



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# **Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development**

---

ENVI • NUMBER 060 • 2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, June 9, 2015**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Harold Albrecht**



# Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

•(0845)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC)):** I'd like to call our meeting to order. This is meeting number 60 of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

We're meeting today pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) for a study of the role of the private sector in Canada in showing leadership by partnering with not-for-profit organizations to undertake local environmental initiatives.

Appearing today by video conference from Mississauga, Ontario, is Mr. Greg Zilberbrant, manager, environment and corporate social responsibility, Holcim Canada. By video conference from Waterloo, Ontario, we have Mary Jane Patterson, executive director, REEP Green Solutions.

We're happy to have both of you here by video. We'll begin with Mr. Greg Zilberbrant from Holcim and his 10-minute opening statement, followed by Mary Jane Patterson with her 10-minute statement. Then we'll proceed to questions from members.

Welcome, Mr. Zilberbrant.

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant (Manager, Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility, Holcim Canada Inc.):** Thank you.

Good morning. Thank you to the committee for inviting me to speak to you today on behalf of Holcim Canada.

To provide some context, I want to share briefly with you what Holcim Canada is. Holcim Canada Inc. is one of the country's largest vertically integrated building materials and construction companies. With 3,000 employees, we manufacture cement, aggregates, and ready-mix concrete and provide construction services to many of Canada's largest infrastructure projects. Our business divisions include Dufferin Aggregates, Dufferin Concrete, and Dufferin Construction in Ontario, and the Demix brand, offering concrete, aggregates, and construction services in Quebec.

In short, we build the materials that build the world around us. Concrete, one of the key products of our vertically integrated value chain, is the second most used material in the world, second only to water. We are proud of the materials we make and the solutions we provide and of how they're able to build the foundations of society.

The manufacturing of our materials is an important contribution to the social, economic, and environmental values that our company provides to Canadians. This is an important context for today's discussion about the opportunity for private enterprises to be leaders

in collaboration with not-for-profit organizations and to create value through local environmental initiatives.

As a materials company, we have an undoubted environmental impact with the production of materials. We support the role of government in holding our industry accountable via compliance mechanisms. They play a vital role in ensuring that there is a level playing field among the competitors in our industry.

We produce materials by taking the most sustainable and economically feasible approach possible. We pride ourselves in being an environmental leader in our industry and in general across the manufacturing sector. This has much to do with the way in which we manufacture our materials and how, for example, we're able to reduce our reliance on non-renewable resources through the use of secondary materials such as blast-furnace slag, a byproduct of the steel industry, to produce a cement substitute; to improve our energy efficiency through the reuse of heat generated from our process to dry our incoming materials; and to reduce our carbon footprint overall through a reduction of non-renewable resources and increased energy efficiency, but also in the substitution of coal for non-recyclable residues from other industries as fuel in our cement kilns.

That is the manufacturing element of our business. However, we are able to create an impact and provide solutions beyond our own perimeter. By this, I refer to the opportunity for our materials to be used in pervious parking lots to improve stormwater management, an increased use of concrete in structures to improve the building envelope, and inflexible roadways made of concrete to improve the fuel efficiency of vehicles. This complementary view of direct and indirect impact is a core part of our business strategy and a measure of the true value of a leader in sustainable development.

There is much more we can do, as we have done, beyond our core business as a member of the communities in which we operate. We take pride in our role as a good corporate neighbour and a leader in sustainable development. Holcim Canada has built a solid reputation for its commitment to the communities where we are located, to the people, the economy, and the natural environment. We proactively look for opportunities to reduce our impact on the environment and seek partnerships with trusted local NGOs where our organizations can add value and amplify each other's efforts for the net gain of our natural environment and our communities.

I would like to share with this committee a few examples of such partnerships and how they've come to be, and the net gain that was achieved for those involved.

The first such example is a very simple one, a park. A park was being built by the municipality less than a few hundred metres from our cement facility in Mississauga. We decided to get engaged, as it was a facility that our community and our employees would use for many years to come. Our involvement was to provide materials for the facility.

The material we wanted to provide was innovative in its design. The material is a porous concrete that allows rainwater to penetrate the surface and return to the ground rather than being diverted to the storm sewer, a great innovation that reduces the need for stormwater infrastructure and surges of water being moved to a large body while the groundwater remains unreplenished.

However, there were very few installations of this material in the region. We, along with the park architects and the municipality's project team, saw this as an opportunity rather than a setback. We hosted education events for the municipal roadwork staff; visited a site where the material had been installed in order to discuss best practices; engaged industry associations to provide training to the construction crews on installation techniques; and invited numerous stakeholders to witness the installation to better understand the material.

● (0850)

Holcim also designed an educational interactive outdoor display that shows how this material works and what benefits it provides for the environment. This collaboration has created a unique demonstration of materials and design innovation in a setting that can be assessed by our stakeholders, including our customers and members of the community, to learn more about the material and, most importantly, see it in action.

