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**RIBA MEMBER  
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**APRIL CLASSES  
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See details and the list of expanded classes, free for RIBA members and their employees. Most classes count toward the continuing education credits contractors need.

*Pages 4,5,15,16,26 and 27*

**Affordability  
crisis summed up  
in one graph**

Rhode Island building permit numbers are off to a slow start in '20. Here's one reason why.

*Page 2*

**Networking Night  
set for April 16**

Generously sponsored by Stormite, here's a chance to network with your fellow members and enjoy refreshments.

*Page 10*

**Become a  
recovery-friendly  
workplace**

See details on a new state program to help you and your recovering employees.

*Pages 28*

## HOME SHOW POSTPONED

In accord with the recommendation of the Rhode Island Dept. of Health, and in view of the ongoing global emergency caused by the coronavirus, the Rhode Island Home Show will not take place April 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> as scheduled.

The Rhode Island Builders Association plans either to reschedule the Home Show for later this year, or push it into 2021.

Watch for more information as the scenario develops.

## R.I. has most regulated housing market, after San Francisco and New York

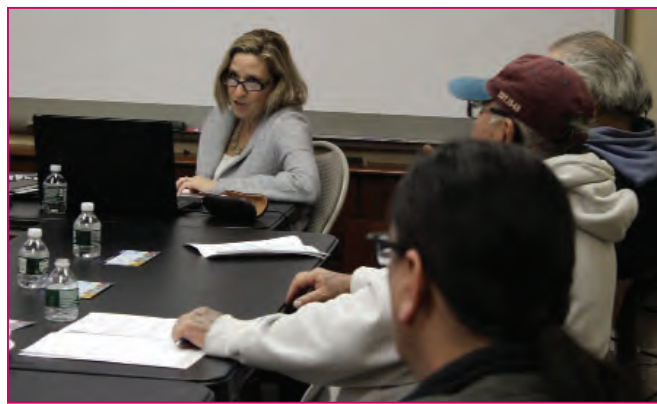
*By Paul F. Eno Editor*

"Rhode Island is the third most regulated housing market in the country, after San Francisco and New York."

That was the sobering message from Amy Rainone, director of intergovernmental relations at Rhode Island Housing as she addressed the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

"Rhode Island is not producing enough housing, and that's tightening the vacancy rate and increasing prices. Also, our housing stock is not well aligned with what people in Rhode Island can afford. And we have population

*see BOARD...page 37*



*Amy Rainone of Rhode Island Housing addresses the RIBA Board of Directors on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Among her messages: The state needs more housing production, and municipalities are doing little to encourage it.*

### Part 2 of 2

## Residential contractor licensing in R.I.? It's complicated

*By Paul F. Eno Editor*

In our first installment in this two-part series, we looked at how contractor licensing is set up in some states. So, what's the outlook for general residential contractor licensing in Rhode Island?

"Rhode Island owes it to its citizens to proceed

with caution when contemplating increasing barriers to entry for any profession, contractors included," said Deputy Director Julietta T. Georgakis of the state Dept. of Business Regulation (DBR).

"The pros and cons (of licensing) should be carefully weighed. Extensive research on what has been

*see LICENSING...page 37*

## Building permits in R.I. sluggish; one graph sums up affordability crisis

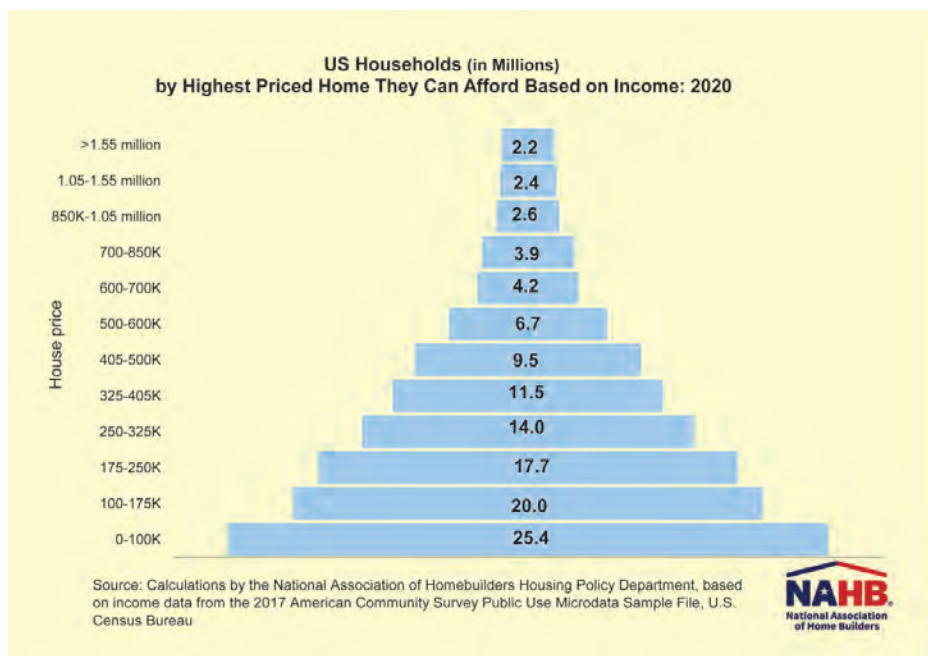
By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Building permits in Rhode Island were off to an anemic start for 2020. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 91 building permits were issued in the Ocean State in January, 78 of them for single-family units. That compares with 113 in December, 80 of which were single-family permits.

Rhode Island's January permit figures were the second-lowest in New England, after Vermont (83). This compares with 1,806 permits issued in Massachusetts, 278 in Connecticut, 234 in Maine and 231 in New Hampshire.

Affordability is a prime roadblock.

Regarding the affordability crisis nationally, the National Association of



Home Builders (NAHB) has come up with a single graph it says explains the entire problem.

"Applying conventional underwriting standards that the cost of a mortgage, property taxes and property insurance should not exceed 28 percent of household income, NAHB economists have calculated how many households have enough income to afford a home at various price thresholds," a statement from the national trade group said.

The housing affordability pyramid

shown here reveals that 63 million households out of a total of 120 million are unable to afford a \$250,000 home.

At the base of the pyramid are 25.4 million U.S. households with insufficient incomes to be able to afford a \$100,000 home. The pyramid's second step consists of 20.0 million with enough income to afford \$100,000 but not \$175,000, and so on up the pyramid.

Adding up the bottom three steps shows that there are 63 million households that

see **AFFORDABILITY...page 37**

### The Rhode Island Builder

Official publication of the  
Rhode Island Builders Association  
since 1951

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The Rhode Island Builder Report

Publisher..... John Marcantonio  
Editor ..... Paul F. Eno

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### DEADLINE FOR THE MAY ISSUE

All copy, ads and  
photos must be to us by  
**Friday, April 3**

E-mail material to

[builder@newriverpress.com](mailto:builder@newriverpress.com) or fax: (401) 356-0913

## RIBA welcomes these new members and thanks their sponsors!

Tony Kinsella  
**OK Fence Co., Inc.**  
37 Lane #2, Warwick, RI 02888

Lisette Jenkins  
**Mightyelf Handyman Services**  
136 Norfolk Ave., Pawtucket RI 02861

Krisanne Murray  
**Designroom**  
333 Main Street, Wakefield RI 02879

Angelo Botelho  
**Tumbleweed Landscaping**  
833 Aquidneck Ave.  
Middletown RI 02842

**Russell Browning**  
376 Water St., Warren RI 02885

**Patrick Chan**  
1144 Washington Ave.  
Allentown PA 18103

John Cioe III  
**Cioe's Construction**  
143 Pomona Ave., Providence RI 02908

**Derek Dagesse**  
134 Fiat Ave., Cranston RI 02910

Jim Doyle  
**JayCat Enterprises**  
25 Errant Way, West Greenwich RI 02817

Kristina Guadagni  
**Testa Property Services**  
141 Old Jenckes Hill Rd.  
Lincoln RI 02802

Wayne Lewis  
**WJL LLC**  
198 Warrington St., Providence RI 02907

James Moon  
**Gutter Helmet and Quality Roofing**  
475 Washington St., Wrentham MA 02093

**Timothy R. Ohliger**  
8 Table Rock Rd., Lincoln RI 02865

**Erik Trager**  
2670 Post Road, Wakefield RI 02879

Robert Pierce Jr.  
**Everbuild Construction LLC**  
106 Waterman Lake Dr.  
Chepachet RI 02814

Richard Rickert  
**Rickert Home Improvement**  
41 Woods End Rd., Dedham MA 02026

David Rothenberg  
**A Plus Handyman Services**  
23 Country View Dr., Johnston RI 02919

