

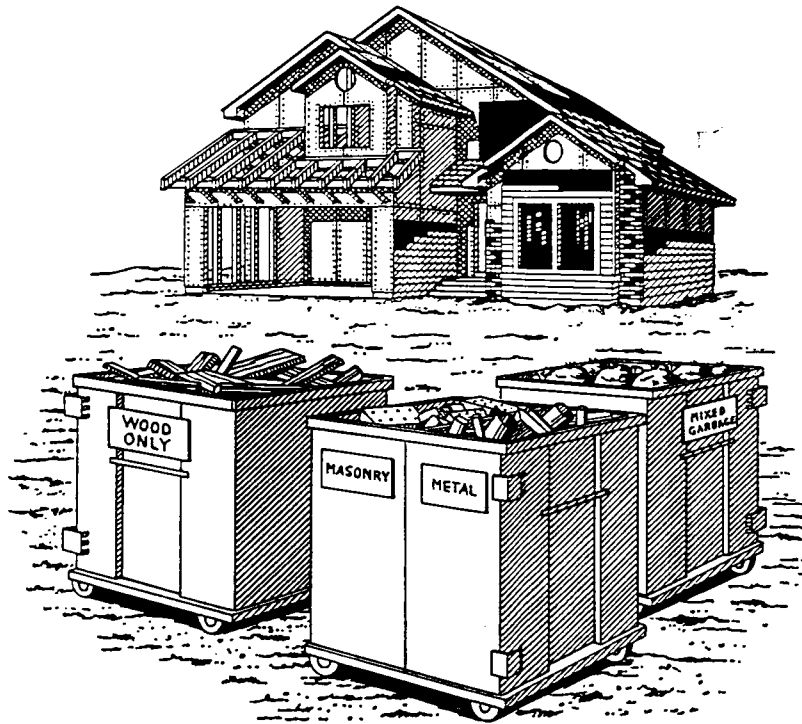
CHALLENGE: REDUCING RESIDENTIAL  
CONSTRUCTION WASTE

DISPONIBLE AUSSI EN FRANCAIS SOUS LE  
TITRE: LE DÉFI: RÉDUIRE LES DÉCHETS  
DE LA CONSTRUCTION RÉSIDENIELLE.

CMHC  SCHL  
Helping to house Canadians      Question habitation,  
comptez sur nous

# CHALLENGE:

REDUCING RESIDENTIAL  
CONSTRUCTION WASTE



## FINAL REPORT

March 31st, 1992



The Energy  
Technology  
Access Group Inc.

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# Executive Summary

The Residential Construction Waste Management Challenge was an initiative of CMHC which challenged new home builders and renovators to implement the three R's of waste management: Reduction, Reuse and Recycling.

Interest in the project was strong, requiring information, technical and human resources to be made available to contractors and the public long after completion of the initial series of seminars. A toll free telephone service continues to receive calls and provide information regarding this residential waste management project.

The fundamental goal of this project was to get builders & renovators to attend a technical seminar where the requisite information would be delivered. A promotional program was to be designed and implemented to entice builders & renovators to attend the seminar where information about the Challenge was then provided. Participants in the Challenge were to be recognized in their local media and good ideas from their projects identified for sharing with the building industry.

The technical seminars were to be delivered by a team of people that were both technically competent and experienced seminar instructors. All instructors were to have good background knowledge of the area where the seminar was conducted.

Fundamentally the Challenge was represented as a request for participants to try some of the waste management techniques learned at the seminar. Each participant who registered in the Challenge and completed the Final Report Form describing what they did, was to be offered recognition in a local newspaper ad for having participated in the waste management activities of the Challenge.

A very interesting aspect of this delivery team is that all instructors were to have a vested interest in ensuring the seminars were well attended. Instructors were to be eligible for a rebate based on the number of paid participants beyond the base attendance of 18. This participation option was designed to motivate the instructors to do the best job possible in promoting the technical seminars.

A toll free line was established to be used for central registration. This line was also to be used for supplying information to interested parties about the Challenge or about the project in general. All brochures and other promotional materials was to feature the toll free number and encourage its use.

With the exception of our Nova Scotia instructor, all performed very well in the promotion and delivery of the seminars. In Ontario, some administrative difficulties were experienced, reducing the potential turnout but not affecting the quality of the technical seminars.

