

# Garden River First Nation HOUSING DEPARTMENT Newsletter

WINTER 2019



It is our pleasure to welcome Kylie Cress and her family as our new tenant. We sincerely hope you find your new home comfortable and enjoyable and thank you for allowing the Garden River First Nation Housing Department to capture this wonderful moment.

## What's inside:

- Housing Policy and Procedures
- Things You Can do for a Home-Safe-Home
- Tenant Relations in Our Community
- Capacity Development

*"A good home...  
a good Community making  
homes affordable and safe  
and committed to creating a  
vibrant and healthy housing  
system for our citizens".*

The GRFN Housing Department hopes you enjoy our Winter Newsletter after the Holiday break. We are excited to announce our Workshops will resume in March with the launch of our "how to" videos. Watch for announcements!

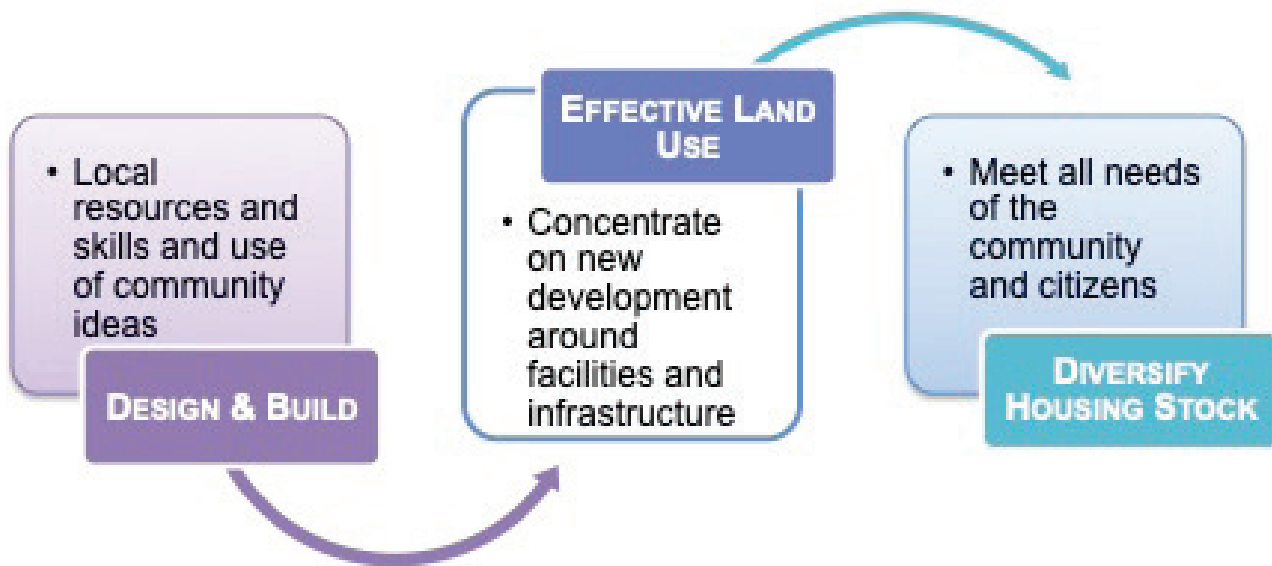
## What's New

The GRFN Housing Department has created a 10 Year Capital Housing Plan which is a detailed approach for managing existing housing programs and meeting the housing needs of GRFN citizens. The 10 Year Capital Housing Plan will assist GRFN move towards increasing resources in our community for housing development and building cooperation with CMHC and other stakeholders.

In operating the largest First Nation asset, the GRFN Housing Department's vision for the next 10 years and beyond is to:

- Provide affordable self-sustaining Housing system
- Locate in the community amongst our homeowners and tenants
- Implement a permitting system
- Provide quality long lasting housing units
- As our demographics and housing needs change continue to develop and implement enforceable policies and procedures

# 10 Year Capital Housing Plan



## Current Situation – Inventory

- 500 homes on reserve
- The GRFN Housing Department manages 150 units through rental or lease to own agreements under the Section 95 program
- 15 more units added to the Housing Portfolio (2017)
- 93 units under the On-Reserve Mortgage Program with Royal Bank and Bank of Montreal
- At 98% capacity of developed land for housing

If you would like to review the 10 Year Capital Housing Plan that was presented to the Community in May, please contact one of our Team Members.

