

## Staff Profile

### Lise Dolen



Lise Dolen looks forward to what each day will bring as she sets out for work as a Housing Maintainer for the Norman Wells Housing Authority (NWA). The NWA works in partnership with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the public housing portfolio for Norman Wells. Recently the administration of the Market Housing Initiative units was added to the partnership agreement.

Lise has been in this role for nine years and she says "I can plan as much as possible, but housing repairs take on a life of their own and that will throw all your best plans out the window". It is that aspect that keeps the job interesting.

Lise attended the Housing Maintainer Program at Aurora College in Fort Smith as part of the apprentice position with the Norman Wells Housing Authority. It is a three year certificate program with components in plumbing, electricity and carpentry. She highly recommends the program as it provides the education and training that thoroughly prepares you for a career. "Trades are the way to go". She enjoys being known as the "go to" person whenever tenants require repairs to their units. "At the end of a day, you have a sense of accomplishment. You are instantly rewarded with thanks from the people and personally knowing you have fixed a problem that has made someone's life easier".

She credits her four sons in large part for her choice of career and the fact that trades offer good and stable income. Lise enjoys working with tools and equipment and sitting behind a computer is definitely not for her. Besides her sons think it's neat what she does for a living.

Lise strongly believes that preventative maintenance is the key to lessen future housing repair demands. One of the prime challenges she faces is not enough time in a day. The NWA currently has thirty five housing units to care for with a three person staff – one person for administration and two people for technical services.

The Market Housing Initiative is an excellent housing strategy that helps the NWA to become self-sufficient by reducing dependability on government resources. She adds however, that additional financial resources directed to increase staff size would help the NWA meet the challenging volume of work.

She sees the partnership working well between the tenants, the NWA and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation - each has a role to play in making sure that the homes are in good condition.

Asked to speculate about her future in five years time and Lise reassures that you will still find her in Norman Wells in the same line of work. It is the work she enjoys and she considers her co-workers as part of the family.

## Profile

### Human Resources Division



The Human Resources Division is one of the primary hubs of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. It is a busy place as staff members provide advice and assistance in the areas of labour relations, recruitment, benefits, pay, human resource planning and development. The Division does all the staffing for the Corporation and upon request, also lends its expertise and assistance to our housing community partners.

The Division has a complement of five – Jane Haley, Manager, Lyla Reid and Carolyn Bungay, Compensation Administrators, Jessica Relucio,

Personnel Officer and Debbora Buck-Colburn, Division Secretary. Combined, they offer the Corporation 74 years of experience in this one-stop shopping Human Resources Division. This certainly indicates a commitment to the Corporation and a consistency in practices for the employees.

The Division strives to ensure that employees are accurately paid on a timely basis and receive their full complement of benefits. Lyla Reid is proud of the response time. Her goal is to respond to employee queries within a day and if not, certainly advises on how long it will take to get an answer. "It is important that the communication between us and the employee is continuous" says Lyla. She enjoys knowing that an employee leaves with an answer or what the plan of action is. Carolyn Bungay echoes her co-workers sentiments regarding job satisfaction. She also shares that the one-on-one contact is a pleasing aspect of her job.

Jessica Relucio comments that the people within her unit and the Corporation as a whole makes it easy to enjoy her work. The most enjoyable components of her job are meeting with the different areas to help with their staffing needs and seeing the new employees hired. This is closely followed with knowing that her follow up in the post-recruitment stage is appreciated.

The greatest challenge facing the Human Resources Division is meeting the staffing needs in the NWT's smaller communities. Recruitment of qualified staff, representative of the communities served, is paramount to the Corporation's success.

It seems that the overriding theme is that all five of the staff truly enjoy working in the Human Resources Division. Prominent for Jane Haley is the "people you know and work with on a day-to-day basis and the opportunity to contribute to building capacity within the existing staffing levels and through the recruitment of new staff. The implementation of the Maximizing Northern Employment Initiative is one of the highlights".

Debbora Buck-Colburn sums it up as "the camaraderie and the interaction with your co-workers" is what fuels your day. It is safe to say that the people compliment each other and together, create the positive ambience in the Human Resources Division.