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**For immediate release**

**ICLR unveils their Disaster Resilient Home:  
part of Emergency Preparedness Week education campaign**

TORONTO, ONTARIO – To mark National Emergency Preparedness Week, the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR) has completed a non-structural retrofit on a Halifax home to illustrate the simple steps Canadians can take to reduce their vulnerability to natural disasters. This home now meets or exceeds the rigorous ICLR disaster resilience standards.

"We are asking Canadians to take a more active role in protecting themselves and their communities," said Paul Kovacs, Executive Director of ICLR. "By getting involved, we can all become better prepared to face severe weather or other hazard."

"Actions should reflect risk and geography," added Mr. Kovacs. Because Halifax is prone to hurricanes, ICLR installed protective window film to reduce the risk of flying glass. We also covered the oil tank to prevent ruptures, reinforced the chimney and removed a large tree that lost a main branch during Hurricane Juan and constituted a hazard. There is a lot of science behind these and the other simple steps to be better protected."

"Most Canadians live in areas subject to natural hazards," Mr. Kovacs said. One of the most common misconceptions among Canadians is that disasters usually take place somewhere else. In fact, natural disasters are occurring more frequently and with increasing severity, putting every Canadian at some risk. The annual cost of natural disasters to property owners, taxpayers and insurers is doubling every five to ten years. And the place where we are most vulnerable is often the place we consider a safe haven, our home," Kovacs added.

The annual cost of natural disasters to property owners, taxpayers and insurers is doubling every five to ten years. "The most expensive natural disasters in Canada's history - the 1998 ice storm, the Saguenay flood, Manitoba flood, Kelowna wildfire and Hurricane Juan - have occurred within the last six years. We can't prevent these hazards but there are many simple actions we can all take to be better prepared."

Information about actions Canadians can take to protect their homes from natural disasters can be found on the ICLR website at [www.iclr.org](http://www.iclr.org)

Established in 1998 by Canada's property and casualty insurers, ICLR is an independent, not-for-profit research institute based in Toronto and at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. ICLR is a centre of excellence for disaster loss prevention research and education. ICLR's research staff is internationally recognized for pioneering work in a number of fields including wind and seismic engineering, atmospheric sciences, water resources engineering and economics. Multi-disciplined research is a foundation for ICLR's work to build communities more resilient to disasters.

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