**Cumberland Glass Co. of R.I.**  
10 Nate Whipple Highway  
Cumberland RI 02864

Thomas Barbosa  
**T.A.K. Development LLC**  
200 Midway Rd., Suite 8471, Cranston  
RI 02920

Harold Greco Jr.  
**Harold Greco Plaster Perfection**  
43 Coldbrook Rd., Warwick RI 02888

**Jeremy Saksik**  
44 Nanaquaket Rd., Tiverton RI 02878

William Allen  
**The Allen Advantage LLC**  
724 Park Ave., Woonsocket RI 02895

**JG Remodeling LLC**  
27 Allensdale Ave., Johnston RI 02919

**KMZ Construction Inc.**  
37 Prospect St., Cranston RI 02910

Martin Parker  
**Swell Construction**  
3915 Old Post Road  
Charlestown RI 02813

Richard Forgey  
**Richards Renewal & Renovation**  
201 Connecticut Ave.  
New London CT 06320

Angela Saldana  
**Saldana & Sons**  
110 Goldfinch Dr. #131  
Coventry RI 02816

Nickolas Adekamaya  
**Restoration 1 of Rhode Island**  
15 Division St.  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

Eric Gledhill  
**High Profile Painting LLC**  
202 Ward St., Woonsocket RI 02895

Roger Vivier Jr.  
**Bridgewater Construction LLC**  
24 Clear Brook Crossing  
Kennebunk ME 04043

**Spencer Rose**  
397 Cowesett Rd., Warwick RI 02886



For RIBA  
membership information contact Elise Geddes  
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[www.ribuilders.org](http://www.ribuilders.org)

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# Looking Ahead

## April 2020

♦ **Ongoing: Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) - Basic Carpentry** - Recruiting continues for VESL classes. For details, contact Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or [bbernal@ribuilders.org](mailto:bbernal@ribuilders.org), or register online at <https://ribuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details>.

♦ **POSTPONED: 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Rhode Island Home Show, Featuring the Rhode Island Flower & Garden Show and The Energy Expo** - **WATCH FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.** Call (401) 438-7400 or e-mail [homeshow@ribuilders.org](mailto:homeshow@ribuilders.org). Details at [RIBAHomeShow.com](http://RIBAHomeShow.com).

🗓️ ♦ **April 6<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Blueprint Reading.  
Details on page 15.

♦ **April 7<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Monthly Board of Directors Meeting** - 4 p.m. networking, 4:30 p.m. business meeting, RIBA headquarters, East Providence. RIBA members are invited to attend for informational purposes. For more information and to register, contact Elizabeth Carpenter, [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

🗓️ ♦ **April 8<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Estimating.  
Details on page 15.

🗓️ ♦ **April 13<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Commercial Blueprint Reading.  
Details on page 16.

🗓️ ♦ **April 15<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Commercial Estimating.  
Details on page 16.

♦ **April 16<sup>th</sup>: Networking Night** - 4:30 to 7 p.m, sponsored by Stormtite Home Improvement. Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members and their guests. Related story on page 10.

🗓️ ♦ **April 17<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Blower Door and Air Leakage Testing.  
Details on page 16.

🗓️ ♦ **April 21<sup>st</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Deck Codes and Construction.  
Details on page 16.

♦ **April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>: OSHA 10-Hour Course** - 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day at RIBA headquarters. Course is FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials fee. For more information and to register, contact Elise Geddes, [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.  
Details on page 27.

*More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org).*

 Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

 Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island and/or Massachusetts continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

**April 21<sup>st</sup> Monthly Meeting, Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council** - 6-8 p.m., Smithfield Plumbing & Heating Supply, 1 Austin Ave., Greenville, RI 02828. All RIBA members are invited, but please register in advance. Contact Linda Bohmbach for details and to register: [linda@homehealth-smith.com](mailto:linda@homehealth-smith.com). *Information on page 8.*

 **April 27<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 8 Credit Hours** - Lead Safe Remodeler-Renovator (8-Hour Initial Training). *Details on page 26.*

 **April 29<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Stamping Out Construction Fraud. *Details on page 26.*

 **April 30<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 1/2 Credit Hours** - Accounting and Cash Flow. *Details on page 27.*

## May 2020

**April 5<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Monthly Board of Directors Meeting** - 4 p.m. networking, 4:30 p.m. business meeting, RIBA headquarters, East Providence. RIBA members are invited to attend for informational purposes. For more information and to register, contact Elizabeth Carpenter, [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

**May 14<sup>th</sup>: Networking Night** - 4:30 to 7 p.m, sponsored by National Building Products. Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members and their guests. *Related story on page 10.*

## June 2020

**June 4<sup>th</sup>: Seventh Annual Networking Barbecue** - 4-7 p.m. at RIBA headquarters, East Providence. Watch for more details. For information and to register, contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org).

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## Take RIBA classes online at [RIBAEducates.com](http://RIBAEducates.com)

*Visit [RIBAEducates.com](http://RIBAEducates.com) for access to 24-7 continuing education!*

*Online courses include Scaffold Safety, Workplace Safety, Confined Spaces, Ladder Safety and more, each worth one credit hour of state-mandated continuing education. Just as with RIBA's onsite courses, online courses are FREE of tuition charges for members and their employees.*

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*For information about online or on-site courses:*

*Contact Bob Salvas, [bsalvas@ribuilders.org](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.*

---



Timothy A. Stasiunas

# President's Message

## Rhode Island struggles with the 'missing middle'

with respect to affordability. This was the first time we heard one of our elected officials stand up and say that something needs to be done, and I look forward to working with anyone who will move that agenda forward.

Granted, a solution is not going to happen overnight, but it's a first step. In following the news, and the folks leading the charge, it really relates to what's called "affordable housing." As I've said in the past, I think that term was ill conceived. It creates a negative connotation: When people hear it, they often think "Section 8." Rather, the focus is on affordability for people of low- to moderate incomes, and that housing shortage needs immediate attention.

The core problem, in my opinion, is what's now being called the "missing middle": The affordability of home ownership in the \$250,000-\$400,000 range.

Depending on where you are in Rhode Island, that can translate into almost no standing housing stock to rehab. If, as a state, we are going to address the housing issue, we have to consider the whole issue and not just part of it.

The biggest driver to affordability of any kind is density of development. Our state, by way of local zoning, doesn't allow for the density needed to create the available lots to build the units we need to be economically viable. Couple that with state regulation that only makes the situation worse.

Several months ago, I acknowledged Gov. Gina Raimondo's recognition that we have a housing problem

In Rhode Island, the only available areas for substantial development are the northern and western parts of the state ("the final frontier"). Yet, at this moment, the proposal is to confiscate more useable land by virtue of jurisdiction.

We have to come to grips with the fact that we are the smallest state in the nation, and we can't put every available acre off limits. We are at a point technologically where we can engineer environmental quality standards to adequately protect rivers, streams and wetlands, while providing much needed developable land to create housing and grow our economy for all Rhode Islanders.

To me, the same people who build our homes, take care of our properties, build our infrastructure, teach our children, and keep us safe – our middle class – should be able to go home at the end of the day to a place they own, not rent.

Further, the idea of home ownership is fundamental to our society. It's the antidote to many societal issues. Buying and owning a home is the largest single investment most people will make. It creates wealth over time and, at the point of retirement, is the "nest egg" many Americans need to carry them through financially.

With the stability of Social Security in question, you can see how relevant this lifetime investment is. There's also pride of home ownership, the feeling that "it's ours" can be a cornerstone of the family unit, with families focused on preserving their shared values.

Finally, there's security. Home ownership helps promote stability in any family, to parents, spouses, children and even grandchildren.

Nothing says "American Dream" like home ownership.



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## From RIBA's Carpentry, Electrical & Plumbing Training Programs

# Over 120 new workers ready for hiring

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

"We have over 120 graduates from programs that wrapped up during the second week of March, and they're ready to work!"

That's the report from Cheryl Boyd, the Rhode Island Builders Association's director of workforce programs.

The graduates come from training in carpentry, electrical, and plumbing/HVAC. Each course involves 200 Hours of hands-on training, over 26-weeks in fully equipped training facilities, following the curriculum from the Home Builders Institute (HBI), the education arm of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

Training includes manufacturer demonstrations, employability skills, OSHA 10 certification, Lead Safe RRP training/certification, basic first aid training, and the awarding of a tool kit upon



RESIDENTIAL  
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completion of the courses.

New classes are starting all the time, and they're free for participants and employers.

"Each week because stagger the start times for the new classes," Ms. Boyd said. "So there are new graduates all the time."

### *See the resumés*

"The graduates' resumés are posted at RCWPJobs.com, and employers who haven't already done so can sign up for a free account. Every employer should be posting job openings on the site," Ms. Boyd added.

RCWPJobs.com is Rhode Island's industry-specific residential construction

job portal.

