online)
- Listed in Building Blocks as a Parade sponsor for 3+ months
- Free 1/6 page ad in three issues of Building Blocks (upgradeable)



**PARADE DATES:** Sat., October 4<sup>th</sup> – Sun., October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014

**PARADE HOURS:** Sat & Sun ONLY 12-5pm, closed Mon-Fri

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- Virtual tour / tab / map handout online on HBA website
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# LICENSING ON THE AGENDA—OHBA AT THE TABLE

*By: Vince Squillace  
OHBA Executive Director*

We recently learned the Ohio House will take up the issue of licensing of homebuilders via HB 140 this fall. As published in our legislative review, the bill has been subject to some intense scrutiny before the House Commerce and Labor committee. While varied approaches have been discussed and drafted into different bills, the committee chair has expressed an interest to bring the issue to the full House for consideration.

In the Senate, a bill has been in the drafting stage for more than a year. To date, no measure has been introduced, as expected by Senate sponsor, John Ekland. Most of the attention to the subject was raised by TV news stories in the Cleveland area regarding consumer's problems with home improvement contractors.

OHBA was informed legislative interest is mounting on the subject and we were asked to participate in discussions in the Senate for a possible bill. OHBA convened a government affairs committee meeting based on the interest of the Senate. House sponsor, Bill Patmon, introduced HB 140 with no prior discussions with OHBA. Our government affairs committee reviewed the issue from the information acquired from both the House and the Senate. The committee adopted a position of support of licensing but with important conditions designed to protect the industry. It was clear our members understand the need to be closely involved in discussions of an issue which will impact all homebuilders. In sum, we are at the table. Discussions

continue at this time.

Licensing of builders is not new. More than half the states require some sort of licensing or registration. When OHBA was formed some 70 years ago licensing was recognized as an issue the industry would face. The issue has been discussed in the legislature in recent times as well. The important thought to remember is that OHBA is at the table. We have been asked to participate and our recommendations are being considered.



This is the major benefit of OHBA, representation and advocacy on behalf of the home construction industry. This is the mission assigned to us and adopted unanimously by our trustees for decades. While an issue may be controversial, it is of vital interest to have influence in the outcome. This is a truly valuable benefit not all industries or professions possess.

That is the true value of OHBA. We represent you in a substantial and tangible way. We expect discussion on the subject to continue through the end of the year. Stay tuned as this issue will be a matter of discussion at the highest levels of state government and OHBA will be at the table representing you.

See more on this issue - page 16-18. ■



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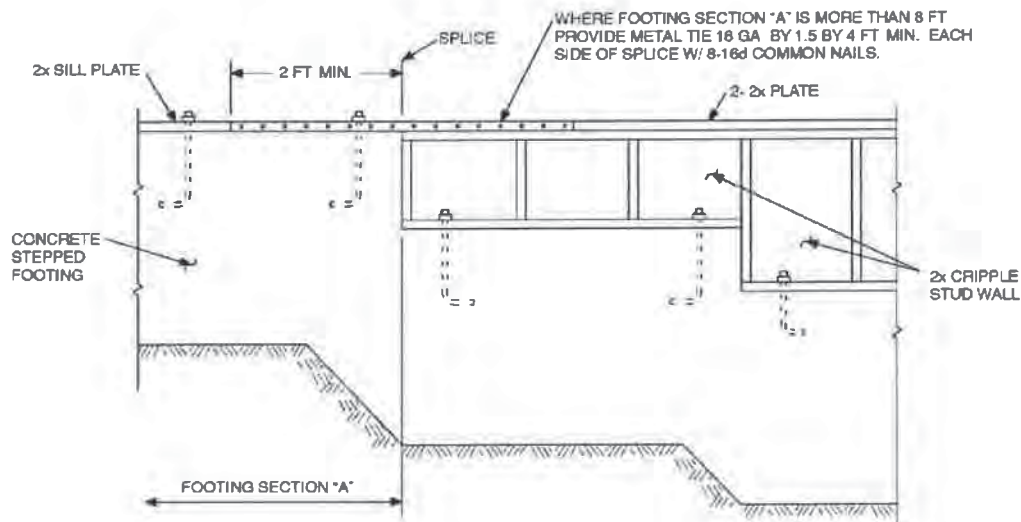
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# RCAC Recap – from Legislative News, Page 4

