

### New Monthly Giving Program to Kickoff Habitat Fundraising Efforts for 2009

Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg's (HFHW) new HopeBuilder Monthly Giving Program gives new and existing Habitat supporters the convenience of pre-authorized donations from a credit card or chequing account and the local not-for-profit charity is hoping that donors embrace the new option.



With the average cost to build a Habitat home in Winnipeg rising to almost \$143,000 in 2008, HFHW is entering its busiest fundraising season as they prepare to build 15 homes in 2009.

"The planning for this program began in September, 2008 and we introduced it to our current supporters in a year end campaign," said HFHW's project manager of fundraising, Genevieve Cloutier.

"In today's economy, giving donors the option to have their annual donation spread out over 12 months is important and will mean that supporting Habitat doesn't have to be a huge dent in anyone's personal budget. By joining HopeBuilders, the average person can help us build safe, decent, affordable homes for as little as 50 cents per day."

As one of the busiest Habitat affiliates in Canada, HFHW continues to lead construction numbers with more than 161 homes built since 1987 and another 11 homes constructed in 2008—nearing completion. In addition to leading the country in the sheer number of homes constructed, HFHW is leading the way in affordable green housing. Starting in 2006, HFHW began building all of its Habitat homes to Manitoba Hydro Power Smart Gold standards which directly benefits Habitat homeowners through lower utility and operating costs. HFHW is considered the greenest new homebuilder in Manitoba.

"Our goal for 2009 is to build 15 new homes and this will take us closer than ever to our record year, 1993 when the Jimmy Carter Work Project built 19 homes," says Cloutier. "But even with the 15 homes we will build this coming summer, we're only going to help a fraction of the low-income working families that are living in substandard rental housing. Winnipeg's strong housing market has made homeownership unobtainable for countless people and rental rates for family-sized apartments have placed low-income families in a position that they are often paying more than 60 percent of their household income for shelter."

With an aggressive goal set for 2009, HFHW is confident that its new HopeBuilder Monthly Giving Program will play a key role in raising the funds needed to make safe, decent, and affordable housing a reality for 15 low-income working families in Winnipeg.

For more information on becoming a HopeBuilder please visit [www.habitat.mb.ca](http://www.habitat.mb.ca) or call

(204) 233-5160, Ext. 0.

*Did you know that 39 children will live in the 11 HFHW homes built in 2008? And since 1987, more than 550 children have benefited from a Habitat home in Winnipeg.*