"Our construction career training participants and recent graduates are actively seeking employment," she said. "Their resumés can be found on the website."

To learn more about RCWPJobs.com and how to post or apply for a job there, contact Elise Geddes at RIBA, (401) 438-7400 or e-mail [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org).

### *Take a course*

If you are interested in applying for a training program, find further information online at [RIBuilders.org/training-programs](http://RIBuilders.org/training-programs).

Classes meet Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Participants include workers wanting to make a career change into the residential construction industry, existing industry employees whose employers wish them to "upskill," and many others.

RIBA

## *First VESL class graduates from new Central Falls facility*



*Instructors, administrators and students from the first class to graduate from the Rhode Island Builders Association's new Central Falls Vocational Training Center are seen in the Central Falls City Council Chamber on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Here, graduates of the Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL - Basic Carpentry) program receive certificates of completion. For more information on VESL classes and to register, contact RIBA Diversity Outreach and Education Coordinator Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or [bbernal@ribuilders.org](mailto:bbernal@ribuilders.org).*

  
Vern Rainville

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## Professional Women in Building : PWB NEWS



*Enjoy these moments from our past networking events of 2019-2020.*

### Upcoming Events



**April 21 – 6-8pm Smithfield Supply – 1 Austin Ave, Greenville, RI**

### **PWB Officers**

Carol O'Donnell- President  
Linda Bohmbach- Vice President  
Sophia Karvunis- Treasurer  
Jacqueline Pagel- Secretary

Want to learn more about the PWB?

Please visit our site for contact info, up-coming events and news at <http://ribuilders.org/professional-women-in-building>

## Pella honors Pagel for second year running



*For the second year in a row, Jackie Pagel of Pella Windows has been honored with the Pella Corp. President's Club Award for outstanding sales performance in 2019. The award was given based on Pella Specified Projects, both residential and commercial, worth \$2.5 million booked last year. Ms. Pagel, ranked the nation's #3 architect representative, serves on the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors, is president of the National Association of Women in Construction No. 1 of Rhode Island, and is secretary of RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council. Here, Ms. Pagel receives her award at the Hyatt Regency Resort & Spa in Huntington Beach, California. With her are Pella CEO Timothy Yaggi and Adam Farver, chairman of the board.*

## Providence Business News features Home Healthsmith

The increasing demand for residential elevators has shined a spotlight on a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association that provides them: Home Healthsmith, which was featured in the January 31<sup>st</sup> issue of *Providence Business News*.

"The last three years have been the busiest in residential elevator demand that I've ever experienced," William Bohmbach, who owns Home Healthsmith with his wife, Linda, was quoted as saying.

The demand for elevators is one reason the Portsmouth-based company plans to remodel its showroom this year, to include a working residential elevator. Mr. Bohmbach cited lower prices, easier installation, and an aging Rhode Island population as factors in the increased demand.

Founded in 2012, Home Healthsmith also sells many other aging-in-place products.

Find out more at [Homehealthsmith.com](http://Homehealthsmith.com).





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# Monthly networking events draw crowds to RIBA

**WHEN:** Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 to 7 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters,  
450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence  
02914

**SPONSOR:** Stormtite Home Improvement

**COST:** FREE for members and their guests

**FOR INFORMATION, TO REGISTER OR TO**

**SPONSOR:** Contact Elise Geddes at [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org),  
or call (401) 438-7400.

The Rhode Island Builders Association's monthly networking events are more popular than ever, and many members make them part of their regular schedules.

Members and non-members alike enjoy each other's company, along with some fine refreshments and the information offered by the generous sponsors.

Join us for the next FREE Networking Night on April 16<sup>th</sup>.



*Enjoying a recent Networking Night at RIBA are, from left, Joyce Therrien of the Builders Insurance Group, Gordon Brayton of Scituate Lumber and RIBA Vice President Carol O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes.*

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Member Profile: Ed Ladouceur of Stormtite Home Improvement

# From a tough dad to a thriving company

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

How do you develop a solid-steel work ethic like Ed Ladouceur's?

"My father was in the home improvement business too and, when I was 14 years old, he had me work with him on the weekends," recalls Ed, a native of Woonsocket who grew up in Smithfield. "He was one of those hardcore guys. If you want it, go work for it. Nothing in this world is free. You want a car? Go earn the money."

That was in the mid-1960s, and Ed spent the summers as a laborer.

"I had to bring the shingles up to the third-floor roof on my shoulder. I got all the dirty jobs, and I had to do the clean-up. None of the fun stuff!"

"I wasn't college-bound. So, I actually quit school in February of my junior year and went to work with my father. That summer, he drove me into the ground, and I realized that quitting school was a mistake," Ed says.

He went back to school, made up his junior year, and graduated in 1970.

"I had '30' in the draft lottery, so the military seemed inevitable. I said to myself: 'If my young butt is going to head off to Vietnam, I'm going with the best.' So, the next day I went down and joined the Marine Corps."

Ed was honorably discharged in 1972, and he and his high school sweetheart, Deborah, married that September. But things weren't easy on the job front at first.

"I opened my own home-decorating center in North Smithfield. And that was a struggle. I closed the business, then went to work for Ford products for a few years."

Ed started as an installer, ending up as sales manager. That was more like it.

"Finally, I joined the Stormtite company in 1982 as a partner with Ed Aprahamian, who founded the company in 1969," says Ed.

But there was a catch.

"The arrangement was that, when Ed turned 65 in 1989, I would buy him out."

And that's just what happened.

"So, Stormtite is starting its 51<sup>st</sup> year, and in all that time we have



Ed Ladouceur

maintained a clean work record, with no claims filed against us," Ed reports. "We're not perfect. We goof like anyone else. But people never get angry with you as long as you go back and take care of it."

Today, Stormtite crews range all over Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts. Work includes interior remodeling, siding, roofing, windows and doors, decks, and repairs and maintenance. The company has built up quite the reputation.

"One of my best memories is a huge siding project we did for the Central Baptist Church in Warwick in 1996," Ed recalls. "It was very prestigious. But we had to get an approval from the Historic District Commission because this was a historic building."

No way, the commissioners decreed.

The church appealed to the City Council, which kicked it back to the commission. This time, they agreed to the job, but only if no trim was used.

"That wasn't an option," Ed says. "It wouldn't protect the building from water entry. So those parishioners appealed that decision all the way to the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, which is in charge of the National Register of Historic Places. And they said we could go ahead with the job and do it right."

In fact, as far as Ed knows, Stormtite was the first company in America approved by the department to use vinyl siding on a historic building in a historic district.

Stormtite joined the Rhode Island Builders Association in 1982, recruited by RIBA's first full-time executive director, Ross Dagata, who served from 1955 to 1997.

"Ross took me under his wing, and encouraged me to get involved and serve on committees," Ed states.

And serve Ed did, on almost every committee RIBA had, beginning with the Health Insurance Committee, which pioneered the wildly successful Workers' Compensation Safety Program in the 1990s and into the 2000s.

Ed worked his way up to the RIBA presidency, serving from 2004-2006, the first remodeler member ever to hold the office. One of his many achievements was the complete renovation of RIBA's headquarters in East Providence. He's also proud of nominating Carol O'Donnell, now on the path to becoming RIBA's first woman president.

As if that weren't enough, Ed also served on the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board for many years, and is now in his fourth term on the Warwick City Council. As for the future:

"I'm going to keep on going, and keep doing what I'm doing right now. I'll be 69 in July, but I'm still leading the charge!" he declares.

## ***Stormtite Home Improvement***

***President: Edgar N. Ladouceur***

***RIBA member since: 1982***

***Focus: Siding, roofing, windows, doors, decks***

***Founded: 1969***

***Based: Warwick, Rhode Island***



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# Heating and cooling rebate programs undergo some changes

In late 2018, National Grid launched new, enhanced incentives to support the displacement of electric resistance, propane and oil residential heating systems with high-efficiency heat pumps.

Heat pumps are a critical pathway for decarbonizing heating. In December 2019, National Grid presented the continuation of these enhanced incentives to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (PUC) as part of the 2020 Rhode Island Energy Efficiency (EE) Program Plan. The PUC voted on the plan and ruled that fuel switching via heat pump incentives was not an appropriate use of EE dollars.

National Grid has therefore discontinued the enhanced incentives for oil and propane fuel displacement in Rhode Island, while those for electric resistance heat remained in place

## What's Next?

National Grid has filed a motion with the PUC seeking approval for funding for projects that were in progress in 2019, and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER) has proposed \$2.7 million in Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funds to reinstate the incentives in 2020 and into 2021.

National Grid is currently working with OER and other stakeholders to find a long-term solution that best supports the transition of Rhode Island to a clean, affordable and reliable heating sector, as outlined in Gov. Gina Raimondo's Heating Sector Transformation (HST) Executive Order 19-06.