Public Hearing Draft  
Amendments Group LXXXVIII  
Page C- 315

that extends from foundation to floor above varies more than 4 feet (1219 mm), the braced wall line shall be constructed in accordance with the following:

1. Where the lowest floor framing rests directly on a sill bolted to a foundation not less than 8 feet (2440 mm) in length along a line of bracing, the line shall be considered as braced. The double plate of the cripple stud wall beyond the segment of footing that extends to the lowest framed floor shall be spliced by extending the upper top plate a minimum of 4 feet (1219 mm) along the foundation. Anchor bolts shall be located a maximum of 1 foot and 3 feet (305 and 914 mm) from the step in the foundation. See Figure 602.11.2.
2. Where cripple walls occur between the top of the foundation and the lowest floor framing, the bracing requirements of Sections ~~602.10.9 and 602.10.9.1~~ 602.10.11, 602.10.11.1 and 602.10.11.2 shall apply.
3. Where only the bottom of the foundation is stepped and the lowest floor framing rests directly on a sill bolted to the foundations, the requirements of Sections 403.1.6 and 602.11.1 shall apply.



For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 foot = 304.8 mm.

Note: Where footing Section "A" is less than 8 feet long in a 25-foot-long wall, install bracing at cripple stud wall.

FIGURE 602.11.2

## STEPPED FOUNDATION CONSTRUCTION

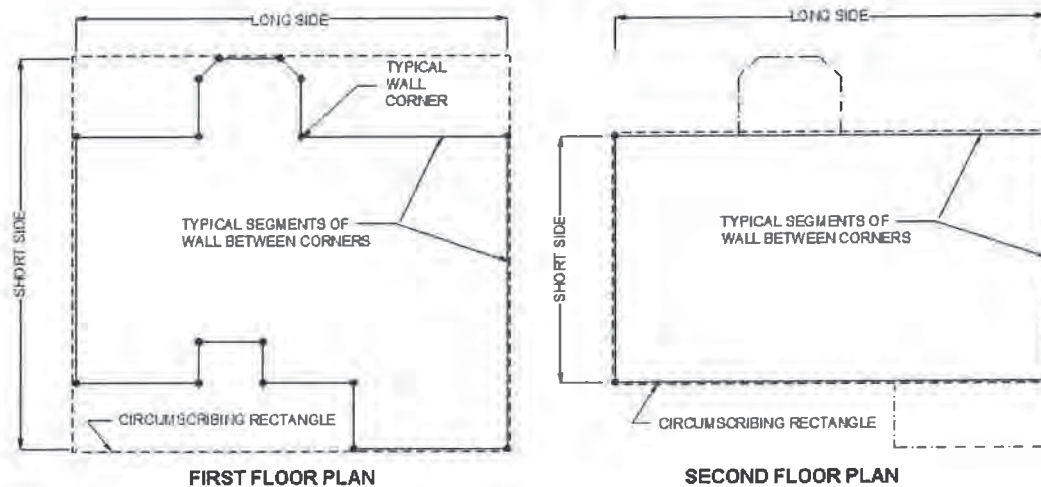
602.12 Simplified wall bracing. Buildings meeting all of the conditions listed in items 1-8 shall be permitted to be braced in accordance with this section as an alternative to the requirements of Section 602.10. The entire building shall be braced in accordance with this section; the use of other bracing provisions of R602.10, except as specified herein, shall not be permitted.

