



## PRESS RELEASE



*Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2005*

### **Minister Announces Funding for Sustainable Housing**

**WATERLOO, Ontario, July 20, 2005** — The Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced today a contribution of \$1 million to launch the first phase of a Canadian net zero energy healthy housing initiative, a government/industry partnership to build a vision for a clean energy future and healthy communities.

"Our quality of life today, and the legacy we leave to future generations, demands fundamental change in the way in which we think about, and interact with, our environment," said Minister Fontana. "The net zero energy healthy housing initiative strengthens the Government of Canada's commitment to building safe, healthy, and sustainable communities."

The initial funding has been identified for the start of this initiative, which would see net zero energy home demonstrations being integrated into sustainably planned communities across Canada within 18 months. This first phase is part of the plan for a community-scale demonstration of 1,500 homes involving all provinces and territories to be started within five years under this initiative.

"This announcement represents an important signal to industry that sustainable housing and renewable energy technologies will play an important role in our communities in the future", said Milfred Hammerbacher, Chair of the Net Zero Energy Home Coalition and member of the Canadian Solar Industries Association. The Net Zero Energy Home Coalition consists of private and public sector organizations that support the vision of a housing future where all new homes will be built to net zero energy healthy housing standards by 2030.

The goal of net zero is to implement a range of measures that will ultimately lead to housing that has a zero net consumption of energy on an annual basis for heating and electricity. The initiative will also target reduced consumption of other key resources such as land, water, building materials, natural habitat and infrastructure through application of the healthy housing principles. The net zero energy healthy housing initiative is designed to help reduce the energy intensity of Canada's housing sector, support the growing renewable energy and sustainable housing industries, and help Canada meet its goal of reducing green house gas (GHG) emissions.

"Moving towards zero energy housing is an important step towards building a sustainable living environment in Canada," said Environment Minister Stéphane Dion. "By integrating green energy technologies with enhanced energy efficiency, the net zero program represents transformational change that will help us meet our Kyoto commitment and enhance the economic competitiveness of our building sector."

Zero energy housing is a key target of long-term Government of Canada energy technology research and development. This initiative provides the potential for early application and proof of how zero energy housing solutions can work, in order to help overcome barriers to adoption and accelerate broader acceptance of this type of housing.

The ultimate objective of the net zero housing initiative is to build capacity for the broad-scale, long-term development of affordable, sustainable housing and communities in all regions of Canada. This initiative is another part of Project

## Canadian Mortgage News - Minister Announces Funding for Sustainable Housing

Green — the federal government's broader environmental vision aimed at supporting a healthy environment and a competitive economy.

Housing is responsible for 17 per cent of secondary energy use in Canada and 16 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency. For over half a century, CMHC has been contributing to improving the living conditions and the well-being of Canadians through four areas of housing activities — housing finance, assisted housing, research and information transfer, and export promotion. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, and making vibrant and sustainable communities a reality across the country.

### **For further information, please contact:**

#### **Media Enquiries:**

Peter Graham,  
Minister's Office  
Director of Communications  
(819) 953-5646

Christine Choury  
Chief, Media and Associations Relations  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation  
(613) 742-5344  
[cchoury@cmhc.ca](mailto:cchoury@cmhc.ca)

Gordon Shields  
Co-ordinator  
Net Zero Energy Home Coalition  
(613) 852-2316  
[gshields@magma.ca](mailto:gshields@magma.ca)

#### **Public Enquiries:**

1 800 668-2642

### **Backgrounder**

#### **Net Zero Energy Healthy Housing**

The key objective for creating a national net zero energy healthy housing demonstration and implementation initiative is to advance new Canadian housing towards a net zero energy consumption goal.

Net zero energy healthy housing follows CMHC's five healthy housing principles (occupant comfort, energy efficiency, resource conservation, environmental impact, and affordability) by combining passive solar, energy efficient design, construction and appliances with commercially available renewable energy systems. The project will adopt the integration of renewable energy technologies such as photovoltaics, solar thermal, ground source heat etc.

The initiative also involves important improvements to community and building design, regulations, and innovative financing, such as direct lending, in support of sustainable housing and healthy cities.

## Canadian Mortgage News - Minister Announces Funding for Sustainable Housing

Being industry led, key stakeholders (Net Zero Energy Home Coalition, Canadian solar and renewable energy industries, developers, manufacturers, homebuilders, architects, engineers, integrated design experts, researchers and federal, provincial, territorial and municipal government departments) will be contributing financially and to the project's creation, development, and deployment. The initiative will include all housing types (single detached to multi-units) and ultimately address the existing housing stock.

Looking to Kyoto and beyond, net zero energy healthy housing represents an integrated government/industry/consumer solution to address Canadian environmental quality and climate change issues and access to quality, affordable housing. The development of net zero will also ensure Canada's inclusion in competitive international markets and our next generation of value added exports.



Minister Fontana and members of the Net Zero coalition stand with solar panels similar to the ones used in the solar home behind them.