This feature is now a destination for the local conservation authority as part of its low-impact development tour that is attended by architects, engineers, and developers in the region. As such, it provides us with a business opportunity to promote a product that our company is able to deliver with high quality, as can be seen by the interest of our potential customers during this visit. Most importantly, it demonstrates that both the municipality and the conservation authority have trust in our abilities as an organization to deliver innovative environmental solutions.

The second example is that of the Holcim Waterfront Estate, a facility where member of Parliament Stella Ambler, who is on this committee, announced the funding that Holcim Canada and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority will be receiving for another project, which I will come back to in a moment as my third example.

The Holcim Waterfront Estate was again a collaboration between Holcim and the City of Mississauga. I will not delve into the details of this facility, aside from saying that it's a beautifully restored manor and a key piece of local heritage and history that has been revitalized using modern-day sustainable practices, for the enjoyment of generations to come. We are happy to be part of it.

The collaboration in this project demonstrated a level of trust that was built as a result of a previous park construction experience.

Recycled aggregate was a primary source of stone for the project in using crushed recycled concrete rather than mined virgin aggregate. Low CO<sub>2</sub> cement mixes were used for smaller features. A mix using recycled water and manufactured sand was used in some of the concrete designs, both offsetting the equivalent in natural quantities of material needed.

This example highlights the potential of adopting innovative environmental solutions in projects so that other stakeholders can understand the potential for such features within their own projects. Innovation, however, is not at the expense of quality and safety. All the features mentioned still appear and function in the same manner as designed.

What these projects have provided is an exceptional collaborative environment between Holcim and our non-private partners. This has led to continuous conversation with and support of one another by Holcim, the municipality, and the conservation authority. We provide access to conservation authority personnel to monitor birds, bats, fish, and shoreline conditions around our properties. These activities are part of larger studies; however, because of our open dialogue and our environmental commitments and the seriousness with which we take them, and based on the success of previous collaboration, Holcim was willing to grant access to have our properties included in these studies.

We also benefited when an opportunity for funding became available through the Government of Canada, as the information collected and, more importantly, the established collaborative relationship between Holcim and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority facilitated their support for Holcim to have nine acres of waterfront land enhanced to create a stopover and feeding area for migratory species at risk. This project clearly benefits these species, the mandate of the conservation authority, and the national conservation plan, but it also allows Holcim to further solidify our environmental leadership position with a project that independently would not be within our scope of knowledge or financial resources to complete.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to present to this committee and for the support the Government of Canada has provided for the natural enhancement project I just mentioned, on nine acres of land of our property on the shoreline of Lake Ontario, as a model of natural restoration and environmental leadership.

In summary, the collaborative nature of relationships between Holcim and our not-for-profit or public partners, in combination with our sustainability-minded business approach, has allowed us to take a leadership role in the private sector. All the examples provided have been realized within 500 metres of our Mississauga cement plant. These are local projects with local stakeholders that have a local and global impact.

We also appreciate the value we're able to bring to the table when discussing such collaboration. When there are innovative, creative organizations sitting at the table with us that are able to provide expertise in their area, the reputational value of their organizations, and an understanding of business needs, as well as the potential for funding to bridge economic gaps, then sustainable development opportunities are bound to find light.

Thank you.

● (0855)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Zilberbrant. That was very informative.

We'll move now to Mary Jane Patterson from Waterloo.

Mary Jane, please proceed.

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson (Executive Director, REEP Green Solutions):** Good morning, committee members, staff, and Mr. Zilberbrant. Greetings from Waterloo region.

I am honoured to be part of this discussion today and am very interested in this topic. Our observation as a non-profit is that the private sector is ready and willing to partner and to show leadership, not only by sometimes sponsoring our work but many times by participating in it as well.

I work for REEP Green Solutions, an environmental non-profit organization that serves the Waterloo region. We focus on energy and water sustainability. In particular, we've delivered the EnerGuide for houses home energy evaluations for 16 years. We've now been in 14,000 homes in Waterloo region and participants in our program are collectively saving 21,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually through their home energy upgrades.

Some of the work we're doing is cutting edge and actually similar to what you described, Mr. Zilberbrant, such as climate change adaptation to prevent flooding and to protect our streams and rivers. When a business gets involved in one of our programs as a participant or a delivery partner, they're showing leadership because together we're helping to establish a new norm of behaviour in our community. The strongest most effective programs we've seen have government policy and incentives as their foundation. In other words, you have two legs of the stool in the description of this study: the private sector and non-profit organizations. I propose that we add a third leg, and that is government policy and incentives.

I want to give you examples from our stormwater program and our energy efficiency work to make three points. First is that private sector partners strengthen our impact. Second, government policy and incentives are an essential foundation for this work, and third, these programs are good for the economy.

Let me give you a recent example involving a bank as a partner and a property management company as a participant in our RAIN program. RAIN is an ecological approach to stormwater management. We had the pleasure last week of receiving a cheque for \$5,000 from RBC to support a rain garden party at a six-plex residential building in Kitchener. Rain gardens are a creative and beautiful way to reduce flood risk and protect our streams and rivers by soaking up and slowing down stormwater. Although they're not new technology, they are cutting edge in terms of public adoption.