1. There shall be no more than two stories above the top of a concrete or masonry foundation or basement wall. Permanent wood foundations shall not be permitted.
2. Floors shall not cantilever more than 24 inches (607 mm) beyond the foundation or bearing wall below.



3. Wall height shall not be greater than 10 feet (2743 mm).
4. The building shall have a roof eave-to-ridge height of 15 feet (4572 mm) or less.
5. All exterior walls shall have gypsum board with a minimum thickness of 1/2 inch (12.7 mm) installed on the interior side fastened in accordance with Table 702.3.5.
6. The structure shall be located where the basic wind speed is less than or equal to 90 mph (40 m/s), and the Exposure Category is A or B.
7. The structure shall be located in Seismic Design Category A, B or C for detached one- and two-family dwellings or Seismic Design Category A or B for townhouses.
8. Cripple walls shall not be permitted in two-story buildings.

**602.12.1 Circumscribed rectangle.** The bracing required for each building shall be determined by circumscribing a rectangle around the entire building on each floor as shown in Figure 602.12.1. The rectangle shall surround all enclosed offsets and projections such as sunrooms and attached garages. Open structures, such as carports and decks, shall be permitted to be excluded. The rectangle shall have no side greater than 60 feet (18 288 mm), and the ratio between the long side and short side shall be a maximum of 3:1.



**FIGURE**

**R602.12.1  
RECTANGLE CIRCUMSCRIBING AN ENCLOSED BUILDING**

**602.12.2 Sheathing materials.** The following sheathing materials installed on the exterior side of exterior walls shall be used to construct a bracing unit as defined in Section 602.12.3. Mixing materials is prohibited.

1. Wood structural panels with a minimum thickness of 3/8 inch (9.5 mm) fastened in accordance with Table 602.3(3).
2. Structural fiberboard sheathing with a minimum thickness of 1/2 inch (12.7 mm) fastened in accordance with Table 602.3(1).

**602.12.3 Bracing unit.** A bracing unit shall be a fullheight sheathed segment of the exterior wall with no openings or vertical or horizontal offsets and a minimum length as specified herein. Interior walls shall not contribute toward the amount of required bracing. Mixing of Items 1 and 2 is prohibited on the same story.



1. Where all framed portions of all exterior walls are sheathed in accordance with Section 602.12.2, including wall areas between bracing units, above and below openings and on gable end walls, the minimum length of a bracing unit shall be 3 feet (914 mm).
2. Where the exterior walls are braced with sheathing panels in accordance with Section 602.12.2 and areas between bracing units are covered with other materials, the minimum length of a bracing unit shall be 4 feet (1219 mm).

602.12.3.1 Multiple bracing units. Segments of wall compliant with Section 602.12.3 and longer than the minimum bracing unit length shall be considered as multiple bracing units. The number of bracing units shall be determined by dividing the wall segment length by the minimum bracing unit length. Full-height sheathed segments of wall narrower than the minimum bracing unit length shall not contribute toward a bracing unit except as specified in Section 602.12.6.

602.12.4 Number of bracing units. Each side of the circumscribed rectangle, as shown in Figure 602.12.1, shall have, at a minimum, the number of bracing units in accordance with Table 602.12.4 placed on the parallel exterior walls facing the side of the rectangle. Bracing units shall then be placed using the distribution requirements specified in Section 602.12.5.

602.12.5 Distribution of bracing units. The placement of bracing units on exterior walls shall meet all of the following requirements as shown in Figure R602.12.5.

1. A bracing unit shall begin no more than 12 feet (3658 mm) from any wall corner.
2. The distance between adjacent edges of bracing units shall be no greater than 20 feet (6096 mm).
3. Segments of wall greater than 8 feet (2438 mm) in length shall have a minimum of one bracing unit.





602.12.6 Narrow panels. The bracing methods referenced in Section 602.10 and specified in Sections 602.12.6.1 through 602.12.6.3 shall be permitted when using simplified wall bracing.