## WHAT IS OUR PROPOSED BUILDING/ CONSTRUCTION?

The GRFN Housing Department will be constructing the following in 2019:

- Two Triplex Units: consisting of three bedroom units
- Housing construction development of five units proposed for 2019 forward

To apply for these new builds or for any vacant unit, please ensure you have completed the “CMHC Section 95 Application”. Applications are kept on file for one year and it is your responsibility to ensure they are updated with the Tenant Relations Officer.

## Housing Policy and Procedures

The purpose of a structured Housing Policy and Procedures will provide Chief and Council, the Housing Portfolio Holders, Staff and tenants and homeowners with a framework to deliver the Housing Programs in a fair, transparent and unbiased manner. The GRFN Housing Policy and Procedures are currently being reviewed and updated to reflect the growing needs of Housing.

## HELP FOR LOW INCOME CONSUMERS – ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) provides low-income customers with a monthly bill credit ranging from \$45 to \$75 to reduce the electricity bill. Please contact the Tenant Relations Officer for assistance or more information.

Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) will provide financial assistance who are behind on their bill and face having their service disconnected and may be eligible to receive up to \$500.00 in emergency assistance and if your home is heated by natural gas, up to \$500.00. Please contact the Tenant Relations Officer for assistance or more information.



## Things You Can do for a Home-Safe-Home

- Contacting the Housing Team with any potential safety issues in the home as this will help us provide a safe environment
- Put it in writing! There may be times when our Housing Team is unable to respond to requests immediately (maximum time is 24 hours). Complete a Maintenance Request Form that is available from one of our Team Members and we will ensure follow-up
- Know the procedures and who to call in an event of an after hours emergency! Call our After Hours Emergency phone at 705.254.9492 should you ever experience: no heat, no water and electrical issues
- Emergency Repair or Urgent request is when the health or safety of the occupants are threatened; the structural integrity of the unit is threatened

### WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR INDOOR AIR QUALITY?

Reducing air contaminants is the most effective way. The following tips have been identified on the "Government of Canada" website:

- Having a smoke-free home increases indoor air quality; smoke outside
- Dampness, water leaks and mould
  - Controlling humidity levels or having too much humidity can cause mould. Remove mould on the surface with warm soapy water – there is no need to use bleach
- Fix leaks immediately
- Ensure hoses and connections for leaks are repaired as needed
- Remove basement or crawlspace clutter
- Keep carbon monoxide out – it is a poisonous gas that has no colour, smell or taste
- Improve ventilation and circulation:
  - Leave interior doors open
  - Using bathroom and kitchen fans
  - Keep baseboards or heating vents clear of furniture
  - Opening windows and doors
  - Keep beds, bedding and furniture away from outside walls to allow enough air and heat flow around furnishings

### HAVE YOU CLEANED YOUR HEAT RECOVERY VENTILATION (HRV) FILTER LATELY?

Dirty or clogged filters can lower the ventilation efficiency of your heat recovery ventilator (HRV) which can have a negative impact in the air quality in your home. If you are unsure how to clean your HRV filter, please contact Greg Solomon, Construction Maintenance Coordinator for a hands-on teaching.

It is recommended to clean your HRV filters at least every two months.

