



Siloni Waraich,
Chief Research Officer
Home Construction
Regulatory Authority



HCRA: SUPPORTING OUR BUILDERS AND PROMOTING INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

"Working with Your Municipal Building Department"

When we launched our Research & Education Program, the Home Construction Regulatory Authority (HCRA) engaged with its licensees and industry stakeholders to better understand how we can support builders as Ontario Building Code (OBC) requirements evolve and new construction trends emerge. One educational need that continues to be highlighted is the builder–municipality relationship.

The HCRA, with the support of RSM Building Consultants, is creating an illustrated tip sheet focused on the three key stages of the construction process: (1) design development, (2) permit application and (3) inspections.

To help inform this resource, we launched a survey with our builders and another with OBOA members at the recent Annual Meeting and Training Sessions (AMTS).

So, what have we heard so far? While the themes won't surprise many, they reinforce feedback that can support our collective efforts.

Across all licensee survey responses, "Time delays in approvals" was identified as the top challenge. Licensees attributed these delays to unclear processes, inconsistent communication and staffing shortages, reinforcing the opportunity to clarify permit application best practices.

Not all the feedback was critical, however. Builders also shared examples of effective collaboration in certain municipalities. The consistent theme was strong communication and clear expectations from the onset. There was very positive feedback about the value of (1) open dialogue and mutual respect, (2)

pre-submission consultations, (3) timely responses to emails and phone calls and (4) in-person conversations that strengthen relationships.

What did OBOA members tell us? Their responses aligned closely with those of licensees, all pointing back to the importance of communication. Five themes were consistently identified:

1. Regular Meetings and Forums

Many municipalities highlighted the value of hosting regular meetings, workshops, builder forums and seminars. These create space for open dialogue, updates (including Code changes) and collaborative problem-solving. Some municipalities shared success stories, such as annual industry workshops that cover OBC updates, common inspection-stage issues and builder bulletins.

2. Clear and Proactive Communication

Open, transparent and proactive communication — through emails, newsletters or in-person discussions — was repeatedly cited as essential for positive collaboration.

3. Building Relationships and Open Dialogue

Strong relationships and open dialogue between inspectors, builders and municipal staff are seen as key to successful collaboration. There was also solid acknowledgement of including designers and permit administrators into that relationship-building strategy. This includes being available for questions, providing feedback and maintaining a supportive approach.

4. Educational Resources and Training

Many municipalities already share guides, checklists, online materials and training sessions to help homeowners and builders understand Code requirements and municipal processes. A particularly relevant suggestion — and one aligned with our upcoming tip sheet — was the use of stage-specific construction checklists.

5. Use of Digital Tools and Online Portals

Many respondents noted the benefits of digital platforms, online permit portals and shared drives to streamline communication,

application processes and access to information. Several suggested quick educational videos to help builders adopt these digital platforms.

We are thankful to all OBOA members who took the time to complete the survey and share thoughtful responses, including examples of local best practices. The HCRA looks forward to sharing the completed tip sheet, which we hope will become a useful resource at your building counters as well.

HCRA'S RADON GUIDES

With a clear desire to support our licensees through Code changes, the 2024 OBC update presented an opportunity to launch our first working group, which included OBOA's executive and members. With support from industry stakeholders, technical experts, several authorities having jurisdiction and OBOA's Building Code Advisory Services, the HCRA developed [Home Building Basics: What Licensed Builders Need to Know About Radon](#) to help builders adopt the new mandatory rough-in requirements.

As part of our Research & Education mandate, the HCRA is also committed to ensuring homeowners have access to current and relevant information to help them understand how Code changes may affect the homes they purchase and their well-being. In this case, the responsibility for radon testing now rests with homeowners if they suspect radon in their new home. To support them, we created [Beyond Homeownership: What Every Homeowner Should Know About Radon](#).

Some OBOA members have expressed an interest in making these guides available at their building counters. Because additional clarifications and updates to the 2024 OBC requirements are expected, the HCRA's intent is to maintain these guides as "living documents." We are offering printed postcards with QR codes linking to the most up-to-date version of each guide.

You can request postcards for your building department by using the QR code below.

NOW AVAILABLE!

Consumer & Builder Radon Guides

Order **free** information cards for your building department today!

Radon Resource for Homeowners
AVAILABLE NOW!

Radon Resource for New Home Builders
AVAILABLE NOW!

Home Construction Regulatory Authority



RESOURCE HUBS FOR HOMEOWNERS AND BUILDERS

Over the last few months, the HCRA has expanded its Resource Hubs to support licensees and new homeowners throughout their educational journeys. These hubs also promote existing training and educational resources from partner organizations, including OBOA's Code-related training offerings.

As these hubs continue to grow, we hope they become a centralized, one-stop resource for the industry.

You can access the HCRA's Resource Hubs by clicking the images below.

Consumer Education & Resource Hub

Welcome to the Consumer Education & Resource Hub, providing educational content that supports consumer protection, education, and awareness related to home buying and ownership. We have created resources for you, as well as curated content from our generous partners to provide you with the most relevant education on important homeownership topics.

Here, you'll find helpful resources we've developed, along with curated content from our valued partners, all focused on the most important topics for today's homeowners and homebuyers. [Browse our latest resources](#) or [explore by category for specific information](#).

For home maintenance tips and educational resources to support your new homeownership journey, subscribe to our [Home Building and Beyond newsletter](#).

Filter by category: All categories

Filter by date: All dates

Reset filters

Submit

HCRA Resource, Radon
10 October 2024

What every homeowner should know about radon

In collaboration with key stakeholders, the HCRA has developed a practical guide to help homeowners understand and manage the risks associated with exposure to radon. It includes key information for new and new addition homes.

