

News Release

For Comment: Jim Holody, President, 519-661-9579

For Background: E.L. (Betty) Doré, Executive Vice-President, 519-641-1400

Regulation of home inspection industry needed

London, February 6, 2014

Currently in Ontario, anyone can call themselves a home inspector. This could pose a problem for Ontarians who might base their decision to buy or sell a home on information they receive from an unregulated, unlicensed home inspector. "Home inspectors play an important role in the home buying and selling process," says Jim Holody, President of the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®. "Professionals with this much influence should be licensed and have proper training to ensure consumers receive a consistent and standardized service."

The Ontario Real Estate Association is working with the Ministry of Consumer Services to improve consumer protection in the real estate marketplace by encouraging efforts to regulate the home inspection industry. In August 2013, the Minister of Consumer Services, the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, asked a volunteer panel of experts to review home inspector qualifications in Ontario. The panel, comprised of members from home inspection associations, consumer advocates and real estate industry representatives, developed a report with 35 recommendations for the home inspection industry.

"One of our main recommendations is to establish parameters for licensing the industry," says Holody. "Regulating the industry will help ensure homebuyers and sellers receive reliable, informative and professional advice when making one of the largest decisions of their lives."

Unlike home inspectors, Ontario REALTORS® are regulated under the *Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 (REBBA)*. REBBA is administered by the Real Estate Council of Ontario.

"Realtors are regulated professionals with a duty to provide accurate information to our clients," says Holody. "We are subject to strict standards of client care, which were designed to deter unethical behaviour in the real estate marketplace. We hope to accomplish the same in the home inspection industry."

The panel's report and any public feedback the ministry receives will guide the government as it considers whether to bring forward legislation to establish qualifications for home inspectors.

The London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR) is one of Canada's fifteen largest real estate associations, representing 1,500 REALTORS® working in Middlesex and Elgin Counties, a trading area of 500,000 residents. LSTAR adheres to a Quality of Life philosophy, supporting growth that fosters economic vitality, provides housing opportunities, respects the environment and builds good communities and safe neighbourhoods and is a proud participant in the REALTORS Care Foundation's Every REALTOR™ Campaign. As members of the Canadian Real Estate Association, LSTAR members may use the REALTOR® trademark, which identifies them as real estate professionals who subscribe to a strict code of ethics. The Association operates the local Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) and provides ongoing professional education courses for its members.

Advertisements of local MLS® property listings and information about the services provided by a REALTOR® can be found at [www. REALTOR.ca](http://www.REALTOR.ca). More information about LSTAR is available at www.lstar.ca.