The private sector leadership in this case is twofold. One is the property owner doing something new and different to solve a flooding problem on his property, and the other is RBC showing their private sector leadership by helping our organization turn this single action into a living classroom in the community so that neighbours can come to our training session and a work party.

RBC receives positive recognition and the staff feel part of making their community better. I can say that this was really clear when we went to get the cheque. All the staff had blue T-shirts on and there were giant blue raindrops suspended from the ceiling with tips on how to conserve water. They were really proud of what their company was doing for the community.

What really made this project possible was the third leg of this stool: government funding and an incentive. Our work in stormwater management began with funding from the Province of Ontario and it continues now under contract with the municipalities. The local government also provided an incentive of \$4,000 to the property owner to encourage uptake of this kind of project so that it can become a public demonstration of innovative stormwater management practices.

The third leg in the stool is really the first one. The government's role is very important in these partnerships to steer us to the future we want for our country and for our communities. We need good public policy based in evidence to provide a framework for private and non-sector action, and incentives to help put these policies into practice.

At REEP we often work with small and medium-sized businesses. If I look at it from their perspective, I see that they want to distinguish themselves in the eyes of the community. They want to increase their sales. They want to be responsible corporations, and sometimes, they also want to solve a problem on their property that we can help them with. In all of these cases, they're looking for ways that their goals intersect with the public good.

● (0900)

We want the public good to be well defined. Otherwise, we risk public sector investment going to activities that look good for public relations reasons but don't contribute to the end results we want for our country and our community.

One of the best examples I've seen of the private sector, the non-profit sector, and the government working together has been the ecoENERGY home energy efficiency program. The federal government provided the financial incentive to homeowners to spur them to action. They based it on a third party audit to benchmark and verify the results. REEP was one of the many service providers for that audit. A number of them were non-profit also. Renovation contractors were essential additional private sector actors providing the retrofits for these homes.

We worked closely with renovation contractors during that time. All of us were really proud to be part of a government-led initiative that we brought our local strength to. The contractors were key partners who helped spread the word about the program and spur uptake. They also benefited economically. We think somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$41 million would have been spent in our community to implement those retrofits over the years. We really cannot underestimate the economic value of these programs and the jobs they create and sustain.

The ecoENERGY incentive ended in 2011, and there hasn't been anywhere near the retrofit activity in our community there was before. At REEP we used to do 100 energy evaluations a month. Now we barely do that in a year. It doesn't mean there aren't home energy retrofits happening, but there really isn't anything to spur homeowners who are putting it off to do it now, or to move it up higher in their priority list, or to access those people who aren't planning to do it already.

We've really looked for ways ourselves to encourage home energy retrofits in the absence of the incentive. For example, we've talked to our electric and natural gas utilities about working together, and in some ways, we are. But what we've heard from them is that they're really focusing on the commercial sector rather than the residential sector, because that's where they have the easiest gains and the greatest impact.

Some homeowner-targeted programs continue in some areas, but they're not able to have the impact the federal incentive was able to have. This demonstrates to me the importance of the federal government being at the table to provide a framework that makes sure key sectors or issues are not left out because they're harder to address. If you look at the residential sector, it accounts for 50% of our natural gas consumption in the Waterloo region and 30% of our electricity consumption. That's a really significant sector that we want to address.

I'll give you one more example of private sector leadership, in this case spurred by a Natural Resources Canada call for proposals. REEP is partnering with two businesses in the Waterloo region, Mindscape Innovations and Scaled Purpose, for a proposal to NRCan to encourage home energy retrofits by providing both a retrofit coach to help people through the process and innovative community-based financing to help address the capital cost.

We are proud to partner with these two local businesses, and very pleased that we may have the support of the federal government to provide this pilot, but I know that each gain and every retrofit will be hard won, because there really isn't anything like a federal incentive to motivate action by homeowners. If this approach had the support of a federal incentive to build on, then it could really fly. I feel

sometimes like we're trying to build something in mid-air. We really need a foundation for the residential sector from the federal level to make things happen.

My conclusion is that the third leg of the stool is really critical. The private sector is ready and willing to partner, and their input really makes the impact much stronger. We can make that generosity and corporate innovation count most when there's a solid public policy foundation based in evidence that steers us forward together. Then we as non-profits and our private sector partners have something to build on. We're part of something bigger than ourselves, working together not only for our community but for our country, for our country's climate action plan. It becomes an economic stimulus and an environment benefit rolled into one powerful package.

● (0905)

Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today. I'm looking forward to the discussion.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Patterson.

Again, thanks to both of you for your good remarks and for keeping well within your time.

We're going to move now to our committee members for an opening round of seven minutes each. We'll begin with Mr. Woodworth, please.

Mr. Woodworth.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC):** Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the witnesses.

I'm sorry you can't be here with us in person, but I'm glad that you both had an opportunity to present your point of view and get some things on the record federally.