To prepare the delivery team for this project a detailed package of information, known as the Implementation Guide, was produced and delivered to them. This package contained all forms and documents that would be used during this project and a clear explanation of how the project should be promoted, operated and documented. A training session was held with each of the instructor teams and follow up discussions were held as the delivery team studied the process and considered the implications for their regions.

French Materials -- all required materials were translated into french and in most case the publicity and promotion materials were produced in a bilingual fashion. The brochures , posters, national ads, site signs and salutes were bilingual.

To prepare for the promotion program a strategy was developed that would result in the stated objectives of the program being achieved as well as good turnout for the seminars. Additionally, each of the delivery team members was coached in the process of running a telemarketing program. The entire program was promoted at the national level through national magazine advertising in Home Builder Magazine and Alumi News Magazine plus presentations made at the national meetings of the Canadian Home Builders' Association.

From the registration and attendance reports, you can see that the number of people registering for the seminars was pretty much as expected. In some areas where the numbers should have been higher (Toronto) they were in fact just the opposite. In other areas where the numbers were expected to be low (prairies, Nfld) they were again just the opposite.

*Overall, the total number of seminars proposed to be delivered and the total number of people expected to attend were exceeded during this project.*

This project had a very strong industry profile and considerable public exposure. Very few sectors of the building industry were not aware of the project and CMHC sponsorship. The 1-800 toll free line provided a continuous series of inquires from the public, CMHC and of course the

industry. One interesting aspect of this project was the interest it generated among entrepreneurs that had recycled products to sell or wanted to set up recycling operations.

The Challenge participants final reports reflect some interesting perspectives on residential waste management and the success of this program:

- Over 60% have implemented a Waste Management Action Plan.
- 56% have altered building designs to make them more efficient.
- 78% have improved material storage procedures .
- 89% have improved their material procurement procedures.
- 90% have found uses for excess materials in other parts of their building projects.
- 60% believe that managing construction wastes will increase their costs in the short run.
- 100% believe that managing their construction wastes will save them money in the long run.
- 64% don't believe there are enough recycling businesses to adequately handle their construction wastes.

## **Recommendations**

A survey of the delivery team conducted early in 1992 generated the following recommendations:

- A detailed seminar should be developed that deals very specifically with each product used in the construction process and how it can be reduced, reused or recycled.
- A catalogue listing of building products that use or are made entirely of recycled materials should be published.
- A promotional campaign should be developed in concert with CMHC, the Manufacturers Council of CHBA, and CHBA locals to encourage the use of building materials that contain a high percentage of recycled materials.
- The job site innovator program be used to focus attention on good waste management activities being employed by building companies.
- A second series of seminars should be offered as many members of the building industry are more aware and interested in learning.
- Waste management should be built into all provincial and national training programs that are directed at the building industry.

# Introduction

The Residential Construction Waste Management Challenge was an initiative of CMHC which challenged new home builders and renovators to implement the three R's of waste management: Reduction, Reuse and Recycling. Considerable efforts were made to promote the challenge to the building industry and to raise public and industry awareness of environmental issues and CMHC's involvement in this area. The stated goals for this project were:

1. To generate public and industry awareness of the Federal Government's commitment to the quality of the environment, and that through its housing agency, CMHC, is working to promote construction waste reduction;
2. To promote the idea of reduction, reuse and recycling and to stimulate the building industry to participate in the challenge of waste reduction;
3. To transfer design and technological knowledge gained through these demonstration projects to the building industry best positioned to use the expertise;
4. Position CMHC as a leader, catalyst and partner in solving environmental issues related to the housing industry.

Depletion of landfill sites has become a major issue in many parts of the country, however, waste management issues have not risen to the forefront in all regions. As a general rule, individuals become aware of issues only when their own business is directly affected. Therefore, by focusing attention on the waste management issues faced by most construction businesses (rising costs, disposal bans and legislative actions), this project acted to raise the awareness of builders and renovators by providing specific information and action plans.

Interest in the project was strong, requiring information, technical and human resources to be made available to contractors and the public long after completion of the initial series of seminars. A toll free telephone service continues to receive calls and provide information regarding this residential waste management project.



# Methodology and Approach

## The Seminar

The fundamental goal of this project was to get builders & renovators to attend a technical seminar where the requisite information would be delivered. A promotional program was to be designed and implemented to entice builders & renovators to attend the seminar where information about the Challenge was then provided. Participants in the Challenge were to be recognized in their local media and good ideas from their projects identified for sharing with the building industry.

