

NEWSLETTER

Important Dates

CMHI Annual Meeting
February 23, 2003
London, Ontario

MHABC Board
March 11, 2003
Venue TBA

**1st B.C. Manufactured Housing
Consultant (MHC)TM Course**
March 27/28, 2003
Best Western—Kamloops

**12th Annual MHABC
Golf Tournament**
Tuesday, April 22, 2003
Sandpiper Golf Course
Harrison Mills, B.C.

MHABC 2003 AGM
Tuesday/Wednesday, April 22/23
Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa
Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.

**B.C. Building Officials Assn.
Annual Conference**
April 27/28, 2003
Delta Sun Peaks Resort
Kamloops, B.C.

**Union of B.C. Municipalities
Annual Convention**
September 22-26, 2003
Vancouver Trade & Exhibition Centre
Vancouver, B.C.

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British Columbia MANUFACTURERS Gained a little in 2002

MHABC Member Manufacturers in B.C. reported shipping 503 new homes in 2002, up marginally from 2001. This is a hint of a revival of housing outside B.C.'s larger metropolitan areas.

Shipments into B.C. by Members declined yet again to 33 homes last year.

The Manufactured Home Registry (MHR) reported that 561 new home registrations originated in B.C., up 7.9%. MHR registrations originating outside B.C. dropped 10.9% to 82 new homes.

MHR registrations from B.C. can include non-factory-built but chattel titled homes. All of MHR's in-bound homes are factory-built.

MHABC manufacturers built single section homes increased by some 8% in 2002, while multiple section home shipments declined by some 6%.

(See Tables and Charts)

Manufactured Housing Association of British Columbia

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Website: www.mhabc.com · Email: mhabc@telus.net

**1st British Columbia Offering
MANUFACTURED HOUSING
CONSULTANT (MHC)[™]**

Program Course

MARCH 27 & 28, 2003

Best Western—Kamloops

\$500 MHABC Members

\$750 non-members

179 people have taken the MHC program in Canada from Alberta to Atlantic Canada. *It's now available for British Columbians.*

The program was developed by the Canadian Manufactured Housing Institute -

"...to provide a professional development opportunity for retailers, realtors, sales people, builders, community owners and managers."

This course offering is made possible by the generous financial support of Residential Warranty Company of Canada Inc.

REGISTER by MARCH 8th!

Submit forms and funds to:

MHABC, P.O. Box 31661,

Pitt Meadows, B.C.

V3Y 2H1

(See Information and Form)

**MHABC 2003
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

Mark April 22nd & 23rd on your calendar and plan to attend the 2003 AGM at the Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa.

Members and guests, playing in the 12th Annual MHABC Golf Tournament on Tuesday April 22nd, will be checking into the hotel on Monday, April 21st.

The Annual General Meeting will be called to order at 8 a.m., Wednesday, April 23rd.

Because of the number of important matters, meetings will begin following the golf tournament. For example, a Transportation Session with senior officials from Victoria is being arranged for 3:30-5 p.m.

After a full day of meetings, the AGM program will conclude with the Annual Reception and Dinner on Wednesday April 23rd.

The Harrison Resort & Spa is in first class shape. In fact, Spa appointments need to be booked early because of its popularity!

**Reservations 1 800 663 2266
"MHABC"**

IMPORTANT ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

As 2003 unfolds, MHABC Members will need to focus on several significant matters.

First up is the future regulation, if any, of the retail sale of manufactured homes. The indication from the B.C. government is that no provision for retail licensing is intended to be included, when the new consumer legislation - *Consumer Protection Act* - is brought forward.

The *Consumer Protection Act* is believed to include provisions for the regulation (licensing) of activities through Designated Administrative Authorities (DAA).

The automotive industry is expected to establish a DAA to provide for licensing and other regulation. This follows the earlier development of the Motor Dealer Standards Association and the introduction of training of sales staff prior to employment.

Examples of existing DAAs include The Real Estate Council of B.C. for realtors and the Homeowner Protection Office for site-builders.

The MHABC Board has recommended that provincial licensing be continued, though it would not likely be under the Motor Dealer Act.