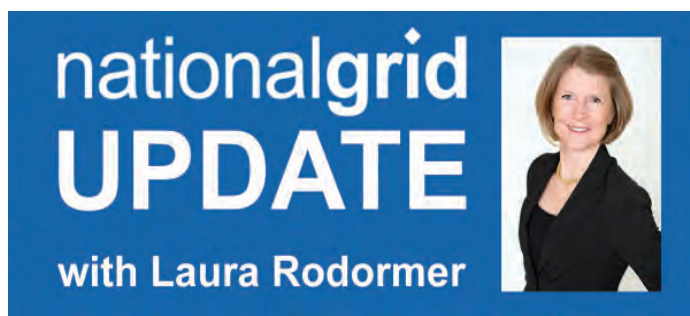
## What's Available in 2020?

**Enhanced Rebates:** National Grid is continuing to offer an enhanced rebate of \$1,250 per ton for energy-efficient central and mini-split heat pumps installed in qualifying homes that heat primarily with electric resistance and meet the efficiency requirements listed below.

- Central Heat Pump
- Ducted, AHRI: SEER > 15, HSPF > 9
- Mini-Split Heat Pump
- Ducted or Mixed-Ducted, AHRI: SEER > 15, HSPF > 9
- Non-Ducted, NEEP\*\* Listed: SEER > 15, HSPF > 10, COP 1.75 at 5°F

**Standard Rebates:** National Grid also offers standard rebates for energy-efficient central air conditioning, central heat pump and mini-split heat pump systems for both replacements and new construction homes that meet the efficiency requirements below.

- Central AC



**On February 27<sup>th</sup>, National Grid hosts a Trade Ally breakfast to share the latest updates to rebates and energy-efficiency programs.**

- Ducted, AHRI: SEER > 16, EER > 13 - \$50 per ton
- Central Heat Pump
- Ducted AHRI: SEER > 15, HSPF > 9 - \$350 per ton
- Mini-Split Heat Pump
- Ducted or Mixed-Ducted, AHRI: SEER > 15, HSPF > 9 - \$350 per ton
- Non-Ducted, NEEP\*\* Listed: SEER > 15, HSPF > 10, COP 1.75 at 5°F - \$150 per ton.

**New Construction – High Efficiency, All-Electric Homes\***

For all-electric, or fossil-fuel free, homes participating in the Residential New Construction (RNC) Program that meet a minimum of Tier 3 (35 percent savings over the baseline), National Grid offers the following incentives in addition to the RNC performance and Standard Rebates for equipment.

- 1-4 unit building - \$1,000 per home
- 5-10 unit building - \$500 per home
- 11+ unit building - \$250 per home

For additional details on eligibility requirements for any of these programs, please visit [NGRID.com/ri-ee](http://NGRID.com/ri-ee).

For information on Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships, visit [NEEP.org](http://NEEP.org).

The Rhode Island Builders Association continues the Contractor Training Program in March, expanding its educational offerings for members and their employees! Also, for the month of March, all R.I. residential contractors are eligible to take the in-person classes noted below for FREE, subject to enrollment in the Contractor Development Program, sponsored by Real Jobs Rhode Island, the Dept. of Labor & Training, and the Residential Workforce Partnership. Call for details and to register: (401) 438-7400.

## Continuing Education

Courses headlined in **RED** on The RIBA Contractor Training Pages qualify for continuing education requirements. EVERY RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTOR registered to work in Rhode Island must take five hours of continuing education before his or her next renewal date, and must provide class certificates as evidence of completion.

5 Credit Hours:

### *Residential Blueprint Reading*

*April 6<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Carlos Lora for this course, which will provide students with an introduction to the area of residential blueprint reading, construction documents/calculations, and project specifications.

During this course, students will learn to read the legend, details, specifications, properly use a scale ruler and find different trade sections of blueprints/drawings in order to perform work required.



5 Credit Hours:

### *Residential Estimating*

*April 8<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This will be an extension of the Blueprint Reading class described on this page.

Instructor Carlos Lora will take you through basic construction math and how it is used to estimate the labor and material costs of a residential construction project.

Knowledge of blueprint reading is strongly advised (or completion of Residential Blueprint Reading on April 6<sup>th</sup>).



***As an added benefit to RIBA's Education Program, our instructors are happy to speak with class attendees by phone, after class, if they have additional questions or issues to discuss.***

***For information, contact Elise Geddes, egeddes@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.***

***RIBA reserves the right to limit the number of attendees from a single company at courses taught on-site.***

***For information, contact Elise Geddes, egeddes@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.***



## RIBA Contractor Training

5 Credit Hours:

### Commercial Blueprint Reading

April 13<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Carlos Lora for this course, which will provide students with an introduction to the area of commercial blueprint reading, construction documents/calculations, and project specifications.

During this course, students will learn to read the legend, details, specifications, properly use a scale ruler and find different trade sections of blueprints/drawings in order to perform work required.



5 Credit Hours:

### Commercial Estimating

April 15<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This will be an extension of the Blueprint Reading class described on this page.

Instructor Carlos Lora will cover basic construction math and how it is used to estimate the labor and material costs of a commercial construction project.

Knowledge of blueprint reading is strongly advised (or completion of Commercial Blueprint Reading on April 13<sup>th</sup>).



2 Credit Hours:

### Blower Door and Air Leakage Testing

April 17<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor John Erickson for this course, which will provide students with an introduction to blower door testing and locating air leaks in a home.

The Rhode Island Building Code now requires all new homes and some remodeling projects to be tested for air leakage.

In this course, learn from an expert when the test can be done, how it's done, how to prepare for it, what the test results mean, and what results are required.



5 Credit Hours:

### Deck Codes and Construction

March 31<sup>st</sup>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course with instructor Mike Guertin will cover: "Deck Construction Codes: Sorting Out Codes and Solutions."

Deck codes have undergone more changes than any other portion of the residential code.

Learn what you need to design and build code-compliant decks using prescriptive measures outlined in the code and code-compliant standards.



For RIBA  
membership information contact Elise Geddes  
401-438-7400 • or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)



# Featured Products & Services for April 2020

A Rhode Island  
Builder Magazine  
Special Section

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# Rhode Island Builders Association

# Member Benefit Guide

## 2019-2020



**Member Solution Services**

•  
**Tuition-free Education for  
Members and their Employees**

•  
**Vital Information Resources**

•  
**Powerful Advocacy at  
the State House**

•  
**Award-Winning  
Monthly Magazine**

•  
**Unique Marketing  
Opportunities, including  
the R.I. Home Show  
and RIBAlist.com**

•  
**Member-to-Member  
Reference Services**

•  
**Complimentary  
Customized Job Training**

•  
**Full-Service, in-house  
Insurance Agency**

•  
**Medical & Dental Plans**

•  
**Complimentary Jobsite Safety Service**

•  
**Discounts and Rebates**

•  
**Monthly Networking Events**

# RIBA Offers an Unprecedented



## Find Work/Hire Members

Services include member-to-member referrals, the new and improved RIBAlist.com consumer website, the huge, consumer-based Rhode Island Home Show, held every year since 1948, and the annual *Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide*.



## The Education Benefit... It's Tuition-Free!

Online or in person, take Massachusetts and Rhode Island continuing-education courses, with professional-development classes and seminars for owners and all employees within your firm. Subject matter includes codes, safety, estimating and so much more!



## RIBA Helps You Hire & Train

Our complimentary workforce-development program includes custom training initiatives for your company and/or a 26-week comprehensive pre-apprenticeship program where you can send current or prospective employees for carpentry, electrical or plumbing training. Spanish programs are also available.



## Complimentary Safety Services

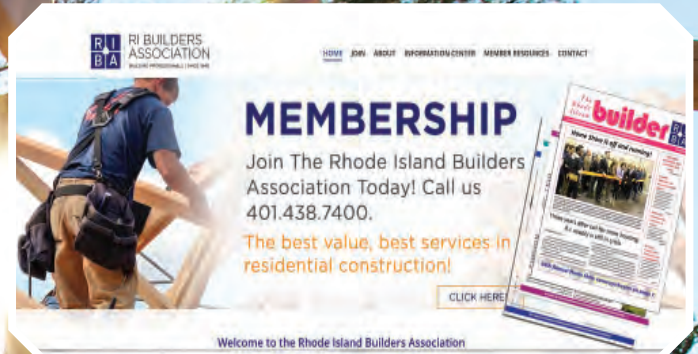
RIBA has a complimentary Safety Service that includes jobsite visits to guide members toward proper workforce-safety procedures, OSHA compliance and lower insurance rates. This is a totally confidential service, and it can save you thousands of dollars!