I especially welcome Ms. Patterson. I hope you don't mind if I call you Mary Jane. I'm very, very glad to have had the opportunity in this study to bring you here to talk about how non-profits partner with the private sector. You know that I'm a big fan of the work that you do and I'm really glad to get a chance to put some of this on the record federally.

I'd like to begin by asking you to describe the REEP House for sustainable living. First of all, describe what it is and its purposes, and also then tell us what role the private sector had in helping you to arrange that demonstration house.

Ms. Patterson, please.

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Well, I'd be glad to and I did have that in the text of my remarks but I cut it out, because I knew I had to speak more slowly for the translators. So thank you for asking.

The REEP House for Sustainable Living is a 100-year-old house in the heart of Kitchener that has been renovated to reduce its energy consumption by 86%. It's one of very few renovated homes that are LEED platinum certified in Canada. It is part of our efforts to continue to encourage home owners to retrofit their homes by showing them in practice some of the things that we recommend in our home energy evaluations.

One of the things that's the most popular is the insulation room. We have a whole wall with different kinds of insulation displayed with the drywall removed so you can see each different type. We explain the R-value and the cost and the impact, and some of the environmental implications of each type.

As you pointed out, Stephen, there is a really neat combination of people who came together to make the REEP House possible, starting with the federal government grant during the stimulus funding time, and matched with provincial grants and local government, and then many private sector partners came together with us to do this.

I can mention, for example, Reitzel Insulation, a company in Kitchener that we had often worked with in the ecoENERGY program. They insulated the whole house for a value of about \$16,000 as an in-kind contribution to the project. There are a number of other contractors who either provided lower prices for us or things at cost, or even outright contributions, to make that project happen.

• (0910)

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Have you disseminated this technology and this information to building contractors in the Waterloo region area, and how has that effort been going?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** We do get contractors coming in. Our focus is more on helping home owners understand how to choose between different types of insulation they encounter, but we continue to work with contractors, and sometimes they send their customers to the house so they can see the different options.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Very good.

I think the idea is to demonstrate to the building industry and to residential consumers that the kinds of technology, not just insulation but other kinds of technology, in the demonstration house will in fact pay back many times over, over time. Is that correct?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Yes, that's one of the important parts of the demonstration. The title of it is: "What do you want your annual heating bill to be?" We show under each type of insulation and also with a bare or wall—which is how we found the house—what the heating costs are, what it costs to upgrade with each type, and what the payback would be.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** I would like you to also tell us what support the NRC is offering in the program for which you put in a response to the call for proposals. What is that NRC program about?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** It was a request for proposals for multi-sectoral partnerships that would further home energy retrofits using the EnerGuide for houses software as part of the package and Energy Star for new homes. So in our partnership, we've partnered with Mindscape Innovations, which offers home ratings for new homes. We're combining the work we do for existing homes with

their work for new homes to respond to this proposal. The third partner is coming in to work on community financing.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** What is NRC's contribution?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** If we are successful in our application, it would be about \$120,000, which we're matching with in-kind and local money. That will help us hire a retrofit coach to help people through the process and to provide contractor training as well.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Very good. EnerGuide and the other program you mentioned, was it On Star? I'm sorry, I lost that name, but EnerGuide—

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Energy Star.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Thank you.

Are those federal programs or not—federal developed instruments, yes?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Yes, they are. Yes, certainly, EnerGuide for houses is. I think Energy Star is too.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Very good, thank you.

I wonder if you could tell us if there is any obstacle that you've encountered in getting businesses to work with you to make sustainability the norm for them.

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** I would say that what we need is the support to do the work. For example, right now we're hired by the municipalities on the stormwater side to engage with businesses, to show them how to divert and soak up stormwater on their property rather than sending it all to the stormwater system.

What we need is support to be hired to do the work, but once we do that, then we go out and make the contacts and it's up to us to engage businesses in it. They've been really interested. We've had probably three dozen businesses working with us this past year, whereas the year before I don't think any of them would have ever heard of any of this work. So they're very interested.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** I'm afraid I'm out of time, but thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Woodworth, and Ms. Patterson.

Our next question will be by Ms. LeBlanc. Welcome to our committee.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would also like to thank the witnesses for their presentations and for the extremely important initiatives they discussed with us.

Ms. Patterson, you said that a partner was missing for all of these initiatives, that they were often of rather short duration, and that there were no long-term incentives.

Mr. Zilberbrant, you gave the example of a park in which you used a rather innovative type of concrete, if I understood correctly.

Do you think that in the long term, the federal government could see to it that the population and entrepreneurs are made more aware of these materials that are particularly adapted to climate change, since they contribute to reducing greenhouse gases?

Do you think the federal government could do something in that respect?

● (0915)

[English]

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** Thank you very much for the question.

The material that was used in this park is a porous concrete. In very basic terms, it's a concrete with lots of holes in it that allow water to penetrate back in the ground and replenish the ground water.