The following is the text of the MHABC letter to the three Ministers, whose responsibilities and legislation currently impact manufactured housing. The Ministers are: Hon. Rich Coleman, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Hon. Gary Collins, Minister of Finance and Hon. Rick Thorpe, Minister of Competition, Science and Enterprise.

February 14th, 2003

RETAIL SALE OF MANUFACTURED HOMES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The current proposals, which have been put forward with regard to new consumer legislation (*Consumer Protection Act*) and the modernization of the Motor Dealer Act (MDA), would end provincial licensing of the retail sale of manufactured homes to British Columbians.

Following the Core Review of the Corporate, Personal Property and Manufactured Home (MHR) registries, there may also be changes proposed to the MHR as well as to the Manufactured Home Act and/or its regulations as well.

While there may only be several dozens of MDA licensees that are engaged in the principal business of selling new manu-

factured homes and the resale of existing homes, and while their collective consumer complaint record is very good, they ought not and do not wish to be cast adrift. Licensing has had a very positive effect, indeed it has contributed to the consumer satisfaction record.

The retail sale of manufactured homes is a highly specialized business that involves:

- home construction in third-party certified factories,
- specialized road, ferry, and perhaps barge, transportation,
- knowledge of both surface, pier and other inground foundation systems,
- the rolling or craning on of housing components, and
- the completion of home modules on site.

MDA licensing also facilitated the operation of businesses in the regions of B.C. that included the incidental purchase/sale/resale of motor vehicles. Such longstanding licensees (the minority) have had MDA dealer plates consistent with this adjunct business.

Retail sales businesses are not simply realtors nor are they

just like site builders, yet both of these other activities will continue to be licensed by law, either by an existing Delegated Administrative Authority (DAA) or a provincial body. B.C. law has recognized the uniqueness of manufactured housing for years vis a vis the Real Estate Act and more recently the Homeowner Protection Act, and Office (HPO).

A few years ago, the unproclaimed provisions in the Manufactured Home Act for the licensing of retail businesses were struck from the act, as licensing continued under the Motor Dealer Act. Unless they, or a contemporary variation of them, are reinstated, the manufactured home retail sector must look to the proposed new consumer legislation for the continuance of provincial licensing.

There is some merit in considering licensing under the Manufactured Home Act as the title interests of manufacturers, retailers, homebuyers, lenders and both the B.C. (e.g. PST on imported homes) and local governments (e.g. assessment and taxation of improvements) are all serviced by the MHR and Per-

sonal Property Registry (PPR) in the Ministry of Finance.

On the other hand, the licensing of manufactured home retail businesses *could be included* under the proposed new *Consumer Protection Act*, which may need to be re-drafted for this purpose (a need that may be shared with other small groups of businesses, that are currently licensed by the province and would wish to continue).

Although a canvassing of all MDA licensees selling manufactured homes has not been conducted, it is believed that a simple, variable term licence for manufactured (modular and mobile) home retail sales businesses could be readily implemented. Existing licensees with a clean consumer record could perhaps obtain a licence for five years, while a new business might first obtain a one or two-year licence.

All existing MDA licensees have made contributions to the Consumer Compensation Fund, which is understood to be remaining under direct provincial control. It is understood that this fund may also

be segregated and might be able to continue to provide for consumer protection, with contributions from manufactured home retail licensees from time to time.

The manufactured home retail sector might opt to pursue self-regulation, however, discussion of this subject is premature at present.

In closing, the Directors of the Manufactured Housing Association of British Columbia recommend that there be specific provincial licensing of manufactured home retail businesses in the province.

Hon. Rich Coleman Responds

Earlier the association had written to the Hon. Rich Coleman and the Hon. Gary Collins about the interaction of initiatives within the respective ministries, including the Manufactured Home Act, the Manufactured Home Registry and Personal Property Registry in Finance and the new consumer legislation, the new Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act and in Commercial Transport .

Hon. Rich Coleman responded:

"I am aware of the linkages between the various statutes and the need for them to interact in an appropriate manner. I will work closely with my colleague, the Hon. Gary Collins, Minister of Finance, to ensure that the various initiatives underway blend together in a manner that does not negatively impact your industry."

Manufactured Home Registry CORE REVIEW

There has been no release yet of any proposals that would affect the Manufactured Home Act and the MHR and PPR in the Ministry of Finance. It is believed that the combined registries are a "profit center" for government, with user fees funding the several operations.