602.12.6.1 Method CS-G. Braced wall panels constructed as Method CS-G in accordance with Tables 602.10.4 and 602.10.5 shall be permitted for one story garages when all framed portions of all exterior walls are sheathed with wood structural panels. Each CS-G panel shall be equivalent to 0.5 of a bracing unit. Segments of wall which include a Method CS-G panel shall meet the requirements of Section R602.10.4.2.

602.12.6.2 Method CS-PF. Braced wall panels constructed as Method CS-PF in accordance with Section 602.10.6.4 shall be permitted when all framed portions of all exterior walls are sheathed with wood structural panels. Each CS-PF panel shall equal 0.5 bracing units. A maximum of four CS-PF panels shall be permitted on all segments of walls parallel to each side of the circumscribed rectangle. Segments of wall which include a Method CS-PF panel shall meet the requirements of Section 602.10.4.2.

**TABLE 602.12.4**  
**MINIMUM NUMBER OF BRACING UNITS ON EACH SIDE OF THE CIRCUMSCRIBED RECTANGLE**



STORY LEVEL	FAVF-TO-RIDGE HEIGHT (feet)	MINIMUM NUMBER OF BRACING UNITS ON EACH LONG SIDE <sup>a,b</sup>						MINIMUM NUMBER OF BRACING UNITS ON EACH SHORT SIDE <sup>a,b</sup>					
		Length of short side (feet)						Length of long side (feet)					
		10	20	30	40	50	60	10	20	30	40	50	60
 	10	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	3
		2	3	3	4	5	6	2	3	3	4	5	6
 	15	1	2	3	3	4	4	1	2	3	3	4	4
		2	3	4	5	6	7	2	3	4	5	6	7

*For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 foot = 304.8 mm.*

*a. Interpolation shall not be permitted.*

*b. Cripple walls or wood-framed basement walls in a walk-out condition of a one-story structure shall be designed as the first floor of a two-story house.*

*c. Actual lengths of the sides of the circumscribed rectangle shall be rounded to the next highest unit of 10 when using this table.*

**602.12.6.3 Methods PFH and PFG.** *Braced wall panels constructed as Method PFH and PFG shall be permitted when bracing units are constructed using wood structural panels. Each PFH panel shall equal one bracing unit and each PFG panel shall be equal to 0.75 bracing units.*

**602.12.7 Lateral support.** *For bracing units located along the eaves, the vertical distance from the outside edge of the top wall plate to the roof sheathing above shall not exceed 9.25 inches (235 mm) at the location of a bracing unit unless lateral support is provided in accordance with Section 602.10.8.2.*

**602.12.8 Stem walls.** *Masonry stem walls with a height and length of 48 inches (1219 mm) or less supporting a bracing unit or a Method CS-G, CS-PF or PFG braced wall panel shall be constructed in accordance with Figure 602.10.9. Concrete stem walls with a length of 48 inches (1219 mm) or less, greater than 12 inches (305 mm) tall and less than 6 inches (152 mm) thick shall be reinforced sized and located in accordance with Figure 602.10.9.*

## SECTION 603 STEEL WALL FRAMING

**603.1 General.** Elements shall be straight and free of any defects that would significantly affect structural performance. Cold-formed steel wall framing members shall comply with the requirements of this section.

**603.1.1 Applicability limits.** The provisions of this section shall control the construction of exterior cold-formed steel wall framing and interior load-bearing cold-formed steel wall framing for buildings not more than 60 feet (18 288 mm) long perpendicular to the joist or truss span, not more than 40 feet (12 192 mm) wide parallel to the joist or truss span, and less than or equal to three stories above grade plane. All exterior walls installed in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be considered as load-bearing walls. Cold-formed steel walls constructed in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be limited to sites subjected to a maximum

# Licensing Bill on the Fast Track? – from Legislative News, Page 6



"It is unconscionable that ODE would try to turn these brave teachers into scapegoats in an effort to deflect attention from ODE's own disinterest in conducting a serious investigation."

