

GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

ST. JOHN'S A1C 5T7

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

1982 06 01

Honourable Paul Cosgrove
 Minister Responsible for
 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
 House of Commons
 OTTAWA

Minister's Office	
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Ex. Asst.	
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Dear Mr. Cosgrove:

As you are aware, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation commissioned the consulting firm of Marshall, MacKlin and Monohan to study moisture induced problems to NHA housing across Canada. Based on their findings to date, it is readily apparent that a very serious problem of structural deterioration is predominant in electrically heated homes in this Province. Officials of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation have been able to corroborate these findings by way of an investigation of a number of their own rental housing units which served to further confirm the seriousness of the problem and the need for immediate remedial action.

While investigations to date have not resulted in any one cure-all which could be confidently employed to eliminate the problem, the interim report of the consultants has advised that the major contributors to the condensation problems are, in fact, the living habits and lifestyles of the housing occupants. Clearly then it is essential that we must, without delay, launch a publicity campaign to advise both homeowners and tenants of the damage they may be causing and, more to the point, the damage they are causing to the units they occupy.

I would now seek your assistance in developing this publicity campaign and, given that findings to date reveal that the resulting damage appears most apparent in this Province, we would suggest that the publicity effort be concentrated in this region.

Recognition of the moisture induced problems being experienced and the need for an educational program is but one facet of the problem for we must also address the development of an assistance program for homeowners and landlords who are faced not only with large expenditures to repair existing moisture induced damage but also to carry out a preventive maintenance program to avert further deterioration.

The final report of Marshall, MacKlin and Monohan will, I understand, define with some accuracy the extent of the moisture problem and its resulting damage to NHA financed or insured housing units. I would suggest to you that the number of units they identify as affected will be but only a very small percentage of the total number of units affected when one takes into account houses constructed under other financing mechanisms as well as the many houses and apartment units retrofitted under both the CHIP and COSP Programs, many of which are suspected to be suffering a similar plight.

While responsibility for this serious problem lies to an extent with the homeowner, we must not lose sight of the fact that both Federal and Provincial Governments have, for some time, been publicly encouraging homeowners to conserve energy through increased insulation and airtightness of their homes. In light of this, the onus rests with both Governments to take immediate action and to this end I would suggest, without any delay, we launch a publicity campaign to advise homeowners of the moisture problem and ways to eliminate it. Furthermore, we should be prepared to provide expertise and assistance to homeowners and landlords to refurbish the damage caused by the hidden moisture.

Yours very truly,



H. NEIL WINDSOR
Minister of Development

cc Honourable G. Ottenheimer
Minister of Justice

Honourable H. Newhook
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Mr. Adrian MacLean
President
Newfoundland and Labrador Home Builders Association