

CHBA – Value in Numbers!

Kevin Lee, CEO, CHBA



On October 2nd I had the pleasure of attending the GVHBA Dinner Meeting and addressing the members and guests present that evening. It was great to speak with the leadership of the GVHBA and the many award winners and milestone recipients honoured at the event.

As I spoke about the value of our 3-level association, I made reference to many statistics that show just how important our industry is, and why. It is important that we use these numbers in our communications to politicians and stakeholders to advance our cause. Feedback revealed that these numbers resonated with folks in the audience, so back by popular demand, here in print are the key statistics for our industry.

A large part of my job in representing you, the Vancouver members, as part of the over 8,500 company members of CHBA from coast to coast, is to advocate to the federal government on issues affecting [your businesses, your clients and our industry](#). But many people don't fully appreciate the central role our industry plays in Canada's economy. So our first step is to make sure that we, and anyone we are talking to, recognize the scale of our industry and the important role it plays in Canada's economic health and wellbeing. Let's look at those numbers.

Each year, our residential construction industry in Canada generates:

- over 900,000 jobs,
- over \$120 billion in economic activity, and
- over \$57 billion in wages.

Our industry numbers are key in all our government advocacy, highlighting the economic importance of our industry.



With Prime Minister Harper
on infrastructure investment



With Justin Trudeau
discussing housing affordability



With Minister Findlay for action
on the underground economy



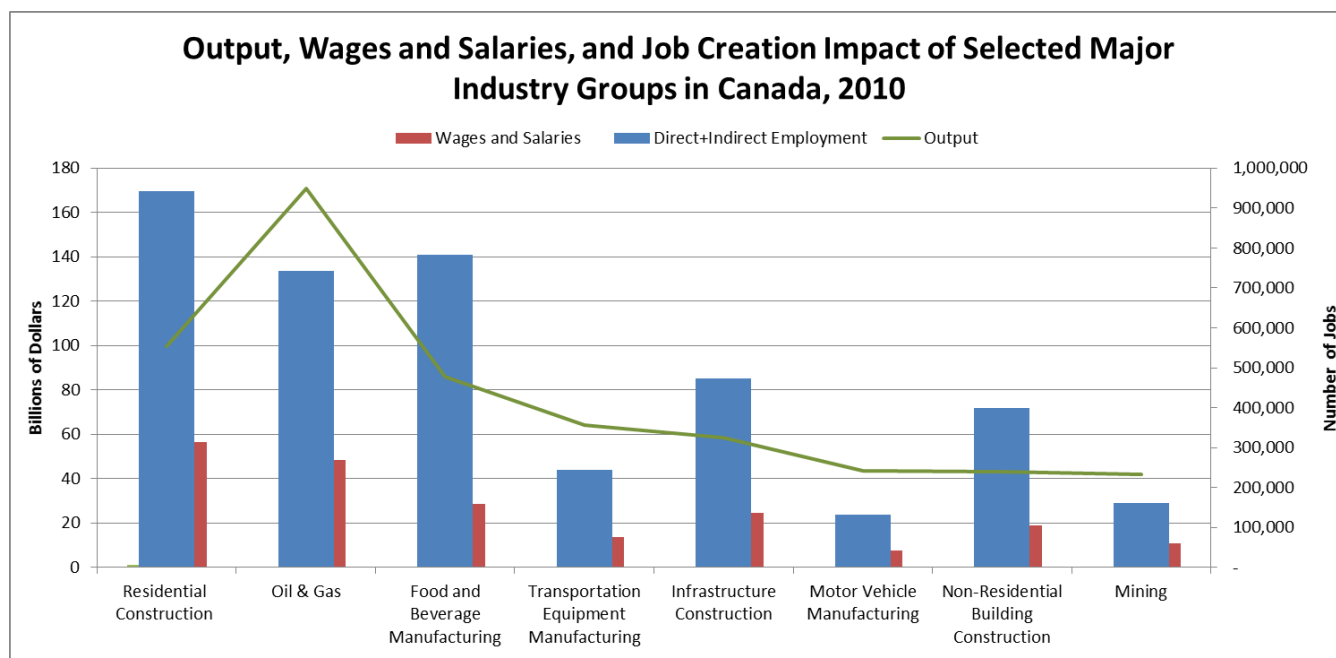
With Minister Kenney
for action on skilled trades

Our industry is a central part of every community, large or small, from coast to coast—that's important to our economy, and to politicians! Pick a Member of Parliament, and we can give you the numbers for his or her community. We generate [factsheets](#) for all our local and provincial Associations to reinforce municipal and provincial advocacy efforts. Here are those numbers for [Vancouver](#):

- over 81,000 jobs,
- nearly \$11 billion in economic activity, and
- \$4.6 billion in wages.

These are big numbers, nationally and locally. But how do we compare? Just how important are we? The answer is: very important. Compared to other major industries, our residential construction industry is:

- #1 in jobs – bigger than oil and gas!
- #1 in wages;
- #2 in economic activity (only second to oil and gas);
- we employ about 7 times more people than the auto industry, and 5 times more than the mining industry;
- our economic activity is larger than both automotive and mining combined; and
- unlike almost any other industry, we are in every community, large or small.
- We are made up of small- and medium-sized businesses, supporting the local economy; and
- we generate personal wealth for Canadians through their housing investments.



Looking at [British Columbia](#), we can also say that, provincially, residential construction is:

- 3 times larger than forestry
- 3 times larger than electric power generation
- And almost 2 times larger than conventional oil and gas extraction.

What does all this mean? It means that when we speak to our municipal, provincial and federal politicians, we need to ensure that they understand these numbers, because these speak directly to how decisions affecting the residential construction industry affect the economy at large.

When we talk about housing affordability, we are talking about a key economic aspect of Canadians' personal financial health, and the health of an industry that is the largest employer in Canada. When we talk about the need for skilled labour, we are talking about the industry that pays more wages than any other. When we talk about the underground economy, we are talking about the financial security of Canadians' number one asset, their homes, and the competitiveness of small and medium sized companies that drive the local, provincial and national economy.

At CHBA national, we are pleased to be your voice for the residential construction industry. These numbers show how important our industry is, and how vital it is that we all work together, through the Association, to ensure our voice is heard.

At the national office, we continue to lobby the federal government to foster an environment that allows your business succeed and prosper. As an Association, there is strength in numbers—and these numbers show just that.