ODE responded by saying the wellbeing of children is its top priority, "so when people make allegations of sexual abuse, time is of the essence in reporting and responding," Mr. Charlton said.

"Genuine concern for the welfare of our children is shown by taking immediate action in response to the situation that may endanger our children," he said. "The Department of Education takes all complaints seriously. Several offices within the Department of Education investigate complaints daily."

Mr. Charlton said in the past three days the agency has notified local authorities that could undertake their own investigations, contacted the complainants and reminded educators of their obligation to report abuse, neglect or criminal activity in a timely manner.

"The Department of Education investigates all test violation complaints. They are confidential by law and therefore we cannot comment about test investigations," he said. "The Department of Education also investigates complaints of teacher misconduct, in addition to other types of complaints."

The Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools meanwhile on Friday came to the defense of the school and its management company Concept Schools.

"The allegations made by former employees of the Horizon Science Academy Dayton High School at the State Board of Education meeting earlier this week could not be more serious and clearly demand investigation," OAPCS President and CEO Darlene Chambers said. "However, a rush to judgment could not be less appropriate. We all have a right to due process regardless of one's religion or ethnic background."

"OAPCS was especially troubled by the testimony of a former Department of Education employee who suggested that allegations against Concept Schools are an indictment against all charter schools and the state laws that govern them."

Democratic Gubernatorial candidate Ed FitzGerald issued a statement calling for the resignation of Superintendent of Public Instruction Dick Ross over the issue.

## Backers Of Bill To Address Home Construction Scammers Want Enactment In Lamé Duck

A House Democrat's bill to try to prevent home construction scams could see enactment before year's end but will likely require a bipartisan effort to draft a version agreeable to conservatives, the committee chairman said.

[Rep. Bill Patmon's](#) (D-Cleveland) residential construction bill ([HB 140](#)) stalled at the end of the spring session because of problems with a substitute version proposed by the committee chairman, [Rep. Ron Young](#) (R-Leroy).

The House Commerce & Labor chairman said at that time that his substitute version was assessed as being very expensive. Whereas Rep. Patmon's current bill calls for the licensing of residential builders, maintenance contractors and salespersons, Mr. Young had proposed to have them register with the attorney general's office instead.

"That one would have required the AG's office to have investigators and for them to manage the (registration) website, and the AG's office got back to us and said they'd have to hire like 20 more people, 25 more people...and the cost would have been in the millions," the chairman said in an interview.

The AG's office would need more funding to perform the types of services being considered for the bill, he said.

"We may very well end up with a real licensing bill where people would be assessed fees...and those fees then would go to the operation of a website and if there was a problem with a contractor they'd go before the board of the licensing group and be dealt with through the licensing board," Rep. Young said. "It'd be the industry essentially policing itself in most matters."

Rep. Patmon said, however, in his assessment of the current status of negotiations the committee concluded the current bill before it is preferable.

"After taking a look at the different way, we concluded that the way that I'm attempting to do it is the way you should go if in fact you do go, if I can get it through the legislature," he said.





The Democrat said the bill is necessary because thousands of complaints are annually filed with the attorney general's office by people scammed by residential builders.

The current bill would also create a Residential Builders' and Maintenance and Alteration Contractors' Board and create procedures for renewing the license created by the bill that includes taking an exam.

"I always thought that it was a good idea that people should know the difference between a two-by-four and a two-by-10 before they go to work on probably the largest purchase most people ever make in their lifetime," Rep. Patmon said.

Mr. Young said he thinks contractors should be traceable through a registration number that would be required to be included on any of the worker's literature and website. Significant fines and penalties could be levied if that number is omitted.

Consumers could then access a user-friendly website or call their local building department and find out about the contractor, his or her history and if they have any past litigation. Such a tactic is used in other disciplines, he said of a possible approach to the bill.

