



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2018

Industry partnerships continue to protect consumers from illegal building

PELHAM, ON – The new home industry in Ontario is made up of a number of working parts – not just on the job site, but also behind the scenes managing the system of standards, permits and inspections to ensure a home is properly built, safe to live in and covered by a warranty. Today, representatives from Tarion, the Niagara Home Builders' Association, and the Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) met with media to discuss how they are working together to enhance consumer confidence in the home building industry and protect consumers from illegal building.

"We are pleased to share the success stories of local builders and see the vibrant communities they're creating for home believers in the Niagara region," said Joe Vaccaro, CEO of Ontario Home Builders' Association. "Each of the organizations represented here today share a commitment to consumer protection and ensuring that Ontario's new home building industry is regarded as a world class leader."

Siloni Waraich, Tarion's Vice President of Stakeholder Relations; Jon Whyte, President of the Niagara Home Builders' Association; and Joe Vaccaro visited a Rinaldi Homes model at their Pelham site where they talked about the *Ontario Building Partnership* between Tarion, OHBA and the Ontario Building Officials' Association (OBOA) including how the partners are:

- collaborating on local consumer education and homeownership issues;
- advocating for a province-wide illegal building prevention program, like the one currently being tested in Niagara Falls, to protect home buyers from illegal building; and
- working on establishing more consistent standards across the province.

Under the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act anyone in the province of Ontario who plans to build and/or sell a new home must be registered with Tarion and enrol the home(s). Prior to being granted registration, all prospective home builders are required to successfully complete a technical evaluation based on the Ontario Building Code and undergo a financial viability and business competency analysis.

In the last five years, Tarion's Compliance and Investigations team has laid 89 charges related to illegal building in the Niagara Region and obtained 57 convictions in Provincial Offences Court.

Since July 1, 2015, the members of the Ontario Building Partnership have been running a pilot program to prevent illegal building. Niagara Falls was one of the first municipalities to join the pilot. that sees Tarion assume responsibility for providing building departments with a letter that either confirms a builder is registered or provides assurance that the home is a bona fide owner-build.

"I am a big supporter of the illegal building pilot and welcome changes that provide better protection for home buyers." said Whyte.

“Leaders, like Niagara Falls and its building official colleagues across the region, are part of the reason we formed the Ontario Building Partnership, because we saw the genuine desire from across the industry to work together on greater consistency in education and application of standards and increased professionalism across the province. We know that will, in turn, provide greater consumer confidence and better products for the consumer,” said Waraich.

RED FLAGS

Homeowners should be suspicious of builders who say things like:

- You don't need a Tarion warranty because I offer my own;
- I built the home for myself but decided to sell it instead;
- You don't need a warranty if you leave my name off the building permit and say you're building it yourself.

New home buyers should visit the Ontario Builder Directory on Tarion's website before signing a purchase agreement to confirm that their builder is registered. Illegal building can be anonymously reported by calling Tarion at 1-800-786-6497, or by sending an email to enforcement@tarion.com.

About the Partners:

The groundbreaking Ontario Building Partnership was formed in Fall 2017 to increase consumer protection for new home buyers, improve industry standards and achieve greater consistency in education and application of standards in Ontario's new home building industry.

The Ontario Building Officials Association supports Ontario building officials in ensuring a safer and a more sustainable and accessible Ontario by delivering training and certification, promoting uniform code application, working with industry partners, providing a voice to policymakers, and advancing the profession. On behalf of the municipalities across Ontario, OBOA's 2000 members administer provincial laws and municipal by-laws relating to the construction of all types of buildings and structures.

As #homebeliever champions, the Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) believes in the great Canadian dream of home ownership by supporting more housing choice and supply across Ontario. OHBA is the voice of the residential construction industry in Ontario, representing 4,000 member companies organized into 29 local associations across the province.

Tarion is the regulator of new home builders and vendors, that protects the rights of new home buyers according to the terms of the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act.