The technical seminar was designed to increase participants awareness of the impending landfill crisis and the significance amount of construction waste that ends up in landfill. The seminar also focused on specific and practical actions for reducing the net amount of waste produced by the construction or demolition process and how recyclers should fit into the waste management plan.

Seminar participants were to be offered many benefits from attending. In addition to the information provided by the seminar instructor, the participants would be able to learn how other businesses in the marketplace were responding to the issues. A copy of the publication Making a Molehill out of a Mountain was to be distributed to each participant as was a *Molehill Directory* - a publication listing the recycling businesses located in the area. Finally a *Waste Management Action Plan* was to be distributed which provides step-by-step procedures for businesses to plan and implement waste management programs.

## The Delivery

The technical seminars were to be delivered by a team of people that were both technically competent and experienced seminar instructors. All instructors were to have good background knowledge of the area where the seminar was conducted. Many of the selected instructors had received extensive training through previous CMHC instructor training programs such as those for the Builders' Workshops and Renovators' Seminars.

## **The Challenge**

During delivery of the seminar, instructors were to distribute all course materials including a Challenge Registration Form. Interested businesses could complete the form and return it to the instructor. Each business officially registered in the Challenge was to receive a package of materials known as the Challenge: Participants Resource Kit. Every business was to be encouraged to participate in the Challenge.

Fundamentally the Challenge was represented as a request for participants to try some of the waste management techniques learned at the seminar. Each participant who registered in the Challenge and completed the Final Report Form describing what they did, was to be offered recognition in a local newspaper ad for having participated in the waste management activities of the Challenge.

## **Promotion**

A very interesting aspect of this delivery team is that all instructors were to have a vested interest in ensuring the seminars were well attended. All registration fees were to be collected on behalf of the project manager however, each of the instructors were to be eligible for a rebate based on the number of paid participants beyond the base attendance of 18. The rebate was to be calculated at \$30 for every participant beyond the base requirement of 18. This participation option was designed to motivate the instructors to do the best job possible in promoting the technical seminars.

Instructor teams were to be provided with marketing materials such as posters and brochures to assist them promoting the seminars. The media was also to be employed through new releases, articles and public service announcements to promote the seminars.

A series of awareness seminars were to be hosted by the local CMHC branch managers (usually during the Home Builders' Associations monthly meetings). The issues were defined and the technical seminars promoted.

## **Registration**

A toll free line was established to be used for central registration. This line was also to be used for supplying information to interested parties about the Challenge or about the project in general. All brochures and other promotional materials was to feature the toll free number and encourage its use.

# Program Delivery

## Delivery team selection

The selection of the training team began during the preparation of the proposal. The concept put forward by the ETA Group in our proposal recommended the use of regional field teams that were both technically competent and had strong instruction skills. The team of people chosen was vast and in the most part very professional. The training team as used for the delivery of workshops was:

B.C.	Ontario
David Lawson	Laverne Brubacher
David Dungate	Phil McColeman
Joe Charron	Oliver Drerup
	Bob Sawatsky
Alberta & N.W.T.	Quebec
Bill Christ	Jon Eakes
Blaine Husky	
Saskatchewan	N.B.
Keith Hanson	Joe Waugh
Dave Fetsch	
Manitoba	P.E.I.
Dale Verville	Grant McLeod
Brian Mansky	Nova Scotia
Lindsay Kolt	Ian Startup
	Nfld.
	Jack Parsons

These instructors were selected because:

- they had expressed a strong interest in working on this project,
- they had good practical experience and a clear understanding of the waste management issues,
- they had good facilitation skills with most having been trained by the ETA Group during previous projects.

With the exception of our Nova Scotia instructor, all performed very well in the delivery of the seminars. In Ontario, some administrative difficulties were experienced, reducing the potential turnout but not affecting the quality of the technical seminars.

## **Training of the delivery team**

To prepare the delivery team for this project a detailed package of information was produced and delivered to them. This package was known as the Implementation Guide. This package contained all the forms and documents that would be used during this project and a clear explanation of how the project should be promoted, operated and documented. A copy of the Implementation Guide is included in this report.

A training session was held with each of the instructor teams via telephone. Follow up discussions were also held as the delivery team studied the process and considered the implications for their regions.

In addition to the Implementation Guide, each of the delivery teams received the technical seminar Instructor's Guide and resource package for study. After studying this information and considering the implications of seminar delivery, further information sessions were held by telephone with each of the training teams to answer questions and resolve any concerns.