The chairman said the "major impediment" to the measure at present is his committee, which thinks it goes too far in some areas.

"They didn't like the reach of it, the fact that it included all building, even the projects over \$25,000, even some commercial projects where we have significant amounts of state law that offer protection," he said. "We have a somewhat conservative committee that probably wants the bill tailored so that it addresses the problems that we're hearing about."

Rep. Young nevertheless said he thinks some law changes are needed.

"I think Ohio needs something that will offer people more protection," he said. "I think what we're going to come up with will be something a little more tailored toward where the major problems are. Above the \$25,000 limit (in project cost) there are already protections in state law.

"It seems as if most of the problems come from the folks that they want some repairs in their driveway done or their gutters have fallen down or there's some storm damage. So someone comes out, agrees to do the work and they give them something under \$25,000 generally, they have some sort of a maybe a handwritten agreement and then...the contractor just disappears and their money's gone."

The trick is to draft something that does not interfere with the good actors in the industry, Mr. Young said.

"It's complicated because most of the homebuilders are good, honest people that just want to go out and make a living, so if we push too hard and end up with something that limits their ability to provide a service at a reasonable cost then everybody is hurt by it," he said. "At the same time we need something that protects the people, I think."

Ohio Home Builders Association Executive Vice President Vince Squillace said about two-thirds of his members support the idea of licensing contractors while the other third oppose it. They are in favor of going after bad actors, he said.

"We support the concept of licensing but it requires a lot of work because there's so many other rules and regulations that would impact it that have to be cleared out the way," he said.

OHBA has also talked with its members about Rep. Young's concept for a registration ID number.

"It's certainly not a bad idea, but where it gets a little bit of a problem is, let's say, someone either doesn't register and does work, to what degree are they punished, and say someone who is registered does bad work," Mr. Squillace said. "If you have a registration law you can't really punish someone for doing bad work. That would be more along the lines of licensing."

As to creating a board that would police the industry, he said that type of structure is pretty commonplace and OHBA supports the idea.

"We certainly think that you need some kind of peer-type review to properly analyze to see if someone's doing something out of the ordinary or not in accordance with industry-accepted practices, things of that nature," Mr. Squillace said.



The sponsor said he hopes the bill can get through both the House and Senate this session following the November election.

"Rep. Young has been cooperative in working with me and that gives me my optimism," Rep. Patmon said. "I think it can pass because we have so many people who are complaining about being hoodwinked and we have a state that has its storm season where they blow through and then people come and raid those areas and in many cases they're unscrupulous and people are left holding the bag."

[Sen. John Eklund](#) (R-Chardon) has drafted his own version of the proposal. Rep. Young said he has been in talks with the senator with the aim of having something that can move through both chambers in December.

"I think we can get something done; the Senate understands the problem," the House chairman said.

## Department Begins Final Push To Alert Iraq Veterans Of Approaching Bonus Application Deadline

Harkening to its military foundation, the Department of Veterans Services is taking a "no man left behind" approach to reaching out to those eligible for benefits, especially those set to expire under a \$200 million bonus program.

This week, the department began airing public service announcements on radio and television stations to alert Iraq War veterans that their window for opportunity to receive a payment through the veteran's bonus program is closing on Dec. 31.

The PSAs are part of a larger movement to ensure that anyone who is entitled to the bonus approved by voters in 2009 knows it exists and signs up to receive it, DVS spokesman Michael McKinney said. As of May, 82,000 bonuses totaling more than \$66 million had been awarded to veterans of the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

"We have always talked about the bonus and always publicized it, but we've gone into warp speed the last few years because it's ending," Mr. McKinney said, adding "We don't want anybody to be left behind."

The department has also reached out to Iraq War veterans by purchasing advertising space from more than 120 newspapers and sending out more than 49,000 informational post cards, using Bureau of Motor Vehicle records to determine which Ohioans may be eligible.