This is an example of the sustainable technology or a technology that can be used in different applications—not in all applications, but for parking lots. As Ms. Patterson mentioned, it can be used to deal with rainwater and rainwater run-off, especially in impervious areas or in parking lots or sidewalks.

The largest thing the federal government can play a role in is really the policy and the adoption of these technologies beyond their demonstration. I think Ms. Patterson alluded to that regarding the ecoENERGY guides or in Energy Star—not necessarily as much for certification as for education and highlighting which technologies do what and what their purpose is in our built environment. I believe there's an opportunity to provide that sort of educational information, and then eventually incentivizing the builders to do it.

[Translation]

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc:** You talked about incentives, but how could the federal government provide those?

I'm not talking here about a brief program or project that would disappear after two or three years, but about a more official initiative centred on this type of product. If I understand correctly, this could reduce the risk of flooding, or the overflow of municipal wastewaters. If there were a certification or an incentive, this could encourage entrepreneurs to use the product.

[English]

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** I think with something like LEED, there is the opportunity to include these types of materials. It really then becomes a matter of how that procurement process occurs and initially, even at the federal government level, how buildings and roadways are built, when you're dealing with structures and lands that are owned by the federal government, and a matter of having initiatives to actually incorporate these materials as the norm for structures and for roadways. That incentive may come in the form of something for early adopters, in the same way ecoENERGY works to give that incentive.

I can speak to some municipalities that are looking at taxing stormwater management. Mississauga, for example, is coming forward with an increased tax on impervious surfaces. It's a disincentive in a way, but at the same time it is an incentive in that if you're looking at new construction, you'll put in pervious surfaces to reduce your long-term tax bill. So there is the opportunity.

[Translation]

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc:** That is a very good idea. The federal government has an enormous number of buildings, enormous infrastructure. It could as you said be one of the first users. It could lead by example by adopting this type of technology, which is really focused on adapting to climate change. I think that is interesting.

In addition, there is the Quebec Fonds vert, the Green Fund. That plan provides funds to companies and industries. It applies to industries at this time. Could you tell me how the Green Fund allows companies to innovate while lowering their energy costs and costs of production? How could a bill, or a program like the Quebec Green Fund, be an incentive for companies to innovate, in partnership with government?

● (0920)

[English]

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** I won't speak in detail about the green plan, because I don't know it in detail. I will speak to the concept of early adoption and innovation. I think this is a challenge, especially for larger companies.

There are many new innovative technologies coming forward from small companies that are looking to us as a partner to showcase them in the same way I described the federal government taking a leadership role by using certain building materials. These companies may be technology companies that are looking for a partner to demonstrate that.

I think that along with having the support of the federal government, the not-for-profit sector has an important role in helping those new technologies to be vetted in a such way that when a large company decides there is an opportunity to test something, it have a bit more certainty.

[Translation]

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc:** Very well, thank you very much.

Ms. Patterson...

Is that all?

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, but your time is up.

We'll move now to Mrs. Ambler for seven minutes.



**Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC):** Thank you very much to both of you for being here today and providing us such rich and interesting material for our study. I thank you for the work that your organizations do in protecting Canada's rich natural heritage.

Greg, thank you for being here from Mississauga today and for all the good work that Holcim does in this area.

I'd like to ask you a very general question, if I might, about how Holcim started down this path. I love your title, which is manager of environment and corporate social responsibility. Has Holcim always had someone in your position?

I'm asking partly because Holcim is obviously a large company. Ms. Patterson's organization works with small and medium-sized enterprises. I'm wondering how a company might get started down the path of working for their environment, helping their environment, and taking on these projects. How did Holcim get started and why did they get started down this path?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** Thank you, Ms. Ambler, for the question. And thanks again, I do have to say, for the support from the Government of Canada for the Credit Valley Conservation and Holcim partnership for this nine acres of land that we'll be rehabilitating.

It's an excellent question. I think we're seeing more and more large companies like Holcim going down the sustainability path. As a global company based out of Switzerland, Holcim's venture into this is decades old. Really it's been adopted around the world, the understanding that sustainable business is good business. We don't hide behind our borders. We don't hide behind our fences and the security we have around our properties. We are very open to the community. We're very transparent. We have that trust built that allows us to really be a good corporate citizen for the benefit of the community and of us and our employees.

As to how a company like this would get started, or would go down that road, really a part of it is Holcim's mentality and view of sustainability as being a critical part of the sustainability of our business, with that triple bottom line of the environmental, the social, and absolutely the economic. We need to be sustainable. We need to be an environmentally and socially responsible business to be economically viable. None of those aspects are mutually exclusive in the world we operate in.

● (0925)

**Mrs. Stella Ambler:** That in fact is what we've been hearing from other witnesses as well. I think it's good for Canadians to know that helping the environment, being responsible in that regard, doesn't have to affect your bottom line, and in fact can improve it. Thanks for making that point.

You mentioned the habitat stewardship program for species at risk and the announcement we were able to make together just a few weeks ago. Again, on the part of the Government of Canada, this is a \$104,000 natural enhancement project having to do with stopover for migratory birds.

