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Canadian Home Builders opening branch in Hat

KELSEY MEEHAN
kmeehan@medicinehatnews.com

The “voice of Canada’s residential construction industry” is preparing to speak up in Medicine Hat.

The Canadian Home Builders’ Association is currently starting up a branch in Medicine Hat for the first time, and those involved are anticipating what its presence will mean for both builders and home owners.

“We are in the process of forming now and we’re really excited,” said Donna Robinson, acting secretary treasurer of the local association and co-owner of New Leaf Homes.

“The response from builders so far has been great,” she said.

Operating under the slogan ‘One industry, one voice’, the associations serve as a membership grouping for residential home builders and others associated with them, such as trades workers, real estate agents, those involved in finance and so on.

No such unified group has ever been in place in Medicine Hat, and Robinson said the time is right for people in the industry to come together and bring a common

voice to customers needs and the standards of the industry.

There are currently existing branches of the association in Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Calgary and Edmonton.

“When we’re dealing with the various levels of government we have way more impact as a group than if one builder was going before the provincial government,” said Robinson.

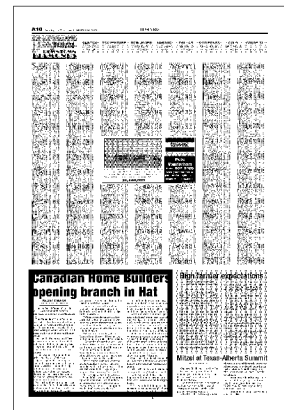
“We’ve been meeting since March 10 and we will be incorporating hopefully this fall,” she said.

The Medicine Hat branch once fully established will be linked and contribute to both the Alberta and Canadian Home Builders’ Association, in terms of fees. An official board will be formed once this step is reached as well.

“It’s a big venture for many of us. As builders we’re not always familiar with sitting on boards, but we really think this is going to improve the industry,” she said.

“It’s going to be empowering.”

Slated for the end of the month, approximately 40 local builders have signed up to take part in a two day workshop session put on by the Built Green Society of Canada and presented by EnerVision, based in Calgary.



In conjunction with the local Home Builders' Association, two separate seminar sessions have been arranged for June 24 and 25, and then again on June 26 and 27.

Belva Crabtree, seminar organizer with EnerVision, said that after the two day session those who took part have the opportunity to receive certification from Natural Resources Canada as an R-2000 home builder in energy efficiency.

Built Green is an industry driven voluntary program that promotes "green" building practices to reduce the impact that building has on the environment. It benefits the home buyer, the community and the environment and is an opportunity for everyone to choose a "green" future.

Once local builders become R-2000 certified they can enter their homes into the Built Green program.

"This will go beyond just being energy efficient," Crabtree said.

Robinson added that it is important for home owners to have access to these building practices.

"It's a wonderful thing for the consumer. So many people don't know about what is hidden behind their walls," she said.