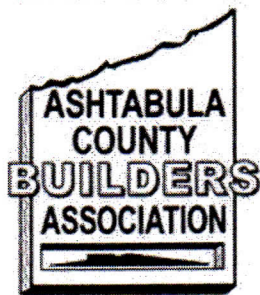


INTEGRITY



## ASHTABULA COUNTY BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

January 2014

### President's Comments

Dear Members and Friends,

At the time of writing this letter, Christmas and New Years has yet to come but I understand that by the time that you get this newsletter it will probably be after both of these days. What ever the case I wish you all have or will have a pleasant Christmas and New Year.

With the start of 2014 I would like to welcome our two newest board members to our Board of Directors. These gentlemen are Bob Hegfield of Andover Bank and John Smolen of Smolen Engineering. Also, I would like to welcome our newest member Crystal Clear Water to our membership.

Our January 9th general meeting will be held at the Elks Lodge and our guest speaker will be Brenda Williams of the Ashtabula County Building Department. She will be discussing the proposed new general contractors' registration requirements for commercial contractors and also the new fee structure that has been proposed for all trades. Along with Ms. Williams, the County Commissioners will also be present and speaking about this issue. At our annual meeting in November I had mentioned this new proposal and it was received with both approval and disdain. I also suggested that the commissioners inform us of any new or changing happenings within the county in addition to the discussion about the registration. After we hear what Brenda and the Commissioners have to say, the Builder's Board will be talking to the member ship to get their feelings on this proposal and then we will formally present our thoughts to the Commissioners and the Building Department.

Sincerely,

Bill Romanko

Your President

#### NEW INFORMATION

##### REVERSE RAFFLE MAY 3rd

Buy your tickets in January or February!  
Receive a chance to win a bonus ticket to the  
main board the night of the raffle dropped in last  
50 remaining tickets.

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 9th  
Brenda Williams  
Building Department  
Elks Lodge

February 13th  
TBA

March 13th  
TBA

April 10th  
TBA

May 3rd  
Reverse Raffle  
Jefferson 4H

**2014 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**ONE YEAR TERM 2013**

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# NATION'S BUILDING NEWS

*The Official Online Weekly Newsletter of NAHB*

*Sponsored by McGraw-Hill Construction and Freddie Mae*

## HOUSING MARKETS CONTINUE SLOW CLIMB BACK TO NORMAL

**December 5, 2013** - Markets in 54 out of the approximately 350 metro areas nationwide returned to or exceeded their last normal levels of economic and housing activity, according to the National Association of Home Builders/First American Leading Markets Index (LMI), released today. The index's nationwide score of .86 indicates that, based on current permits, prices and employment data, the nationwide market is running at 86 percent of normal economic and housing activity.

The LMI figures for November showed that 55 housing markets were operating at or above their last normal levels and the nationwide market was operating at 85 percent of normal growth.

LMI data for the two months were released simultaneously because of the delay in collecting data during the partial government shutdown in October.

"This index shows that most housing markets across the nation are continuing a slow, gradual climb back to normal levels," said NAHB Chairman Rick Judson, a home builder from Charlotte, N.C. "Policymakers must guard against actions that could impede or even reverse the modest gains of the past year."

Noting that smaller metros accounted for most of the 54 markets on the current LMI that are at or above normal levels, NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe said that "smaller markets are leading the way, particularly where energy is the primary economic driver. Nearly half of the markets in the top 54 are in the energy states of Texas, Louisiana, North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana."

"The fact that more than 125 markets on this month's LMI are showing activity levels of at least 90 percent of previous norms bodes well for a continuing housing recovery in 2014," said Kurt Pfotenauer, vice chairman of First American Title Insurance Co., which co-sponsors the LMI report.

Baton Rouge, La., tops the list of major metros on the LMI, with a score of 1.42 – or 42 percent better than its last normal market level. Other major metros at the top of the list include Honolulu, Oklahoma City, Austin and Houston, Texas, as well as Pittsburgh – all of whose LMI scores indicate that their market activity now exceeds previous norms.

Looking at smaller metros, both Odessa and Midland, Texas, boast LMI scores of 2.0 or better, meaning that their markets are now at double their strength prior to the recession. Also at the top of the list of smaller metros are Casper, Wyo.; Bismarck, N.D.; and Grand Forks, N.D., respectively.

The LMI shifts the focus from identifying markets that have recently begun to recover, which was the aim of a previous gauge known as the Improving Markets Index, to identifying those areas that are now approaching and exceeding their previous normal levels of economic and housing activity. More than 350 metro areas are scored by taking their average permit, price and employment levels for the past 12 months and dividing each by their annual average over the last period of normal growth. For single-family permits and home prices, 2000-2003 is used as the last normal period, and for employment, 2007 is the base comparison. The three components are then averaged to provide an overall score for each market; a national score is calculated based on national measures of the three metrics. An index value above one indicates that a market has advanced beyond its previous normal level of economic activity.