Buying Your Home
11 June 2025

Education Session: The Importance of Choosing a Licensed Builder

In this online session, the HCRA explores the risks of working with unlicensed builders and how purchasers can better protect themselves. Learn from real case examples and see what actions the HCRA is taking to crack down on illegal activity.

Buying Your Home
16 May 2025

Keys to Comfort: Info for New Homebuyers and Owners

In this webcast, the HCRA explores how it protects homebuyers and owners, including when to turn to the HCRA for support. In addition, it discusses the actions the HCRA has taken to protect new homebuyers and owners after a complaint is

Technical Research & Education Resource Hub

Welcome to the Technical Research & Education Resource Hub, providing educational content on emerging technical trends and best practices in home construction. Here, you'll find a mix of HCRA resources and curated content from our valued partners, all designed to help you stay informed on key industry topics. [Browse our latest published resources](#) or [search by category for specific information](#).

Explore hot topics like the **2024 Ontario Building Code** updates, **radon mitigation strategies**, and upcoming events and training opportunities!

Upcoming Events & Training Opportunities

For more updates, news, and events, subscribe to our [Home Building and Beyond newsletter](#).

Filter by category: All categories

Filter by date: All dates

Reset filters

Submit

HCRA Resource, Ontario Building Code, Radon
10 October 2024

Building Basics: What builders need to know about radon

Are you aware of the new requirements in the Ontario Building Code (OBC) for radon rough-in? In addition to licensing and homeowner protection, the HCRA also works to strengthen

Training & Education, Video
11 September 2025

Research & Education YouTube Channel

See some of the recent videos we've posted and subscribe to the HRA YouTube channel.

Ontario Building Code
11 April 2025

Ontario Building Code Updates

The 2024 Ontario Building Code (OBC) came into effect on January 1, 2025 – the largest ever change in the OBC with 4,700 items being revised. The HRA continues to support your educational needs as you prepare to adapt to

SOUND ABATEMENT IN STACKED TOWNHOMES

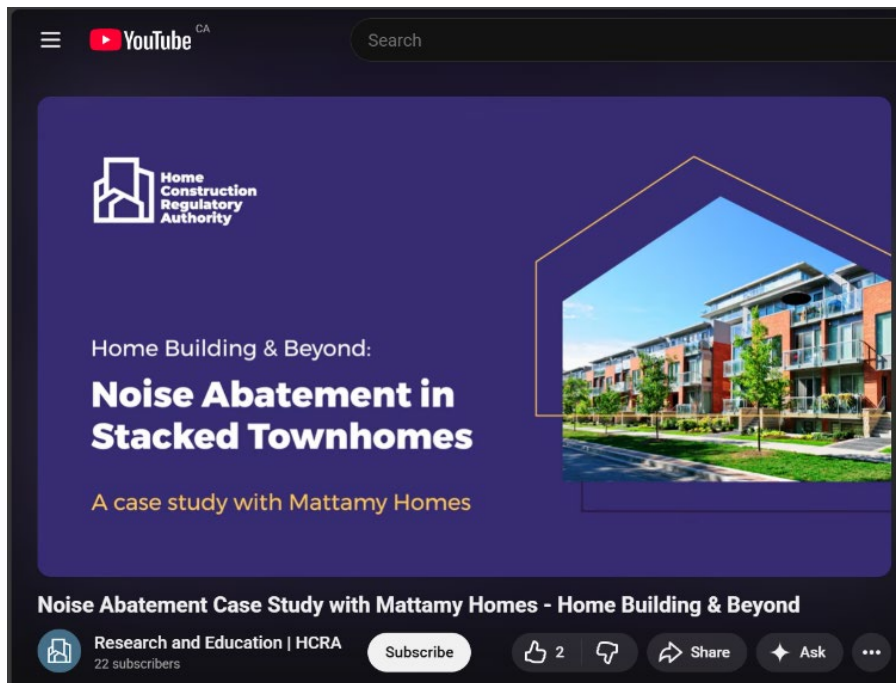
The HCRA's Research & Education program has launched a [YouTube channel](#) to share technical learning related to the built environment, for both builders and homeowners.

Our "Home Building & Beyond" series profiles technical case studies and frontline construction learnings, offering practical, accessible tips that reflect emerging building trends. This aligns with licensees' strong interest in short, highly applicable construction insights. We are excited to share the first instalment in this series, showcasing Mattamy Homes' case study on mitigating sound transmission in stacked townhomes — a common homeowner concern and a frequent source of builder callbacks.

[In the video](#), Daniel Potechin, Vice President of Construction Operations at Mattamy Homes, discusses the issues their teams (and homeowners) were experiencing, why they chose to go beyond OBC requirements and how they developed their solution.

Interested in partnering with the HCRA to co-host a Code-related session for your local builders? Or have ideas for case studies to highlight new or emerging construction practices? Reach out to siloni.waraich@hcraontario.ca.

Siloni Waraich is the inaugural Chief Research Officer for the HCRA, leading their Research & Education Program to support the educational needs of builders and homeowners, while promoting best practices in home construction. She has been in our industry for +20 years; known to OBOA members first as a champion of industry partnerships when at Tarion, especially related to builder and public education, and strategies to combat illegal building. Siloni supported the OBOA Board's development of the OBOA Solution position paper, and then spearheaded the start-up efforts to get OBOA's Building Code Advisory Services (BCAS) off the ground, so that our provincewide membership could receive crowd-sourced guidance for Code interpretations. She continues to serve as a BCAS volunteer, and was the 2023 recipient of the OBOA Special Recognition Award.



NEXT EDITION: THE HCRA CORNER

If flashing installations or radon mitigation techniques from licensed builders across the province have been on your mind, stay tuned for the next instalment of this column!