

WBA Opens Legal and Building Code Hotline



We all know that dealing with a legal problem can be expensive and devastating for a business. The Wisconsin Builders Association® (WBA) Legal & Building Code hotline, sponsored by Axley Brynelson, LLP, will debut on January 4, 2010. This will be the centerpiece of WBA's new Legal Resource Center, which will provide a number of services to members. Available exclusively to WBA members, the Hotline will provide information on building-industry related issues including codes and ordinance consultation. Toll free calls can be placed to 1-(888) WIS-BILT (947-2458) anytime, and will be processed Monday-Friday from 8:00-4:30.

In addition to obtaining legal information, members may also call or e-mail in with questions on Wisconsin's residential building codes. Knowing our members face an ever-growing array new and complex building code requirements, WBA wants to help you get the answers you need to your questions.

WBA General Counsel Pat Stevens will provide members with a response to their legal & code questions. The service will address issues germane to the building and development industry. This includes, for example, legal information relating to local ordinances, fees, land use, codes, contracts and liens.

"One of the most highly valued services that a number of trade associations provide to their members is access to legal services, such as a legal hotline" said WBA Executive Vice President Jerry Deschane, CAE. "By helping members avoid legal problems, these legal services have the potential to save members literally thousands of dollars" continued Deschane.

In addition to the Legal and Building Code Hotlines, the Legal Resource Center will continue to evolve to include the following services:

- **Local Ordinance Consultation:** Local regulations have a major impact on the housing industry, and WBA wants to help local associations and members make sure that the ordinances in their communities make sense. Upon request, WBA will provide input on existing or proposed local ordinances that impact the construction and/or development industry. For example, if a local community proposes a new impact fee ordinance, WBA will review the ordinance and provide information regarding potential legal challenges and policy arguments relating to the ordinance.
- **Education on Important Legal Issues:** The Legal Resource Center will partner with the WBA Foundation to provide educational opportunities on important legal topics.
- **Local Association Assistance:** The Legal Resource Center will provide local associations with legal information of interest to nonprofit organizations.
- **Quarterly Newsletters:** The Legal Resource Center will publish a quarterly newsletter for members covering frequently asked legal questions and developments of interest in the construction industry.
- **BLAR Requests:** The Legal Resource Center will handle and process Building Legal Action Research (BLAR) fund requests. BLAR resources are used to fund a legal actions, research and advocacy at the request of local home builder associations.

It is important to recognize the Legal Resource Center is not designed to take the place of a members' own attorney, and WBA General Counsel cannot provide specific legal advice or personal representation. This program is a member benefit to offer legal information to members who may otherwise not have the time, experience or resources to obtain. In general, this means that WBA can describe the legal implications of a problem and can describe options for solving the problem, but WBA cannot actually put one of the options into effect. In order to remain consistent with our tax exempt status, this service does not extend to drafting a legal document or negotiating a matter for a member. However, by helping members avoid legal problems with information and research, this service has the potential to save members literally thousands of dollars.

WBA is continually working to improve and enhance the services it provides to members to protect and promote the building industry throughout Wisconsin. Membership matters, and the new WBA Legal and Building Code Hotline sponsored by Axley Brynelson, LLP is just one more of the many benefits exclusively available to members of your local home builders association, NAHB and WBA.

CALL 888-WIS-BILT (947-2458) TO USE YOUR NEW AND EXCITING BENEFIT OF BEING A MEMBER OF THE ST. CROIX VALLEY HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION & THE WISCONSIN BUILDERS ASSOCIATION!!!