Nonetheless, the registries are understood to be downsizing. In this regard, there is a risk that long term knowledge of the MHR, its purposes, organization, procedures and operations might be lost with personnel reductions.

The MHR is also linked directly to the transportation of homes

as all homes must be registered before moves and the MHR must be advised of the new location. MHABC has advised the Ministers that it wishes to discuss term permits for the transporters who conduct the moves.

Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act

A session at the AGM will be devoted to the new act and the development of regulations to be used in its implementation.

B.C. Transport Policy

The Transportation Session at the Annual Meeting will allow everyone to get fully up to speed on transportation policy since route specific test moves of houseboats for export has opened up routes connecting Sicamous to Kamloops and Merritt and Merritt to the border at Osoyoos or at Sumas or Surrey Truck Crossing (*or vice versa*).

In the past week, Commercial Transport has released new Forms, most particularly to clarify the dimensions and movement of larger loads on a route specific basis.

Where it was unclear previ-

ously, the larger loads are up to 31 metres long (with tandem drive tractor), up to 5 metres wide and up to 4.88 metres high. They may be moved from 12:01 midnight until 5 a.m. according to the permit requirements for pilot cars, flaggers etc., depending on the route and any necessary traffic control.

These larger loads in the southern part of the province have been pioneered because of export sale possibilities for aluminum houseboats. Their route specific tests have opened these routes for all commodities, including factory-built homes and other structures.

The test moves were carried out under a policy that would limit such moves to 100 kms. or less if two lane road infrastructure was to be used. Moves over 100 kms. in length would have to utilize a routing which is predominantly 3/4 lanes in width.

In addition to the routes described, it is understood that there are proposals for route specific moves from Kelowna north to Salmon Arm (and the first route approved). Other proposals may surface as well.

The *potential* for new building products is significant. MHABC has discussed increased width in the past so as to add eaves. Together with the possibility of height beyond 15' to 16', *potential* exists for a greater variety of fixed roof construction, with residential designs being more readily achievable. Bigger single section homes are possible.

Commercial Transport cautions that the load dimensions only relate to the provincial highways, where the route specific moves will be permitted.

A practical question also arises with regard to existing manufactured home communities and the density/setback limits presently in local bylaws.

Hypothetically, route specific routes could be pioneered off the main routes up to 100 kms. on two lane infrastructure after test moves. Again, *hypothetically*, larger loads *might be moveable* after tests as far west as Cache Creek or up the North Thompson from Kamloops, or to Tsawwassen, *for example*.

The AGM Transport Session should be lively, given such possibilities!

OUTLOOK A LITTLE BRIGHTER IN 2003

With both B.C. and Federal Budgets in hand, the promised delivery of new/improved infrastructure, such as highway improvements in the Kicking Horse Canyon, will have beneficial effects in regions where such investments are made. A winning Olympic Bid in July will reaffirm B.C. as a place where good things can happen.

Nonetheless, with the soft-wood lumber dispute as yet unresolved, B.C.'s biggest economic engine is operating at part throttle. Armed conflict in the Middle-East in 1991 was followed by a recession in the United States. Therefore some caution is warranted re: Iraq.

The manufactured housing industry in B.C. has faced considerable challenges in the domestic marketplace and developed new business in the United States and beyond. Consequently, the industry sector is leaner, tougher and with new, hard earned experience in difficult domestic and

offshore markets. The factory-built sector is ready to go!

CMHC forecasts B.C. housing starts to increase by more than 6% in 2003 and another 4% or so in 2004. CMHC sees starts rising in just 3 provinces this year - Quebec, Ontario and B.C....

MHABC President Greater Langley's Citizen of the Year

MHABC Members can be very proud of the recognition accorded President Dale Ball, who was named by the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce as Langley's Citizen of the Year. Dale has an outstanding record of community service and leadership, across a broad range of interests and age groups.

MHABC 2003 AGM

April 22nd & 23rd

Harrison Hot Springs Resort
& Spa, Harrison, B.C.

1 800 663 2266 "MHABC"

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

April 22nd - Sandpiper Golf Club
Harrison Mills, B.C.

Stay tuned!

Tomorrow's Housing Today!!