# Joining is easy! Call (401)

# ted Member Benefit Package!

## Vital Information Resources

Members stay in the know with information they can only find through RIBA, including the award-winning, monthly *Rhode Island Builder* magazine; update e-mails from Executive Officer John Marcantonio, national updates from the National Association of Home Builders, and so much more! This is a true advantage in the marketplace!



## Solution Services

Industry-based professionals are available to find answers for you and to help you with your most troubling issues – from permitting, to new-regulations compliance, to financing resources, the solutions staff at RIBA gives you peace of mind and lets you know that you're not alone out there!



## Insurance & Bonding

RIBA has its own full-service, in-house insurance agency – The Builders Insurance Group (BIG). Members will find a rewarding service experience, trusted advice on insurance products, and the knowledge that the resources of this RIBA subsidiary go toward helping the industry.



## Medical & Dental Plans for You and Your Employees

Speaking of insurance, RIBA offers complete health and dental plans for you and your employees. The dental plans, in particular, are the best available when it comes to cost. RIBA has its own pool and its own rate.



# 438-7400 • RIBuilders.org

# From RIBA's Executive Officer

Dear Members of the Rhode Island Builders Association:

Please take the time to pull this special Member Benefit Guide out of the magazine. It's yours to keep, and its designed to be a resource for you to quickly reference and recognize everything you have available to you at RIBA.

From the complimentary educational services for you and your employees, the new Safety Service, customized workforce training, networking, business referrals, legislative advocacy and member solution-services, your trade association is structured to help you with every aspect of your business.

We are making it easier than ever to understand what's included in your membership. And when you have a chance, give us a call so we can get you connected to the services we have that can help protect you, make you money, improve your knowledge, keep you safe, and help your business thrive!

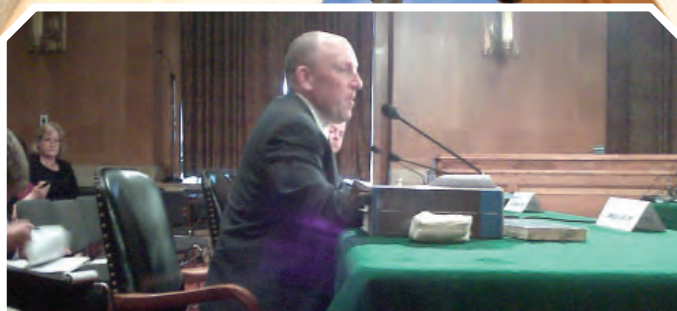
I also need your help with a larger cause. Please share this

message with your industry colleagues and ask them to join! Our services, advocacy and industry-leading resources depend on membership. With so much to offer, our goal is to reach out and serve. Helping someone join is easy, just have them call the office at (401) 438-7400 and we will take it from there!

So thanks again for being a member, for being a part of this thriving, almost 70 year old resource, and for allowing us to serve your needs. Please always feel free to call us with any issue, as we are always here for you!



All my best,  
John Marcantonio *Executive Officer*



## Powerful Legislative Advocacy

RIBA represents you locally, at the State House and on the federal level with all things regulatory, and with very effective political lobbying. We track every bill that affects you, and we put in legislation to help the state's housing needs. Feel free to join our committees, get updates on bills, and advocate with the executive officer on key legislation.

## Socialize, Network & Enjoy!

RIBA has events! Take advantage of big, fun events like our Annual Clambake, Golf Classic, monthly network events, Christmas parties, cookouts, annual meeting.... And if you like to socialize, and make this your focus, just let us know.



## Save Money Every Day

With your dual membership in RIBA and NAHB, enjoy over 20 different programs that give discounts and rebates on products you use every day. The Member Rebate Program pays thousands of dollars a year to members for products they already buy. The Member Advantage program offers discounts on major national products and services that can save you a bundle.

money saving discounts that benefit you, your business and your family [nahb.org/Savings](http://nahb.org/Savings)

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**or e-mail Elise at [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)**



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**www.finetco.net • Page 18**

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**Centerville, Mass. (Cape Cod) 508-771-9730**  
**Corporate Headquarters, Fall River, Mass. • Page 24**



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in touch with us to learn how to become one of those contractors.

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8 Credit Hours:

## 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course

April 27<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options. There is a \$25 materials fee for all students, and all students must provide a head-shot photograph.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

2 Credit Hours:

## Stamping Out Construction Fraud

April 29<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Chuck Schwartz and James Wilkinson, this class will present data and real-life stories about fraud committed internally by construction company owners and staff and externally by sub-contractors and project owners. Also discussed are best practices construction contractors can use to avoid fraud.



2 1/2 Credit Hours:

## Accounting & Cash Flow

April 30<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by David Lucier, this course will help a contractor understand the basics of accounting and how to manage cash flow.



Learn everything you need to know to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule (Lead Paint Removal Training Classes).

This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remodelers/Renovator certification, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings. This course covers the EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) requirements in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Scott Asprey is the instructor

A written exam is given at the end of the course. A passing grade allows attendees to apply for certification through the Rhode Island Dept. of Health and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Pre-registration and a photo are required for your certificate. This must be a head shot only. E-mail it to bsalvas@ribuilders.org at least five days before the class.

No admittance to this class will be permitted without the required photo.

Lunch is included.



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# OSHA-10 Course

April 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday and Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One day before first class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a 10-hour class, held over two days. The course is geared to train safety directors, job foremen and field employees in OSHA construction standards. It highlights the areas of major safety concerns, with the intent to reduce accidents on the job site, saving time and money.

Each person completing the course will receive a copy of the

OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card.

Every person working on a municipal or state construction project with a total project cost of \$100,000 or more must have card certifying their completion of an OSHA 10-Hour training program on their person at all times while work is being performed.

According to the requirement, the rule applies to "any private person or entity bound by a contractual agreement to provide goods or services to a contractor/developer who must physically enter the place where work is being performed or business is being conducted."

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# Jonathan Goyer

Director, R.I. Recovery Friendly Workplace Program

*Jonathan Goyer serves as an expert adviser to Gov. Gina Raimondo's Overdose Prevention Taskforce. He is considered a national leader in the fight against the addiction epidemic. Following his own recovery from an overdose in 2013, Mr. Goyer became a passionate advocate for those who suffer from addiction and has helped communities find solutions. With 12 years of senior business management experience, he now focuses on public health policy and programmatic design. His recovery advocacy, published researched, innovative strategies and overall successes have been highlighted by Hazelden, Betty Ford, The NGA (National Governors Association), The American Journal of Public Health, the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, PBS Newshour, the A&E Network and many other organizations and media outlets.*



themselves, but perhaps they have a son or daughter who had issues with addiction and recovery.

This is an epidemic, and we lose hundreds of people a year in Rhode Island. You can imagine the impact that has on families, friends and communities. So, these RFAs all have experience in addiction and recovery, and they have business experience as well.

That's important because many employers find it difficult to navigate these situations. It really helps to have at your side somebody with that fundamental understanding of business needs and what it takes for people to recover.

The unique capability of this program is that it's tailored to meet the needs of each individual employer.

For example, a café that employs eight people and a manufacturing facility that employs 1,200 people are going to be handled differently in this program, because the needs are entirely different. It's the employers

themselves who really guide these efforts in terms of what they need from the program.

## **THE BUILDER: What is the Rhode Island Recovery Friendly Workplace Program, and how does it work?**

**GOYER:** It's an initiative of Gov. Gina Raimondo's office to provide support and guidance to employers to foster safe and recovery-friendly environments, engage their employees in addiction- and behavioral-health education and prevention, retain healthy and productive employees, and promote prevention and recovery in their local communities. Upon completion of an easy, three-step process, an employer can become a designated Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW).

## **THE BUILDER: What kind of people are the "Recovery Friendly Advisors" (RFAs) who work with employers in the program?**

**GOYER:** Upon completion of a one-hour orientation, employers will have full access to an RFA. RFAs have a variety of experience with addiction and recovery, but they also have experience in business management or operations. This ensures that the program is providing support from people who understand the first-hand struggles and barriers that employers face in regard to these issues.

## **THE BUILDER: That's an interesting combination of skill sets: people experienced in both business and in recovery.**

**GOYER:** Absolutely. It doesn't mean they're in recovery

## **THE BUILDER: Where does the program stand right now?**

**GOYER:** We launched on February 12th. In the first week, we had dozens of employers complete a letter of interest form on our website (<https://recoveryfriendlyri.com/>). Those employers equated to a total workforce of over 4,000 employees across multiple industries.

## **THE BUILDER: As you know, the construction industry reportedly has the worst opioid addiction problem. What are your thoughts?**

**GOYER:** Rhode Island has lost over 1,000 people to fatal drug overdoses in less than five years. We know that over 20 percent of those individuals worked in the construction industry. By becoming an RFW, you are supporting your employees and creating a healthier environment for them. Your commitment to the program shows customers and community members that your business is a proactive, valued community partner.