Now, one might think that cement and concrete don't have very much to do with migratory birds. Why this project for Holcim? What's the benefit? Please help us understand the "why" aspects. Why did Holcim choose this and why is it important to you? I think

it's fairly obvious why it's important to the community, but why is it important to Holcim?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** Thank you for that.

I think the concept of a corporation is the fact that we are made of people. We are made of individuals who have children and who will have grandchildren. I don't have any yet, obviously—you can see me on the video conference there. But when we look at generations to come, I think these are things that resonate with our employees. They resonate even within our own walls.

We looked at what we could do as a company in providing the materials and what we could do within our own borders with the capacity we have. We realize that we're a very large landowner with our aggregates operations and our cement operations. With the partnership we have with the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, that openness and that discussion helped them identify for us that this is really an opportunity for us that has no negative impact on our business. It's a piece of property that we're not using currently and that we don't see being used in the future.

It's an opportunity to do something meaningful, with their support and with the Government of Canada's support, and really the support of our employees, as Ms. Patterson mentioned. The pride of our employees to be there and be part of this is absolutely stellar. They're more excited about this than many other projects we have that are business-related. It's fantastic.

**Mrs. Stella Ambler:** Isn't that nice. That's great to hear. I think the fact that you engaged the local community as well is admirable. I'd like to thank you for that.

I'd like to hear more about the community advisory panels. Can you tell us who's on them? Does Credit Valley Conservation, for example, take part in these panels? Are ordinary folks from the community on the panels, or are they made up of experts in business only? Maybe you could tell us about those.

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** Sure. We have our community advisory panels at every major site Holcim Canada operates. What we do is that we invite stakeholders from the community to join us. It's really made up of individuals. We do have some representatives of not-for-profits or government organizations, but really it is the ratepayers or the representatives of different community groups that sit there.

The intent of that is that on a quarterly basis we meet as a group and really communicate what is happening with our operation, what is happening with our business, what is happening with our industry in general, the direction that we're moving, the projects we have that are moving forward, and we also hear back from the community as to what's important to them and what they see as important in terms of dialogue and having that face time. Again, that's similar to the relationship aspect that we have with other organizations, so that if they have a concern, if they have an issue, if they have a question, they really have individuals they can go to whom they've met face to face. It's not just business cards. They understand us. They know us, and they're able to reach out and ask those questions.

● (0930)

**Mrs. Stella Ambler:** Thanks, Greg.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Ambler.

Now to Mr. McKay, please, for seven minutes.

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair. Thank you to you both.

Ms. Patterson, it's good to see you again. I was quite impressed with your presentation in Cambridge and even more impressed now. What caught my attention was your three-legged stool analogy: that the NGOs seem to be willing, the industry writ large seems to be willing, but the government doesn't seem to be prepared to actually put money on the table. My question is about your comment that whereas you were doing 100 evaluations a month, it's now down to 100 a year.

In your world, what would you see as an active role on the part of the federal government to get involved once again in the energy audit business?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Thank you for the question.

I'd see it starting with a comprehensive climate action plan for Canada that includes the residential sector and specific actions and incentives. It would include a financial incentive to homeowners to make energy retrofits, founded on an energy audit, a third party professional audit to benchmark the starting point and verify the results afterwards.

That allows us to count and measure the impact that we're having as a country and it motivates action. I think the beauty of something like that is that it can be a core, a foundation, and then provinces can add to that, utilities can add to that, and non-profits and private sector groups can add to that. We can all build on that core foundation and make it more. We can strengthen it.

**Hon. John McKay:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Zilberbrant, you are in an energy-intensive business. One way or another, whether the government likes it or not, carbon emissions are going to be priced.

I'd be interested in your views as to where your company is on the issue of GHG emissions because I think in some respects your company, as you describe it, is possibly on the leading edge of environmental sustainability and thinking around these areas. The preference of all governments, whether they're municipal, provincial, or federal, is to see that a company that is on the leading edge of environmental sustainability, particularly with respect to GHG

emissions, gets rewarded. I'd be interested in your thinking as to where Holcim Canada is on this.

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** Thank you for the question. You're absolutely right, Mr. McKay. We are an energy-intensive business, and carbon pricing will come into some sort of form for us and it will impact our business.

I think it comes back to the role of government to create that even playing field so that those corporations or those industries that are the leading edge are obviously not being, I don't want to say punished...but that they are rewarded accordingly as you accurately said. Moving forward, as we see this, the adoption of technology and the opportunity to even further reduce our carbon footprint and to look into innovative companies or leading companies to try to adopt new technology is a critical part. The other aspect of it is ensuring that there is an even playing field across the domestic sector, as well as the foreign sector.

**Hon. John McKay:** Has anybody from the federal government or any entity representing the federal government come to you, as a leader in the industry, and asked you for your opinion as to how carbon should be priced and what credits you as an industry leader should be getting for the innovations you are undertaking, which right now are on your own dime?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** We've had those discussions—not necessarily me personally—for some time with the federal and provincial governments. We are very involved with it directly, as well as through the Cement Association of Canada. There is absolutely a dialogue that is taking place.