## Orange Chicken

### Ingredients:

2 lbs Boneless skinless chicken breast  
 1 Egg  
 ½ tsp salt  
 ½ tsp pepper  
 ½ cup cornstarch  
 1 tbs Oil (oil for frying chicken)  
 ¼ cup Flour

*Directions:* Cut chicken in 1" pieces and set aside bowl. In a medium bowl combine egg, salt, pepper, oil and set aside. In a medium bowl combine cornstarch and flour and mix well. Preheat oil for deep frying at 375 degrees. Dip chicken pieces into dry mixture then into flour mixture and fry for 3-4 minutes and set aside

## Orange Sauce

### Ingredients:

3 tbs Soy sauce  
 ¾ cup Orange juice  
 ½ cup Brown sugar  
 1 tbs Oil  
 1 tsp Minced ginger  
 2 tsp Minced garlic  
 ½ cup Chopped green onion  
 ½ cup Water  
 2 tbs Corn starch  
 1 tsp Sesame oil (optional)

*Directions:* In a medium frying pan heat oil. Add ginger, garlic and green onions and stir fry for 1 minute. Add soy sauce, orange juice, brown sugar. Add chicken and stir well. In a small bowl combine water and cornstarch together then add to frying pan to thicken sauce. Add sesame oil (optional). Serve over rice.



## HOME MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

**JANUARY**

- ✓ Replace/clean furnace filter
- ✓ Check furnace fan belt
- ✓ Inspect oil furnace blower
- ✓ Check water heater
- ✓ Check exhaust fans
- ✓ Clean range hood filter

**FEBRUARY**

- ✓ Replace/clean furnace filter
- ✓ Clean range hood filter
- ✓ Check inside surfaces
- ✓ Conduct annual safety check:
  - Door locks
  - Smoke detector
  - Window locks
  - Potential fire hazards

**MARCH**

- ✓ Replace/clean furnace filter
- ✓ Check attic and crawlspace
- ✓ Check ceilings
- ✓ Check sump pumps
- ✓ Clean range hood filter

## Tenant Relations In Our Community

Tenant files are an integral part of maintaining effective relations with our tenants. Tenant files are an essential part of effective housing management and documenting details about actions, discussions, requests and decisions related to every unit in our Housing Portfolio. Tenant files are maintained for the following reasons:

- Used for audit purposes
- Develop budgets and plans
- Review tenant requests
- Review incidents and complaints
- Keep supporting information
- Serve any other legal purposes, financial or administrative

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS:

- Organized files help achieve our objectives
- Communication between management and the tenant increases for successful tenancy

### RENTAL ARREARS MANAGEMENT:

In November 2018 all CMHC Section 95 Tenants were issued notices in regards to their rental account summaries. The purpose of this memo was to advise you if your summary includes an "amount owing" which represents arrears. Deadline to contact the Tenant Relations Officer to discuss your account was December 1, 2018 to enter into a "arrears repayment agreement". Reminder to the tenants who have arrears and have not contacted the Tenant Relations Officer, it is imperative that arrangements be made (before March 31, 2019) otherwise the GRFN Housing Department may proceed with the following:

- Honourarium – 50% until paid in full
- Payroll and Education – amount determined in consultation with the Housing Department Supervisor or Tenant Relations Officer, but not less than 20%
- Contracts between the First Nation and Band Member – 20% until paid in full
- Social Assistance – 5% of total monthly amount entitled; (taken from basic needs)
- Other First Nation payments to the Band Member – amount determined in consultation with the Housing Department Supervisor or Tenant Relations Officer

Section 95 tenants will be issued another reminder notice in January 2019. Deadline is March 31, 2019 to enter into an "arrears repayment agreement".

Prevention of rental arrears is our focus and we strive to do our best such as implementing cost effective ways to reduce arrears, and eliminate the disruption a tenant experiences with arrears. Therefore, the Garden River First Nation Housing Department will be issuing quarterly statements to keep our tenants informed and updated on their rental accounts.

## WORKSHOPS

***Our monthly Housing Workshops will resume in March!*** Watch for postings. We are excited to launch our "How to Video's". Attend three or more Workshops throughout the year and be eligible for the "grand prize" once all Workshops are completed. If you would like to be notified by phone or email, please contact Carrie Zeppa, Tenant Relations Officer.