Workplaces that implement evidence-based health and safety policies and programs will recruit and retain a healthier, more

see *INTERVIEW...next page*

## **INTERVIEW...from previous page**

productive and more motivated workforce.

There has been great interest in the RFW program from the construction industry. We've been approached by many companies, including prior to launching, that operate in the industry. I must say that it's been really troubling to hear the horror stories about employees or families of employees who struggle with addiction. But there's solace in knowing that they're not alone.

To me, there's also comfort in knowing that industry leaders are willing to take action and stand up to the addiction epidemic.

**THE BUILDER: At what point should employers get in touch with or join the RFW program? Should it be before or after they realize they have an employee or employees with addiction problems?**

**GOYER:** Being proactive is always better. They should start by visiting the website and completing a letter of interest form, which takes less than a minute.

All that does is signify an interest in the program by the employer. It's not a commitment. A representative from the program will contact the employer to tell him or her more.

That said, I think the time for all Rhode Island employers to do this is now. This program really can serve employers on many levels. It's not just about getting help for an employee who's struggling in that moment, but also a willingness to learn more about addiction.

More importantly, to learn more about recovery and become a more recovery-friendly workplace that fosters recovery-friendly environments.

We know that people are struggling. If an employee has a son or daughter who's in drug treatment, that employee needs support too. It's not something their colleagues or co-workers should cast judgment about. That employee should feel like he or she can talk about that issue in a supportive environment.

So, again, we're not just talking about getting people into treatment. We're talking about normalizing recovery.

**THE BUILDER: In that vein, do you ever encounter employers who don't want it publicized that they have recovering employees?**

**GOYER:** The answer is yes. Although not intended, this frame of mind contributes toward negative public attitudes, a stigma, about addiction and recovery. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines recovery as "a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential."

Being a Recovery Friendly Workplace demonstrates belief that recovery from substance use disorder doesn't hinder an individual in the workplace. Rather, it should be viewed as a strength. Over 25 million people in this country are in recovery. These people are our employees, our friends, our families and our customers. It's about time that we recognize that and celebrate it.

**THE BUILDER: Even if a construction company doesn't**

**have employees with addiction problems, how can the RFW program make the work environment more "recovery friendly" in advance of a problem?**

**GOYER:** As I've said, the RFW program is tailored to meet the needs of each individual employer, guiding them toward collaborating with people in recovery and establishing best employment practices to demonstrate the principals of the RFW program.

One example I've seen is that some construction companies have begun paying their employees on Mondays rather than Fridays. This simple and virtually free alteration in procedure has seen great success in reducing weekend temptations for employees who may be struggling.

**THE BUILDER: How much does addiction cost employers?**

**GOYER:** The cost of substance misuse in the workplace is astronomical. The National Safety Council estimates the cost for a construction business in Rhode Island that has 20 employees to be \$10,796 per year. This is largely due to absenteeism, productivity loss and turnover. The economic burden is undeniable. Becoming a Recovery Friendly Workplace can help address those costly factors parallel to saving lives that are worth saving.

**THE BUILDER: Are there other benefits for employers who join the RFW program?**

**GOYER:** Oh, yes! They receive recognition from Gov. Raimondo, and they get a distinctive Recovery Friendly Workplace sign for display. They have the right to advertise as a Recovery Friendly Workplace, and they continue to enjoy access to a Recovery Friendly Advisor.

Participating employers even have an individualized cost assessment of not addressing addiction in their specific workplace, provided by the National Safety Council. They also receive free NARCAN® and a free NaloxBox, a solution to protecting and providing access to life-saving Naloxone in an easy-to-recognize cabinet. That's a value of over \$300.

**THE BUILDER: What's your overall message to residential contractors in general and the Rhode Island Builders Association in particular?**

**GOYER:** I stress again the cost of addiction to employers, and the need to be in a good position to deal with it, should it arise on the jobsite.

It's also an issue of morality, of doing the right thing and getting help to those who need it. That should supersede any other priority. We want to help our employees, and we want to give them a safe place to recover. The economic burden comes to employers who aren't ready. And those losses are largely on account of absenteeism, productivity loss and turnover.

Some employers believe that, because they're not doctors, treatment providers or first responders, they don't have a role to play in providing solutions to the overdose epidemic. That's false.

The RFW program helps employers define what their role is, and supports them in fulfilling that role. Participation in this program is voluntary, with no obligations. It starts with taking the first step. Learn more at [Recoveryfriendlyri.com](http://Recoveryfriendlyri.com).

# RIBA monitors bills of concern to the industry

Local board quorums, building officials' responsibilities, infrastructure funding, industry training, contractor licensing all on the General Assembly's agenda.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

As the 2020 session of the General Assembly begins to heat up, the Rhode Island Builders Association is actively engaged on many bills of interest to the residential construction industry:

## *Industry Training*

House Health, Education & Welfare Committee Chairman Joseph McNamara (D-Warwick) and Senate Education Committee Chairwoman Hanna Gallo (D-Cranston) are sponsoring legislation to support workforce development by creating a dedicated revenue stream for contractor

and building-official training.

Grants would be funded by the industry through expanding from 0.001 to 0.002 percent the levy on building permits, and maintaining the \$50 cap for one- and two-family dwellings. (H 7663).

## *Infrastructure Grants*

House Majority Whip Jay Edwards (D-Tiverton) and Sen. Ryan Pearson (D-Cumberland) are sponsoring legislation to enable direct investment into the Rhode Island Municipal Infrastructure Grant Program (RIGL 42-11.4-1, et seq.), in order to provide competitive grants to municipalities to improve public infrastructure, including water, stormwater and sewer infrastructure, to help provide for residential growth. (H 7177 / S 2362)

## *Quorums*

Senate Majority Leader Michael McCaffrey (D-Warwick) and House Majority

Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Warwick) are sponsoring legislation to reform quorum and voting requirements for planning and zoning boards.

The changes would result in planning board votes for approval to be by a simple majority of the quorum present, and zoning boards being able to meet with four of five members present, including any alternates, and votes for approvals to be by three members rather than four. (S 2549 / H 7629)

## *'Spec & Rehab' Bill*

Whip Edwards and Leader McCaffrey are sponsoring legislation to make permanent the tax exemption for certain residential property developments that have either not been completed or have not been sold or occupied, which is currently scheduled to expire on Dec. 31, 2021. (H 7556 / Senate to be introduced)

see *LEGISLATIVE...* page 35



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# NAHB questions ICC voters, irregular code adoption practices

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) sent a letter February 14<sup>th</sup> to International Codes Council (ICC) President Dominic Sims urging the building codes body to carefully reevaluate the validity of many approved voting officials, to reject two specific proposals as not meeting the intent of the energy code, and to reform some of its voting processes while retroactively reconsidering proposals that should not have been on the final ballot.

The results from the 2019 Online Governmental Consensus Vote, to determine 2021 building codes proposals, included several irregularities and discrepancies, specifically proposals for the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), according to NAHB.

“Some aggressive energy efficiency

proposals that had been defeated at prior committee hearings and public comment hearings were approved in the online vote,” the NAHB statement said.

“When proposals are defeated at hearings, they must get a two-thirds majority to overturn past results. It’s a bar so high, no previous proposal had ever met the threshold with the online vote. But in this code cycle, 20 IECC proposals cleared the hurdle and came back to life.”

NAHB is asking the ICC to set aside the results for these 20 proposals and to revise its code adoption process to clarify that the public comment hearing results are considered the final action for proposals that were disapproved at both the committee action hearings and the public comment hearings.

Two of the 20 proposals were also, in

NAHB’s view, clearly outside the intent of the IECC. These proposals require the addition of electric vehicle charging outlets and the installation of electric outlets where gas appliances are installed that can be used for future electric appliance replacement. Neither proposal increases energy efficiency. NAHB is asking that they be rejected regardless of the outcome of the previous request.

“The 20 IECC proposals that were approved after being previously defeated appeared to have been overturned with significant support from hundreds of new voters in the online vote. And the new voters were added late in the code cycle,” NAHB said.

In 2019, only minor updates occurred to

*see CODES...page 35*



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# Permits down in R.I., up nationally

## National Association of Home Builders

While housing production in Rhode Island started 2020 with a yawn, the figures from much of the rest of the country are “up an’ at ‘em.”

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), total housing starts decreased 3.6 percent in January from an upwardly revised December reading, to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.57 million units, according to a report from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development and Commerce Dept. Meanwhile, overall permits surged to a 13-year high.

The January reading of 1.57 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if they kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts decreased 5.9 percent to a 1.01 million seasonally adjusted annual rate. The multifamily sector, which includes

apartment buildings and condos, increased 0.7 percent to a 557,000 pace.