Those who served anywhere in the world on active duty for at least 90 days, training excluded, from Oct. 7, 2001 until present day could be eligible for a bonus. Because the war in Afghanistan hasn't ended, no bonus deadline has been set.

Mr. McKinney said when the Persian Gulf War bonus deadline was nearing at the end of 2013, the department took an approach identical to the one it is taking toward promoting the Iraq War bonuses, which can pay veterans up to \$1,500 and the families of those who died up to \$6,500.

All in all, the vigorous promotion of the bonuses has cost the department about \$50,000 in the last two years, he said, pointing to statistics that suggest the money has been well spent.

When promotion of the bonus was at its peak in November and December of last year, calls to the bonus department increased from about 800 per month to an average of 1,100 and there was an uptick in the amount of applications that came in daily resulting in 9,000 being submitted in the last two months of 2013, he said.

While Mr. McKinney said procrastinators likely contributed to a portion of the last-minute rush of application submissions, he added that there is always a slight spike in filings following advertising blitzes and media coverage that have taken place throughout the year.

Analytics from the department's recently upgraded smart phone app also show signs that veterans are responding with interest to benefits information, whether it be about bonuses, job search tools or basic benefits, he said.

Since its launch in November 2013, the app has attracted more than 6,500 users who, as of last week's upgrades, can search for Ohio Means Jobs locations and Small Business Development Centers as well as connect with student veterans centers at Ohio's public colleges and universities and with DVS through social media.



will then track the next few sites they visit—which are likely to be sites they visit often—and place your ads on those sites when they visit them again.

- Incorporate a form into your website to garner information on what shoppers are looking for in a home. (How many beds and baths? Do they want a formal living room?) Then email them floor plans that fit their criteria.

### Branding

- According to a study of new-home buyers, five years after Lennar customers purchased a home, they couldn't identify who their builder was, "but they know what kind of car they drive," one panelist pointed out, emphasizing that builders need to look to other industries for good examples of how to stay visible to customers to better establish a brand reputation.

- Decide what message you want your brand to be most associated with, and then ensure that message is conveyed at every interaction a customer has with your company.

- Rather than fight the reality that people use model homes for decorating ideas, embrace it by redecorating one room in your model each month to keep people coming back while establishing your brand as a leader in design. Send out an email blast with a photo of a corner of the room, and then make people come into the model to see the rest.



- Don't underestimate the power of philanthropy.

### Video

- "With the value of using video today, we as builders should do something cool," one panelist noted, adding that last year, 456.6 million content videos were watched and 105.4 billion video ads were viewed. Viewers spent 2.5 times more time watching personally relevant short form videos compared with other videos. And videos on your website make your site come up fast to the top of the line.

### Targeting

- Tap into professional organizations such as young professionals groups, medical professional organizations, and teachers associations by offering a networking lunch at your model homes and collecting business cards for a raffle. "These are people who have a career and a paycheck," making odds better that they will be in a position to buy, one panelist noted.

### Working with Realtors

- Stay top of mind with local Realtors by sending sales teams to the Realtor offices to be a part of their weekly meetings.

- Since Realtors are an excellent source of qualified leads, treat them as a customer and educate them on how you build and the value your homes offer.

- Don't waste money targeting all Realtors, since "90% of the business comes from 10% of the Realtors," one participant noted.

- Consider hosting a monthly lunch group for the top Realtors in your area at your model homes to give



them a chance to become familiar with your product and learn about any new communities or floor plans you offer.

### Parade Event Participation

- We can't say it enough. Whenever there is a Parade of Homes, if there is any way you can participate, you should. With the amount of monies expended on advertising and promoting this event, you just won't get a better marketing deal anywhere else. It is one of the best ways to get the word out about your company and have people, in droves, come and see what you have to offer.

**Members ...**  
Remember, whenever possible, always try to do business with a fellow member and support your Medina County HBA & local community!



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