● (0935)

**Hon. John McKay:** I understood that concrete as a road is far more energy efficient than pavement as a road. Is that correct?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** That is correct. Studies have shown that the concrete, being an inflexible pavement, actually does improve fuel efficiency.

**Hon. John McKay:** When the toing and froing is going on for credit on something like that, how will it work for an industry like yours?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** I think this is the question of how these instruments are implemented for their direct versus indirect benefits, or even not “versus” but with the inclusion of indirect benefits that are associated with a material. This doesn't just affect roadways. I mentioned that some studies do show that, but also, significant numbers of studies show that concrete as a product in buildings has a significant benefit in terms of heat loss and cooling loss. The building envelope is actually better.

I think that framework and how those benefits or those credits can be applied is really an important discussion to ensure that the materials are properly selected. Perhaps it is at the policy level to put forward which ones are Energy Star, for lack of a better term, if that's what they're being called, or "Greenhouse Gas Star", or whatever the program might be, and actually making those selections based on those benefits, beyond the manufacturing aspect.

**Hon. John McKay:** I have a final question. There are basically three options on the table: a carbon tax, cap and trade, or a fee and dividend. Well, I suppose you could put "energy-intensive industry"—

**The Chair:** Your time is up.

**Hon. John McKay:** —which is what Alberta does. Just out of curiosity, what would your preference be and what would be most advantageous to your industry?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** That is a very loaded question. Thank you for that very loaded question.

**The Chair:** Fortunately, his time is up.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** No, go ahead.

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** I think it will be a good discussion for our company and the Cement Association. Thank you.

**Hon. John McKay:** I bet it will.

**The Chair:** We move now to the five-minute rounds, beginning with Ms. Leslie, please.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Actually, Madam LeBlanc...

Sorry, but we're trying to be fair. Madam LeBlanc isn't here all the time and it's nice to have her here, but I do have a couple of questions, so thanks.

I want to start with Ms. Patterson. You said some really intriguing things in your testimony. Where do I start?

I want to explore this idea of a retrofit coach that you talked about. Also, I can't remember which organization it was, but you talked about another organization starting to focus on the commercial side because they felt they could get there and make some progress on the commercial side versus the residential side.

All of that is to say that I have a long background in energy efficiency. I was part of the community group of stakeholders for the EGLIH, the EnerGuide for low-income households, program that never actually saw the light of day. I'm very familiar with EnerGuide and ecoENERGY—I don't care what people call it—retrofits that are supported by the federal government.

When you talked about the need for a retrofit coach and about moving to the commercial instead of residential side, it really made me think about why people aren't just doing this. Why do they need an organization to help them? Why do they need incentives? Why do they need a retrofit coach? Even for the commercial side, you always hear this line that if businesses can save money, they're going to do it. But they're not. They're not engaging in energy efficiency without

the help of incredible organizations on the ground. Why do we need these energy efficiency organizations?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Okay, there are a couple of parts there. I'll start with the residential, but I have some observations on the small business side also.

On the residential side, I guess one of the first things you learn when you enter this kind of work on energy efficiency and, broadly, environmental action is that human beings don't make decisions logically all the time or even often. There are many things that make us act otherwise.

Our work is rooted in something called community-based social marketing. The idea is that together we're creating a new social norm and that sometimes social norms are the things holding us back. When we don't see anybody else doing something, it feels weird, and we feel out of place. So, even though it's logical to do something, there could be a number of barriers that prevent us from doing it.

When we look at home energy retrofits, we've identified maybe three top barriers. One is the cost, especially the upfront capital cost, even though you know you're going to be paying it back over time.

A second one is knowledge, knowing what to do. That's where the home energy evaluation is really key. Many people think that if they replace their windows, they're going to solve the problem. One of the things we can let them know is that a window has a very low R-value. You can increase the R-value by making it double-paned or triple-paned or by adding features, but for the money you're going to invest in replacing the windows on your home, you're going to get a very low energy-efficiency return compared with what you would get if you spent the same amount of money on insulating your home. At REEP House, the value of the insulation was \$16,000. We probably spent that much on replacing the windows. The insulation probably took us 75% of the way to our 86% reduction in energy. The windows are a very small part of that. For the same cost, there was a really different impact. That's where knowledge can help people. People feel ill-equipped to make those decisions.

A third factor is trust. That's where a third-party organization, a trusted non-profit like REEP, can help people make decisions and choose among different options. People are a little leery of contractors. They might have one product they're pushing forward. People don't know how to compare quotes. The home energy evaluation is designed to help with a lot of that. We saw an opportunity to go further in creating this concept of a retrofit coach. We're basing it on something we heard about in the Washington, D. C., area. Really, what's missing is the federal incentive on our side, because in Washington, D.C., the coach was a very successful thing that they were able to have while it was funded. They really saw the coach almost as an app, which sat on top of a number of different state, federal, and local incentives along with utility incentives. The coach was helping people to navigate, to apply for, to qualify for, and to understand all of those things as well as to understand the retrofit work they needed to do and the different options.