“The housing recovery continues, as single-family housing starts have surpassed one million for the second consecutive month and multifamily production has been running above 500,000 for the same period,” said NAHB Chairman Dean Mon, a home builder and developer from Shrewsbury, N.J. “Meanwhile, builder confidence remains solid as demand continues to pick up.”

“While the solid pace for residential construction continues, favorable weather conditions may have accelerated production in the winter months,” said Danushka Nanayakkara-Skillington, NAHB’s assistant vice president of forecasting and analysis.

“At the same time, the growth in permits is a harbinger that that market will continue to move forward in the coming months,

even as builders grapple with supply-side issues like excessive regulations, labor shortages and rising material costs.”

Regionally in January, combined single- and multifamily housing production increased 31.9 percent in the Northeast and 1.2 percent in the West. Starts fell 25.9 percent in the Midwest and 5.4 percent in the South.

Overall permits, which are a harbinger of future housing production, increased 9.2 percent to a 1.55 million unit annualized rate in January. This is the highest level since March 2007. Single-family permits increased 6.4 percent to a 987,000 rate while multifamily permits increased 14.6 percent to a 564,000 pace.

Looking at regional permit data, permits are 34.6 percent higher in the Northeast, 8.2 percent higher in the Midwest, 8.0 percent higher in the South and 3.1 percent higher in the West.

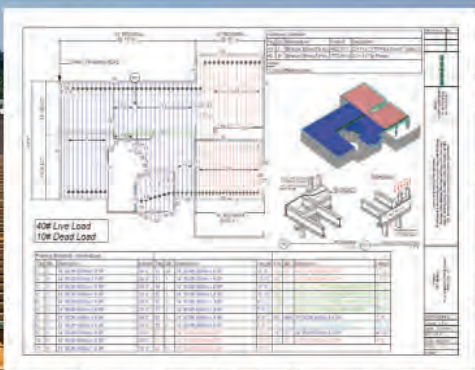
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# Commerce Rhode Island looks at the affordable-housing crisis

Commerce Rhode Island has released the following FAQ and graphics to illustrate the affordable-housing shortage in Rhode Island and the need for a dedicated funding stream to help alleviate it, in the form of the real estate conveyance tax as proposed by Gov. Gina Raimondo:

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Dedicated Funding for Housing Production

**Big Picture:** Rhode Island needs dedicated funding for housing production. The state has an urgent housing shortage, and supply is not keeping up with demand.

#### Q: Rhode Island has a housing shortage?

A: Yes. Rhode Island's total annual housing production is down significantly from historical averages, and the state now has a tight homeownership market and the lowest rental vacancy rate in New England.

#### Q: Why does Rhode Island need dedicated funding for housing production?

A: Rhode Island has an urgent housing shortage, yet significantly underinvests in housing production compared to our peer states. We are the last state in New England without a dedicated revenue stream for this purpose. Permanent, stable funding will enable us to narrow this investment gap and build much-needed homes.

#### Q: Where will dedicated funds come from?

A: A dedicated, sustainable funding stream can be created from a real estate conveyance tax increase on the portion of property sales that exceed half a million dollars.

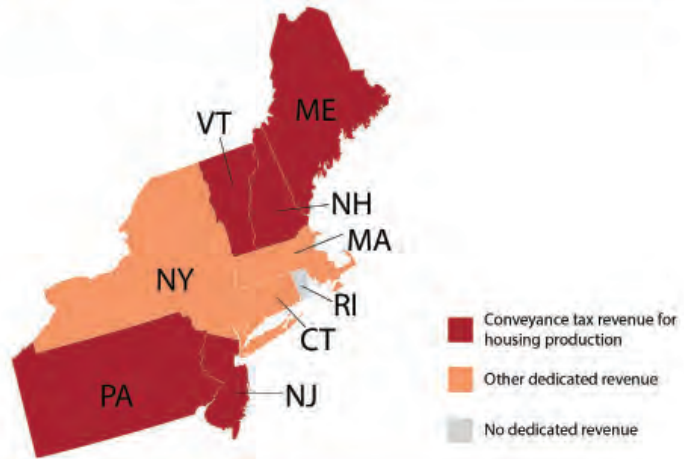
#### Q: Why the conveyance tax?

A: The conveyance tax is the most common revenue tool for housing production, both nationally and within the Northeast.

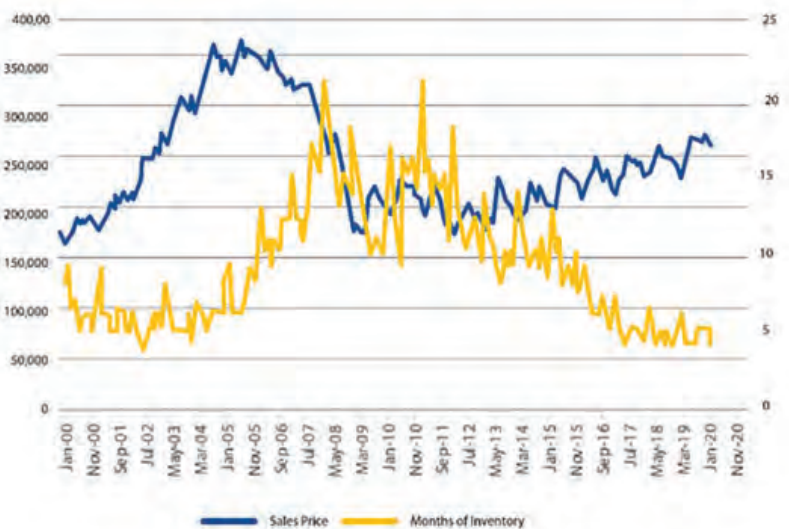
#### Q: How will the change affect the market?

A: The change is modest and only affects the portion of a property sale above \$500,000. In FY19, only 11.2 percent of statewide

## Rhode Island lacks revenue for housing production



## Home prices climb as supply decreases



sales fell into that category. The seller of a \$700,000 property, for example, pays an additional \$920.

#### Q: Will a dedicated funding stream replace Rhode Island's housing bonds?

A: No. A dedicated funding stream builds on the baseline investment provided by housing bonds.

see R.I. COMMERCE...page 35

# Builders Show takeaway: What buyers want in '20

Walk-in master bedroom closets, low-emissivity (low-e) windows and laundry rooms are the most likely features in typical new homes in 2020, based on a survey of single-family home builders by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

Energy-efficient features such as efficient lighting, programmable thermostats and ENERGY STAR appliances will also be likely, as will open design concepts such as great rooms and nine-plus-foot ceilings on the first floor. Energy-efficient or eco-friendly features not likely to be included in new homes, however, are cork flooring in main-level living areas, geothermal heat pumps and solar water heating and cooling.

Consumers continue to desire smaller homes, not only in overall square footage, but also the number of features, such as bedrooms and bathrooms.

This four-year downward trend has led to the smallest average home size since 2011 at 2,520 square feet--only 20 square feet above the average in 2007, the pre-recession peak. The percentage of homes incorporating four-plus bedrooms, three-plus full bathrooms and three-plus car garages have also dropped to levels not seen since 2012.

More consumer data are available in NAHB's *What Home Buyers Really Want* report. Visit [NAHB.org](http://NAHB.org).



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## **CODES...from page 31**

the ICC Member Directory after two deadlines on March 29 and Sept. 23. At some point between late October and Dec. 19, 2019, however, there was a major update that added roughly 209 newly validated governmental members to the roster, totaling about 1,345 new voting representatives.

NAHB is concerned about the eligibility of many of the new governmental members. The letter to ICC includes an attachment with names of specific local government agencies and departments that NAHB is asking the ICC to re-evaluate. Once that reassessment is completed, the online vote results should be retallied, excluding and the votes of any GMVRs who do not meet the current bylaws.

“As a leading participant in crafting the I-Codes, NAHB and its members have a significant interest in retaining the rigor, credibility and legitimacy of the code development process in order to create building codes that are enforceable and provide safe, energy-efficient and affordable homes,” NAHB said. “The ICC must acknowledge the irregularities of the most recent online

vote and take steps to remedy the results and ensure the validity of the process.”

For more information on the building code development process and builders’ role in it, visit [NAHB.org/Advocacy/Top-Priorities/Building-Codes/Code-Development](http://NAHB.org/Advocacy/Top-Priorities/Building-Codes/Code-Development), or contact Craig Drumheller at [cdrumheller@nahb.org](mailto:cdrumheller@nahb.org).



## **R.I. COMMERCE...from page 33**

### **Q: How will new funding be used?**

A: New funds will be used to build and rehabilitate homes for workers, families, seniors, and special needs populations. A subset will also be used to expand housing-related resources for cities and towns.

For more information, contact Housing/Policy Counsel Claudia Wack at Rhode Island Commerce: [Claudia.Wack@commerce.ri.gov](mailto:Claudia.Wack@commerce.ri.gov), or (401) 222-6951.



