



On Monday, October 1, 2018, the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for Ontario, addressed the 2018 annual convention of the Ontario Building Official's Association in Kingston, Ontario.

This is what Minister Clark told the building officials:

- Thank you Matt
- It was a pleasure to have my Monday morning commute bring me to beautiful, historic Kingston.
- While Toronto is where I work, Eastern Ontario is my home and it's where my heart is.
- It is also where I started my political career, and where I learned the importance of giving back to my community.
- I know that community is a central focus for everyone here today.
- And that you all play a very important role in it.
- For more than 60 years, the Ontario Building Officials Association has helped the building officials of this province build their knowledge so they can grow their communities.
- I want to thank the OBOA and its members for being dedicated to public health and safety. In some ways, you are unsung heroes.
- Je tiens à remercier l'OBOA et ses membres de leur souci de la santé et de la sécurité publiques. Vous êtes de véritables héros méconnus.
- I also want to thank the leadership team of OBOA for meeting with me recently at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference to share your priorities with me.
- Great things can happen when we work together.
- Every day when you go to work to enforce Ontario's Building Code, you're making sure that the people who live and work in your communities are safe.
- You also provide valuable insights and advice on how we can enhance the Building Code.
- As you know, consultations on changes to the Building Code wrapped up last year.
- Ministry staff are reviewing all of the detailed feedback received through the lens of our new government's priorities.
- My team and I are committed to working with you to ensure that building officials, building departments, builders, developers, and designers fully understand the impact of any changes we bring forward.
- As many of you know, our government - and my ministry - have had a very busy summer. And I hear that you have been very busy as well.
- The construction industry had over 170,000 housing starts across the province between June and July.
- In the same timeframe, more than \$6.6 billion in residential, industrial and commercial building permits were issued across Ontario.
- As everyone in this room knows, if construction is booming, building officials are busy!

- But I know that your work is related to much more than the construction industry. It impacts the lives of people across the province.
- We need you to inspect the houses, townhomes and apartments that families call home...
- The daycares that shelter our youngest children, and the long-term care homes that accommodate our parents and seniors...
- And let's not forget the shopping centres, libraries and recreation centres where our communities come together.
- Your commitment to public safety is truly admirable.
- My ministry won't ever forget the tremendous support from your association's members four years ago, when a tornado displaced families in Angus.
- The OBOA and its members did not hesitate to help a community in need.
- In true community spirit, the OBOA put out a call, and building officials from all over the province came to inspect damaged homes and make sure that they were safe for the residents.
- And now we have a similar situation in Ottawa after the devastating tornadoes struck just over a week ago.
- Many families lost their homes or have been displaced and businesses have suffered losses.
- I spent a few days in Ottawa after the storm walking through damaged areas to witness the devastation and speak with those affected as well as first responders and volunteers.
- It is truly impressive and moving to see how the community has come together to help those in need.
- And understanding what OBOA members have done in the past when a tragedy like this strikes - I know you are ready to pitch in again, if needed.
- The people of Ottawa are strong and resilient and the community is doing an amazing job in responding to this disaster...
- But I know that the OBOA is there to help if your fellow building officials need it.
- I'd like to thank you for everything you do to ensure that buildings in Ontario are safe and sound.
- It's very important to me that building professionals in our province are properly trained, and more importantly, that we have enough building officials to keep up with development projects coming down the pipeline.
- I have heard from you that municipalities struggle to find qualified building officials to replace those that retire. This is certainly a concern.
- My ministry is keeping an eye on this issue and will work with the OBOA, municipalities and others to find a solution.
- During the election campaign and at the recent AMO conference, people told me that our regulations can be too cumbersome and complicated.
- Business owners and municipalities alike told me that they are drowning in paperwork...
- Struggling to keep up with regulations...
- And are being held back by red tape from innovating or taking advantage of business opportunities.
- For too long, excessive regulations have discouraged business owners and some have walked away from operating in our province.
- Others never bothered to invest in the first place.
- I know that municipalities are facing similar challenges.
- However, I believe we can work together to make sure that we are building healthy, safe, structurally sound buildings with smart regulations that are efficient.
- We can and we will do better.

The text of the Minister's speech was kindly provided to CodeNews.ca by the Minister's staff.
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- I'm pleased to let you know that our government is already working on this.
- Last month, my colleague Jim Wilson, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, announced that our government for the people is taking steps to reduce red tape and address burdensome regulations.
- We can't continue to drive companies away.
- Through our action plan, we'll make Ontario more competitive and open for business.
- We'll make our regulations smarter and more efficient.
- I am sure people in this room have many good ideas about how to make that happen.
- From my early days as Mayor of Brockville, I have made it a priority to listen to those working on the frontlines.
- You understand better than anyone what works and what can be improved - so your insight is invaluable.
- But, I want to stress that public health and safety is going to be the top priority as we review these regulations.
- We are going to make it easier to do business here, while making sure that Ontarians are protected.
- This plan is a huge step towards building prosperity, putting Ontario back on track as a growth leader in North America, and restoring our province to its rightful place as the economic engine of Canada.
- During the election, we made a promise to increase prosperity for your communities.
- Reducing red tape is one of the ways that we're going to fulfill that promise. Less red tape will benefit us all.
- Businesses that are already operating in Ontario will be able to better navigate our regulatory system...
- Companies that are thinking about coming here will face fewer regulatory hurdles, making our province more appealing...
- And, most importantly, each of you will be able to do your job more efficiently.
- A building permit is a key piece of the development approval process - each planning initiative ends with a building permit being issued...
- Everything that gets built in Ontario has to be inspected by a municipal building department.
- Our government is committed to shortening development and building approval timelines, so that we can unlock development...
- And building officials will play a vital role in our plan to make the process more efficient.
- There's housing, schools, hospitals, retirement homes and more that need to be approved, built and inspected.
- The people of Ontario have already waited 15 years for government to catch up, and get these necessities built.
- With your support, we can cut red tape and create an environment that brings developments to market faster.
- I am committed to working with you to ensure that local economies are flourishing, and businesses have a bright future.
- As I said at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference in August, this is a top priority for my ministry.
- I'm actually meeting with members of AMO in a few days, and look forward to further discussions on this matter.
- We are going to protect health and safety...
- Save time, and money...

- And let the world know that Ontario is open for business.
- In closing, I'd like to thank each of you once again for the work that you do to help your communities grow, and keep Ontarians safe.
- You are instrumental to ensuring Ontario's buildings are held to the highest standards.
- I look forward to working closely with you as we update the Building Code, reduce red tape, and make sure that the people of Ontario are safe.
- Je me ferai un plaisir de collaborer étroitement avec vous pour mettre à jour le Code du bâtiment, alléger les formalités administratives et assurer la sécurité de la population ontarienne.
- Thank you, and enjoy the rest of the conference.