Virtually all of the instructors had been trained in facilitation skills by the ETA Group - many as part of other CMHC sponsored programs such as the Builders' Workshops and the Renovators Seminars. The technical seminar Instructors Guide utilized these same facilitation skills and was presented in a format that was familiar and comfortable for the instructors to use. Telephone discussions were held with each instructor regarding seminar delivery and any questions or concerns resolved.

## **Material Preparation**

For this project the ETA Group prepared the following materials for use in promoting the program, delivery of seminars and documentation:

- Information brochure on the Molehill booklet
- Ad mats for national promotion of the project
- Typical questions and answers for the Ministers announcement
- Key points for use by the Minister's announcement speech
- Generic media articles
- Implementation Guide for delivery team
- Directions to the delivery team on how to produce the resource directory
- Notes for awareness seminars
- Waste Management Action Plan
- Local resource directories
- Instructors Guide for the technical seminar
- Challenge registration forms

- Brochures
- Posters
- Details for the Challenge
- Outline of the benefits of participating in the Challenge
- Participant Resource Kit
- Advertisement "Salutes"
- Site Sign
- Participant media kit
- Project registry

Copies of most of these materials are included in this report.

French Materials -- all required materials were translated into french and in most case the publicity and promotion materials were produced in a bilingual fashion. The brochures , posters, national ads, site signs and salutes were bilingual. The instructors guide was translated for use in Quebec as was the molehill directory. The Making of a Molehill out of a Mountain booklet was translated previous to this project. The Waste Management Action Plan was translated for use in Quebec. The Participant Resource Kit and all Challenge documents were translated for use in Quebec and other french speaking areas (New Brunswick primarily).

All materials were produced in sufficient quantity to satisfy the anticipated needs of the delivery team plus extras were produced and provided to CMHC for distribution within the local branch offices as required.

### **Promotional Program**

To prepare for the promotion program a strategy was developed that would result in the stated objectives of the program being achieved as well as good turnout for the seminars. The strategy was as follows:

- produce a poster and distribute it to building supply stores, businesses, CMHC offices and other industry office locations,
- produce a brochure and distribute it to builders, renovators, subcontractors, suppliers, waste haulers, municipalities, building officials, demolition companies, and other members of the building industry,
- produce and distribute articles suitable for use in weekly and daily newspaper that focus on the waste management and construction waste issues,

- produce and distribute Public Service Announcements in support of the Challenge and the technical seminars,
- arrange awareness seminars with local Home Builders' Associations in those cities targeted for delivery of a technical seminar,
- produce and distribute news releases about the Challenge and the technical seminars,
- produce and distribute to Challenge participants, a media kit including sample PSA's, news releases, ad mats, etc. that could be used by the participant to promote their participation in the Challenge,
- produce and distribute site signs that promoted the participants participation in the Challenge to all those who come on or past by the construction site,
- arrange a major national press conference and Ministerial announcement of the project.

Additionally, each of the delivery team members was coached in the process of running a telemarketing program. This program involved contacting prospective seminar participants by telephone and facsimile to explain the issues and encourage participation in the technical seminar.

The telemarketing program was needed because of the way most members of the building industry process information and the reality of the relative importance of issues involved. The ETA Group has broad experience with the building industry and understand the need to talk to people and explain the issues (bringing them closer to home! ) in order to secure agreement to attend the technical seminar.

The entire program was promoted at the national level through national magazine advertising in Home Builder Magazine and Alumni News Magazine plus presentations made at the national meetings of the Canadian Home Builders' Association.

All local offices of CMHC were provided with program information which in turn was distributed as opportunities provided. CMHC field inspectors were encouraged to talk to contractors about the program and in some areas, the CMHC office got very aggressive and strongly supported the project through promotion and information transfer activities.

# Results

The ETA proposal suggested that seminars would be targeted in the following locations:

- Toronto - York region,
- Toronto - Peel region
- Oshawa
- Ottawa
- London
- Kitchener
- Barrie
- St. John's
- Saint John
- Moncton
- Halifax
- Kingston
- Windsor
- Sudbury
- Winnipeg
- Saskatoon
- Regina
- Calgary
- Edmonton
- Vancouver
- Surrey
- Victoria
- Kelowna

Seminars were promoted in many communities beyond these basis locations - based on the input from the regional delivery teams. In many locations, seminars were offered back-to-back which allowed for more attendance and thus more income from promotional activities.

