

## A Small Investment with a Big Return

Become a WRA Affiliate Member today

Dear Colleague:

If your business success depends on successful real estate transactions, then becoming an affiliate member of the REALTORS® Association is a wise and productive investment. Why? Three words: contacts, information and advocacy.

### Contacts

As an Affiliate member of the REALTORS® organization, you'll be part of the best and most extensive network of real estate professionals, both locally and statewide. You will have valuable access and contacts with a wide range of real estate professionals including real estate agents and brokers, lenders, title companies, home inspectors, appraisers, developers, builders, engineers, painters, electricians, property managers, home stagers and other real estate professionals who are affiliate members. These contacts will augment your promotion and advertising dollars.

Becoming an affiliate member is easy and cost effective. While affiliate memberships are individual (i.e., not corporate), only one individual per company needs to join both the WRA and a local association (and realize the related benefits from the state association). All other individuals from that firm who want to become affiliate members need only join the local board. Find out more by contacting your local board of REALTORS®.

### Information

WRA affiliates receive the full-color, monthly Wisconsin Real Estate Magazine, filled with industry and Wisconsin-specific news and issues to keep you current on the latest industry developments and trends.

WRA affiliate members have access to extensive legal services including the Legal Hotline, where your legal questions are answered quickly by the WRA's team of legal experts. Legal services also include weekly electronic *Legal Hottips* summarizing the latest issues and questions received on the Hotline, as well as monthly *Legal Updates*, providing in-depth legal analyses of timely issues. Through your personalized, member-only access, you'll also be able to search past *Legal Updates*, *Hottips* and other Web site features to retrieve important information you need today. Combined, these legal services will give you information you can't get anywhere else regarding questions, issues and trends specifically related to the real estate industry.

Finally, WRA affiliate members enjoy member discounts on all continuing education, products and management programs offered by the WRA.

## Advocacy

WRA affiliate members enjoy access to, participation in and partnership with, one of the most visible and successful legislative lobbying and advocacy teams in Wisconsin. Legislative issues advocated by the WRA team cover a wide range of real estate-related issues including

- Mortgage lending
- Professional regulations for real estate licensees, appraisers, home inspectors and related professions.
- All issues impacting real estate transactions
- Land use and environmental regulations
- Transportation policy
- Economic development and job creation policies
- Local government ordinances impacting real estate transactions
- Multifamily and condominium laws and regulations
- Political advocacy and elections
- Tax policy
- Education policy
- State budgets and financing

Some of the recent legislative accomplishments include:

- Elimination of conversion fee when rezoning land from exclusive agricultural to other zoning classifications.
- Creation of a state income tax exclusion for contributions to health savings accounts.
- Extension of deadline for registration of piers in excess of current size limits.
- Changes to criteria for distressed TIFs and application of prevailing wage standards to promote development and job creation.
- Passage of a permanent property tax freeze which saves the average homeowner approximately \$700 per year.

The WRA also monitors and lobbies all state agencies including the Departments of Natural Resources, Safety and Professional Services, Revenue, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Financial Institutions, and Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection in the creation of administrative rules. These efforts include input and participation in the development of state approved forms required in all real estate transactions.

WRA affiliate dues help promote an aggressive WRA legal advocacy program called the WRA Legal Action Fund, which identifies precedent-setting legal cases across Wisconsin and provides legal briefs advocating on behalf of real estate professionals and property owners. In recent cases, the WRA argued:

- Sellers of real estate may seek specific performance of the Vacant Land Offer to Purchase and interest on the purchase price without first pursuing other remedies or mitigating damages when the buyers breach the contract. . (*Ash Park, LLC v. Ashley & Bishop, Ltd.*)
- A broker is entitled to commission when the buyer who purchased the property after expiration of the listing contract was a “protected buyer” based upon discussion of whether the sale would include broker participation.. (*First Weber Group v. Guyant*)
- Uphill property owners were not liable to the downhill property owner for damages caused by water runoff because the uphill property owners did not create the water flow conditions and had no duty to abate under the “reasonable use” rule. . (*Hocking v. City of Dodgeville*)
- Easement holders cannot unilaterally expand the scope and use of an easement beyond its stated purpose and express terms. (*Grygiel v. Monches Fish & Game Club*)

WRA affiliate dues also support local advocacy efforts by helping fund eight local governmental affairs directors across Wisconsin. These professional advocates lobby in support of real estate-related issues at the county and municipal levels.

WRA affiliate member dues help fund the grassroots lobbying issue advocacy efforts of the Wisconsin Homeowners Alliance. This non-profit organization uses public advertising to educate the public about key homeowners and property owner issues and encourages their participation in passing good legislation and defeating bad legislation.

As you can see, becoming a WRA affiliate member provides you with the contacts, information and advocacy efforts every serious real estate professional wants and needs to create a favorable environment for successful real estate outcomes. To join today, simply contact your local association of REALTORS® for details. It’s a small investment with a big return.