I hope that goes part of the way to answering why we don't do what might seem logical.

On the commercial side, I think especially for small and medium-sized businesses it's day-to-day survival. Running an environmental organization, I can relate. I feel that we're like a small business. It's hard to stick your neck up long enough to see if there's some other option. Often cool new things like porous concrete cost more or you don't know about them. We need help to make those new things cost-neutral and attractive to people.

The three dozen businesses I talked about, which are taking part in our RAIN program, are learning about things like permeable paving, porous concrete, rain gardens, etc. We're offering them a free on-site visit during which we will walk around the property with them to show them the opportunities they have to prevent flooding and to institute those kinds of things.

We're making it cost-neutral just to get the information.

I'll leave it there for now.

● (0940)

**Ms. Megan Leslie:** Thanks very much.

**The Chair:** Your time is up.

I'm sorry, Ms. LeBlanc, this time it wasn't me who cut you off.

I think we'll go to our final question before we reconvene to complete our study report.

Mr. Woodworth, I think you'll be sharing your time with Mr. Toet. Go ahead, please.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Thank you.

If I have some time, I will.

I want to begin with an apology to Mr. Zilberbrant for the loaded question and an apology to Ms. Patterson for having the words put into her mouth that the government just doesn't seem to want to put money on the table.

I know, Ms. Patterson, that you would not say such an uninformed and unintelligent thing, particularly when you are here talking about the application you've made to NRCan for \$120,000 funding and when you mentioned the money that the government provided to

assist you with the demonstration house and when you mentioned the benefits that occurred as a result of the ecoENERGY efficiency program.

You and I both would like that program restored, but you and I both know that it would be inaccurate to say the government doesn't seem to want to put money on the table, and I regret that politicians often lose sight of the fact that folks like you are here to actually tell us about what you're doing. So my apologies to you for that.

Ms. Patterson, I want to ask you specifically about the very interesting fact that you've mentioned which was, I think, that 21,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases annually are avoided in Waterloo region as a result of your work. I wondered if you could tell us a little bit about how much if any of those efforts are replicated across Canada. Although I'm very proud of our efforts in Kitchener specifically, I wonder if you have connections who would tell us whether there are similar organizations accomplishing similar good work in other communities across Canada, because if I take the 21,000 tonnes and multiply it by the number of communities in which it could be implemented, it comes to a considerable difference. Can you help me with that?

● (0945)

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** I don't know the numbers. I think Natural Resources Canada would know.

We're a member of Green Communities Canada, which is an umbrella organization for environment organizations like REEP across Canada. Many of our members across Canada were delivering the ecoENERGY program and the incentives, and a lot of private sector organizations were also doing so.

I think the number would be significant, but I don't happen to know it.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** There's no national association of groups other than Green Communities Canada as you said? Is that the only national association?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** Green Communities Canada represents environmental organizations like ours that do community-based work.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Do you have any notion of how many there are who are members of that group?

**Ms. Mary Jane Patterson:** There are about 25 to 30 members right now.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Okay. Very good.

Thank you.

I'll give my remaining time if any to Mr. Toet.

**Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Zilberbrant, I was intrigued by the comment you made about evening the playing field domestically as well as in the foreign sector. I would assume that your company is somewhat involved in the foreign sector and that it would also apply to you with regard to some of your materials.

I'm just very curious about the importance of that, for instance, when you're talking about carbon emissions and the need for those to be equal.

Why is it so important for Canada as we go forward to make sure we have an even playing field not only domestically but also with all of the foreign entities and especially the ones we have to trade with?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** I'm referring to the fact that when we look at something like cement, we are a commodity-based business and a commodity-based business on a very large scale in terms of volume and tonnage. The importance of the foreign aspect of the even playing field is the fact that our material can travel quite a distance, and manufacturing facilities in other parts of the world can send their material quite a distance.

The even playing field is really a reflection of our ability to remain competitive in the domestic market considering other jurisdictions that may not have the same impact on whatever the carbon mechanism is and that are able to import into Canada.

**Mr. Lawrence Toet:** Great.

You also talked about the need for recognition of what companies such as yours are doing, and I appreciate 100% that there should be a

need for recognition, but I think you also have an advantage in the marketing aspect. Many consumers are looking for products such as those your company is providing on the leading edge. There's a benefit also in that regard, is there not?

**Mr. Greg Zilberbrant:** There is. Absolutely, there is a marketing aspect to the fact that we're able to deliver these products and able to deliver them in a quality and safe manner, as described before.

The aspect of really having that demonstration and adoption, I guess, would be more of a rising tide lifting all boats, simply by the adoption of more sustainable technology across the board. Our intention is always to be the leader in providing that material, and having that adopted more in common practice.

● (0950)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Toet.

My thanks to both of you as witnesses this morning. You gave us some good input for our study. Thank you for appearing by video. At this point we'll declare a five-minute recess while we reconvene in camera. Thank you.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

---





Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>