## Capacity Development

Capacity is about growth: growth of the individual in knowledge, skills and experience. Training is provided to First Nations to help improve housing management and throughout the year, the Housing Team will attend conferences and training sessions to better serve our Community. All travel will be posted on emails and phone messages advising our tenants and homeowners.

### **CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION (CMHC) HOUSING MANAGER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM – TORONTO**

Anne Headrick, Housing Supervisor and Carrie Zeppa, Tenant Relations Officer are enrolled in the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Manager Professional Initiative (HMPI) in partnership with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology which is held in Toronto, ON every month for a week. This is a unique professional opportunity that is geared towards motivated, mature learners who want to further their development and who want to specialize in housing management. Over the course of two years, this learning opportunity will provide the trainee with:

- Gaining valuable housing management knowledge and skills to bring back to their community
- Solidify housing management expertise or gather new information
- Network and share experiences with other housing professionals from the Atlantic region

Successful completion of the course will be in April 2020 and will graduate with a certificate in Housing Manager Program.

### **2019 HOUSING CONFERENCE - CANADA'S PREMIER FIRST NATIONS HOUSING EVENT – THUNDER BAY**

The First Nations Housing Conference (FNHC) is the only conference in Canada dedicated to First Nations housing professionals and the advancement of their Communities. The conference allows delegates to gather insights, train and learn from unique workshops, and build capacity.

Mentorship and skill transfer are the ways we as First

Nations pass on knowledge, progress, and forward (FWD:) housing in our communities. At the First Nations Housing Conference, we come together to gain skills, then use those skills to develop our communities, and through applying that knowledge we are able to pass on what we learn to future generations.

Anne Headrick, Housing Supervisor and Carrie Zeppa, Tenant Relations Officer have been invited for the third year in a row to present at this prestigious event. The presentation is titled *"Empowering Your Tenant = Successful Tenancy"*

In this workshop, the Team will guide you through a "move in process". The process will not only include guidelines and best practices to help your tenant move into their new unit and starting them off on the right foot but will also include ideas on how to begin and foster a positive relationship with your tenants. We believe that empowering your tenant will lead to their success. We aim to do this by developing housing and maintenance education that will help promote and encourage a long, healthy and successful tenancy.

### **2018 CMHC YOUTH SUMMIT**

Anne Headrick, Housing Supervisor and Greg Solomon, Construction Maintenance Coordinator attended the Summit as guest speakers on a panel of Housing Professionals. The 2-day event was held at Fort William First Nation in Thunder Bay. It introduced youth to career opportunities in housing, and it provided training on home maintenance. A key goal was to inspire and motivate the next generation of housing leaders to re-envision housing.



This article in its entirety can be found at: [wawataynews.ca](http://wawataynews.ca)

## *Tenant Communication*

### **REGULAR OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday to Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon)

1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Closed during lunch*

### **SUMMER HOURS**

*(effective June 1st to September 1st):*

Monday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon)

12:30 pm. To 4:15 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

*Closed during lunch*

### **HOUSING TEAM CONTACT:**

**Anne Headrick**, Housing Supervisor  
ext. 248 aheadrick@gardenriver.org

**Carrie Zeppa**, Tenant Relations Officer  
ext. 240 czeppa@gardenriver.org

**Charlotte Boissoneau**, Housing Assistant  
ext. 249 cboissoneau@gardenriver.org

**Greg Solomon**, Construction Maintenance Coordinator,  
ext. 289 gsolomon@gardenriver.org



## *2016 Recipients Housing Recognition Award*

### **HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

7 Shingwauk Street, Garden  
River, ON P6A 6Z8  
Tel: 705-946-6300

### **BAND OFFICE**

Tel: 705-946-6300  
Toll Free: 1-800-665-0987  
Email: info@gardenriver.org

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

705-253-1870

### **WELLNESS CENTRE**

705-946-5710



**Emergency  
Services**

Should you experience any  
emergency after hours,  
please contact the Housing  
Department After Hours  
Emergency Cell at:

**705-254-9492**