## **LEGISLATIVE...from page 30**

### ***Inspection Reform***

Sen. Elizabeth Crowley (D-Central Falls), Rep. Jean Phillippe Barros (D-Pawtucket) and Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Providence) are sponsoring legislation to reform the duties, responsibilities, and municipal sharing of local building officials. It would prevent more than two communities from sharing the same building official, and prioritize state building code work over any municipal work assigned to the building official. (S 2663 / H 7904 / H 7846)

### ***Contractor Licensing***

House Municipal Government Committee Chairman Joseph Solomon Jr. (D-Warwick) and Sen. Cindy Coyne (D-Barrington) are sponsoring a joint resolution to establish a 13-member Special Legislative Commission to study and make recommendations regarding the licensing of residential builders and contractors. (H 7779 / S 2674)

### ***Continuing Education for Contractors***

Senate Judiciary Chairwoman Erin Lynch Prata (D-Warwick) and House Special Legislation Chairman Stephen Casey (D-Woonsocket) are sponsoring legislation to increase continuing education requirements for residential contractors from five hours to 10 hours every two years. (S 2622 / H 7999)

### ***Roofing contractors***

Rep. Carol McEntee (D-South Kingstown) and Senate Environment Committee Chairwoman Susan Sosnowski (D-South Kingstown) are sponsoring legislation to remove bonding requirements for roofing contractors and increase per-occurrence insurance requirements from \$1.5 million to \$2 million. (H 7221 / S 2169)

For more information on any legislative matter, and to participate in RIBA’s government affairs activities, contact RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400 or [jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org](mailto:jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org).




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# Housing, workforce development prominent in 2021 budget

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Boosting housing production and workforce development feature prominently in Gov. Charlie Baker's proposed budget for fiscal 2021.

## Career Technical Institutes

The proposal includes \$8.4 million in funding to transform 15

vocational high schools into Career Technical Institutes and train 20,000 workers over four years in skilled trades and technical fields to address the persistent skills gap. This funding will be combined with capital dollars and other sources of funding for a total investment of approximately \$15 million.

"These institutes will operate three shifts per day, including the regular school day for current vocational school students, after school for traditional high school students and during the evening for adult students," the proposed budget states.

### Resources for RIBA members who work in Massachusetts

*The Rhode Island Builder* covers Massachusetts news relevant to members of the Rhode Island Builders Association who work in our neighbor to the north and east.

Here are some sources of regulatory information and forms for contractors who work in the Bay State, or who plan to. For education purposes, RIBA will shortly expand its education programs to include courses required for work in Massachusetts.

**Building Permits:** Massachusetts has a statewide formula for building permits. Application forms may vary a little by municipality, but standard forms and information may be found at the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation (OCABR) website: [Mass.gov/ocabr](http://Mass.gov/ocabr).

**Contractor Registration and Licensing:** Massachusetts has licensing for construction supervisors and registration for home improvement contractors. Find the details at [Mass.gov/topics/building-trades](http://Mass.gov/topics/building-trades).

Also find information about trade licensing at this site.

**MassHousing:** Similar to Rhode Island Housing, MassHousing is an independent, quasi-public agency that provides financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts.

Created in 1966, MassHousing raises capital by selling bonds, and lends the proceeds to low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners, and to developers who build or preserve affordable and/or mixed-income rental housing. Since its inception, MassHousing has provided more than \$20 billion for affordable housing. Find out more at [MassHousing.com](http://MassHousing.com).



Courtesy Office of Gov. Charlie Baker

**Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker introduces his proposed state budget in January.**

## Housing and Homelessness

The budget proposes:

- \$184.4 million to fund the Emergency Assistance (EA) family shelter system – which will be re-procured for the first time in a decade;
- \$120.0 million for the Mass. Rental Voucher Program, including on and off budget sources, a \$12.5 million (12%) increase above FY20 spending to support 9,427 vouchers;
- \$72 million in funding for local housing authorities;
- \$27.2 million for the HomeBASE household assistance initiative, an increase of \$1.6 million (6.2%) over FY20 spending;
- \$7.5 million for the DMH rental subsidy program for over 1,400 families and individuals.

For more information, visit [Budget.digital.mass.gov/govbudget/fy21/](http://Budget.digital.mass.gov/govbudget/fy21/).

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## **LICENSING...from page 1**

successful in other states, and our unique demographic, geographic and economic reality, must be taken into account so the best possible balance between regulations and consumer protection is achieved," Ms. Georgakis added.

"In our capacity as the regulatory agency, the CRLB (Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board, now part of DBR) is an active participant in discussions around the topic. We look forward to working closely with contractors, industry stakeholders and members of the General Assembly to help best inform any relevant decisions." *Related story on page 30.*

Under current law, the CRLB registers contractors doing business in Rhode Island, and licenses eight additional professions. However, the terms "registered" and "licensed" are often used interchangeably, even in contractor advertising, Ms. Georgakis noted.

"What's important is that contractors – just like anyone else the state regulates – meet the legal and regulatory requirements to work in the state."

Asked if licensing would help get more outlaw contractors out of the market, especially as a consumer-protection move, she said this is already being done without general licensing.

"Since the CRLB's move to the Dept. of Business Regulation, we have made procedural, personnel and regulatory changes, while also being sensitive to not implement overly burdensome regulations. These changes will lead to even greater levels of consumer protection."

Ms. Georgakis said the CRLB has been working on better enforcement, on educating homeowners about the perils of hiring unregistered contractors, on increasing the CRLB's effectiveness at mediating differences between homeowners and contractors, and cooperating with the Attorney General's Office to prosecute unregistered and illegal activity.

"All these things together will, eventually, lead to a more professional industry," Ms. Georgakis said.

Illustrating ongoing action at the CRLB, the Rhode Island Attorney General's office announced on February 25<sup>th</sup> that seven contractors are facing felony charges and

10 more were arraigned on misdemeanor charges in Providence District Court for failing to comply with a final order from the board.

Two other contractors reached agreements with CLRB as a result of this effort. Meanwhile, bills before the General

## **BOARD...from page 1**

changes that will require different housing types," Ms. Rainone added. *Related story on page 2.*

"This is a national problem, and many states and municipalities across the country are taking action, including increasing investment and reducing regulations to reduce barriers to housing production."

She estimated that some 2,000 new housing units were permitted in the state in 2018, half the number constructed in 2005 and 30 percent lower than the average over the last 30 years. She added that municipalities are not doing enough to encourage housing production, and that aging housing stock is not being replaced.

"Rhode Island has the oldest multi-family rental stock in the country," Ms. Rainone pointed out. "We estimate that some 500 units come offline each year because of age, conversion or loss."

Impact fees, minimum lot sizes, long approval processes and density restrictions are among the factors contributing to low


## **AFFORDABILITY...from page 2**

can't afford a \$250,000 home. This helps put affordability concerns into perspective and goes a long way toward explaining the result published by NAHB last September (Eyeonhousing.org/2019/09/new-home-price-data-underscore-affordability-problems), that 49 percent of home buyers are looking to buy homes priced under \$250,000.

"The top of the pyramid shows that 7.2 million households have enough income to buy a \$850,000 home, and 2.2 million even have enough for a home priced at \$1,550,000. But market analysts should never focus on this to the exclusion of the wider steps that support the pyramid's base," NAHB said.

In January, NAHB released its

Assembly (S-2674) and (H-7779) would set up a 13-member special legislative commission to study and make recommendations on licensing for residential builders and contractors.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for information as this issue develops. 

production and high costs, according to Ms. Rainone.


## ***Other matters***

RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio offered an update on the 70<sup>th</sup> annual Rhode Island Home Show, originally set for April 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> at the Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, but canceled as we went to press because of the ongoing public health emergency.

Members should watch for information about whether the Home Show will be rescheduled for later this year.

Mr. Marcantonio reviewed RIBA's legislative agenda point by point. *Related story on page 30.*


RIBA members are invited to attend the public portion of the monthly Board of Directors meetings, which usually take place on the first Tuesday of each month at RIBA's East Providence headquarters.

Please contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org) for more information. 

new "Priced-Out Estimates for 2020" (<https://www.nahb.org/News-and-Economics/Housing-Economics/Housings-Economic-Impact/Households-Priced-Out-by-Higher-House-Prices-and-Interest-Rates>).

NAHB also discussed the often-cited estimate that a \$1,000 increase in the price of a median-priced new home will price 158,857 U.S. households out of the market for the home.

NAHB also cited the related estimate that a quarter point increase in the mortgage rate will price out 1.3 million potential home buyers.

For a more complete description of the methodology underpinning NAHB's latest priced-out estimates, please consult the full study published in [HousingEconomics.com](https://www.housingeconomics.com). 

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