The criteria for whether a seminar would be held was based on the number of registrants that had pre-registered. The 1-800 number was promoted widely as the means for pre-registration however, local numbers were also added to the brochures in those areas where the delivery team felt the 1-800 number may act as a deterrent.

As registrations were taken from the 1-800 number, they were immediately entered into a computerized data base where registration reports could be printed out on a seminar-by-seminar basis. Updated registration reports were sent by facsimile to delivery teams providing names and numbers of registrants.

On occasion, the proposed seminar dates and times were rescheduled. When this happened, each of the registrants were called by the delivery team and the registrant was asked if the new time was acceptable, if so they were confirmed and if not they were eliminate from the data base.

The minimum level of registration was set at 18 participants as this was the break-even level for the seminar to succeed financially. Delivery teams were entitled to a rebate of \$30 for each paying participant in excess of the first 18

people. In some locations, when attendance was less than 18, the delivery team required approval to proceed with the seminar from the ETA project manager.

In two cases, seminars were requested outside of the areas where the delivery team had expected to deliver. In both cases, the ETA project manager was able to arrange for delivery by working with the CMHC project manager and shifting budget allocations around within the contract.

At the conclusion of the project, seminars had been delivered in the following centers:

- Barrie
- Belleville
- Brantford
- Calgary
- Charlottetown
- Edmonton
- Fredericton
- Halifax
- Hamilton
- Kingston
- Kitchener
- London
- Moncton
- North York
- Oakville
- Oshawa
- Ottawa
- Peterborough
- Quebec City
- Regina
- Saint John
- Saskatoon
- Shelburne
- St. John's
- Vancouver
- Victoria
- Winnipeg
- Yellowknife

The technical seminars were targeted at builders, renovators, sub-contractors and general contractors working in the residential market place. While there were many members of the general public interested in attending waste management seminars, they were discouraged from registering because this technical seminar was designed to discuss construction sites and the business approach to waste management -- not household waste management.

Those individuals from the general public that were building a home or doing a renovation were invited and encouraged to attend the seminar.

From the registration and attendance reports, you can see that the number of people registering for the seminars was pretty much as expected. In some areas where the numbers should have been higher (Toronto) they were in fact just the opposite. In other areas where the numbers were expected to be low (prairies, Nfld) they were again just the opposite.

*Overall, the total number of seminars proposed to be delivered and the total number of people expected to attend were exceeded during this*

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*project.*

The drop off of attendance compared to registrations can be attributed to these factors:

- no money had been paid prior to seminar date making it easy to change plans at the last minute,
- seminars were delivered in the late fall which is a busy time for most contractors,
- general interest level was not strong enough...making it easy to change your mind about the seminar and not bother going.

The difference between the number of people in attendance compared to the number of people registered for the Challenge can be accounted for by calculating the number of businesses vs government groups. Also there were many contractors that took the Challenge registration forms away from the seminar with the intention of completing and sending them in -- only to forget to do so -- or change their mind. Because of this factor, it is not clear how many businesses behaved as if they were registered in the Challenge though in reality they were not.

The number of people that completed their Final Reports was low. This is again was due to human nature and a too familiar situation in the building business -- lack of desire to push paper. It would be an understatement to suggest that most residential business people are not very interested in forms and paperwork.

Other participants in the Challenge may not have done anything that they felt deserved recognition. The salutes that were offered to participants may have made some businesses uncomfortable if in fact they didn't make a high profile effort in some type of waste management project.

ETA always maintained that the most valuable aspect of this project was that of the technical seminar. Participants in the seminar came away with a strong awareness of the issues and importance of waste management in the construction industry. Even without a Challenge, the participants would have gained a greater understanding of the issues and would have taken some steps within their company to reduce the amount of waste being created.

In some parts of Canada, the pressure on land fill sites has increased so much that total bans have been placed on construction materials. In other parts of Canada, some landfills are soliciting construction wastes and are managing them for financial gains -- acting as a clearing house.

Yet in some parts of the country, municipal officials understood for the first time the value of their land fill site and went away with the desire to extend its life by managing the type and quality of materials allowed in.

