

**Habitat for Humanity in Manitoba – a Q and A with Sandy Hopkins, CEO Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg**



**Q: How did Habitat for Humanity get started in Manitoba?**

A: In 1985 the movement spread to Canada with the formation of the first Canadian affiliate in Winkler, Manitoba. Volunteers acquired the necessary funding and were able to construct three homes. These properties were transferred to a local housing initiative when the affiliate closed.

Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg (HFHW) was incorporated in 1987 with its first office in the basement of the St. John's Anglican Parish. Largely managed by volunteers, HFHW built two homes in 1988. The peak building year was in 1993 when Jimmy Carter came to town for the Carter Work Project.

Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg (HFHW) was incorporated in 1987 with its first office in the basement of a church on Church Street. HFHW built two homes in 1988. Following the Habitat affiliate standards from the United States, we incorporated at a city level and have included Winnipeg in our name.

**Q: Does Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg only build homes in Winnipeg?**

A: While Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg is restricted to operations and fund raising in the City of Winnipeg we have been able to extend the reach of our affiliate by establishing Chapters in the nearby communities of Portage la Prairie, Selkirk and Southeast Manitoba located in Steinbach.

In each of those locations a dedicated volunteer group does all of the heavy lifting, which includes acquiring land on which to build a home; securing sufficient donations of cash, gift-in-kind building materials and professional services; finding a family that meets Habitat's qualifications; overseeing the family's completion of the requisite sweat equity; recruiting enough volunteers to build the home; scheduling the volunteers at the build site; and, overseeing quality of the construction process.

In 2008, both the Selkirk and Portage la Prairie Chapters built homes. In total, Selkirk has built 4 homes, Steinbach has built 9 and Portage la Prairie has built 2. None of the Chapters expect to build in 2009 but planning is underway in both Portage and Selkirk for 2010.

**Q: Does Winnipeg provide services to these Chapters?**

A: Yes. HFH Winnipeg provides full administrative support including managing the finances and homeowner mortgages for the Chapters. We ensure that funds raised in each community for affordable housing stay in that community to build more affordable homes. Winnipeg also provides construction advice when it is required, ensures that all volunteers

complete the HFHW safety training program, approves the families recommended by the Chapter and confirms that sweat equity has been satisfactorily completed.

**Q: How many affiliates are there now in Canada?**

A: Canada currently has 70 affiliates in 10 provinces and two territories.

**Q: What is Habitat Canada's role in supporting the Winnipeg affiliate?**

A: Habitat for Humanity Canada works on a national level to coordinate gift-in-kind donations and national sponsorship.