Provincial and municipal legislation is rapidly coming into force in many areas which will have the effect of closing landfill sites to construction waste. The lack of availability of adequate recycling depots and the high cost of other alternatives will soon make the information gained at this seminar extremely valuable for those that participated.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

The stated goals for this project were:

1. To generate public and industry awareness of the Federal Government's commitment to the quality of the environment, and that through its housing agency, CMHC, is working to promote construction waste reduction;
2. To promote the idea of reduction, reuse and recycling and to stimulate the building industry to participate in the challenge of waste reduction;
3. To transfer design and technological knowledge gained through these demonstration projects to the building industry best positioned to use the expertise;
4. Position CMHC as a leader, catalyst and partner in solving environmental issues related to the housing industry.

This project had a very strong industry profile and considerable public exposure. Very few sectors of the building industry were not aware of the project and CMHC sponsorship. The 1-800 toll free line provided a continuous series of inquiries from the public, CMHC and of course the industry. One interesting aspect of this project was the interest it generated amount entrepreneurs that had recycled products to sell or wanted to set up recycling operations.

Many members of the public were calling looking for disposal locations/options for products from drywall to roof shingles to old plumbing fixtures. They felt a national clearing house was a good idea for coordinating the supply and demand for waste materials.

The Challenge participants final reports reflect some interesting perspectives on residential waste management and the success of this program:

- Over 60% have implemented a Waste Management Action Plan.
- 56% have altered building designs to make them more efficient.
- 78% have improved material storage procedures .
- 89% have improved their material procurement procedures.

- 90% have found uses for excess materials in other parts of their building projects.
- 60% believe that managing construction wastes will increase their costs in the short run.
- 100% believe that managing their construction wastes will save them money in the long run.
- 64% don't believe there are enough recycling businesses to adequately handle their construction wastes.

**Actions being taken:**

- Clean wood, metals and cardboard are being recycled.
- OSB and lumber shorts are being chipped for trail enhancement in a local park.
- Drywall scraps are being sent to recyclers.
- Vinyl siding ends are being processed into vinyl fence posts.
- Cabinet supplier is reusing packaging.
- Heating company is recycling scrap metal.
- Excess building materials are being returned or moved to the next job site.
- Orders are being corrected to ensure proper quantities are ordered.
- Width of new plan was increased to even module length to reduce waste from cut offs.
- Proper storage of materials is being used to eliminate waste.
- Portable grinder being considered for site grinding of brick, masonry, drywall and mortar waste to be reused as compactable fill under sidewalks and driveways.
- Insulation scraps are being reused.
- Cupboards, sinks, doors, etc. are being salvaged for resale.

- Reuse of left over shingles on outbuildings

### **Concerns being expressed:**

- Its too expensive to take materials to recycling depots.
- Many cities do not have proper facilities for recycling.
- Need more types of recyclers.
- Subs and suppliers must be educated to reduce the amount of waste being created.
- Workers need to be educated.
- New ways to use recycled materials must be developed.
- We must help create a market for recycled products.
- Incentives to recycle should be established. Costs are high.
- Architects and designers must improve designs to cut down on waste.

### **Project Wrap Up**

During the last weeks of the project many people were contacted regarding the use of technical materials and other resources. Some of the groups requested copies of the course while others wanted to contact the instructors regarding the delivery of a seminar. Many technical school and community colleges were pleased to receive course materials as they wish to build them into their curriculum.

Each year most provincial Home Builders' Associations sponsor a Builders Forum which is essentially an educational conference. Many of the provinces offered a waste management session for the delegates.

The 1-800 toll free telephone line was a spectacular success. Calls from all parts of Canada were received. Questions about the program, registrations, and consumer information was the daily diet of this telephone line. The delivery team, CMHC offices, participants and the public made good use. The cost for calls for this line averaged over \$500 per month. The telephone

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company suggested that based on the usage, we would have benefitted from having two toll-free lines installed!

## **Recommendations**

A survey of the delivery team conducted early in 1992 generated that the following recommendations:

- A detailed seminar should be developed that deals very specifically with each product used in the construction process and how it can be reduced, reused or recycled.
- A catalogue listing of building products that use or are made entirely of recycled materials should be published.
- A promotional campaign should be developed in concert with CMHC, the Manufacturers Council of CHBA, and CHBA locals to encourage the use of building materials that contain a high percentage of recycled materials.
- The job site innovator program be used to focus attention on good waste management activities being employed by building companies.
- A second series of seminars should be offered as many members of the building industry are more aware and interested in learning.
- Waste management should be built into all provincial and national training programs that are directed at the building industry.