

OUR PEOPLE

Tom Gross

With a life-long interest in architecture and design, Tom Gross has spent his career working in housing in the north. Tom, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's (NWTHC) Senior Technical Advisor out of the NWTHC's South Slave office, based in Hay River, is responsible for major capital projects that are undertaken by the Local Housing Organizations in the South Slave communities. He has been with the NWTHC for over 30 years.

Tom first came to the Northwest Territories from Ontario in 1977, sparking a love and interest in the north that would last a lifetime. He was just a teenager when he first arrived in the NWT, gaining employment with a construction company that sent him to build public housing in Ulukhaktuk, at the time known as Holman. He also went to Cambridge Bay and the eastern arctic to work for the same construction company. The son of a carpenter, it seemed natural that Tom would also have a career in building.

In 1979 Tom went back to Ulukhaktok to work for the Holman Housing Association, which was an agent of the NWTHC.

Tom was at the forefront of real changes to housing in the territory. He witnessed the transition from "matchbox" houses, basic housing with no running water or much insulation, to houses with plumbing and electricity. He said it was very interesting to be in the north during this transition period.

In 1984 Tom relocated to Cambridge Bay to work as Technical Coordinator for the NWTHC, where he oversaw maintenance for the whole Kitikmeot region. He moved up to the position of Maintenance Manager two years later.

In 1994, after spending roughly ten years in Cambridge Bay, Tom moved to Hay River, initially as a project officer and a land officer, eventually moving into his current position. He is the supervisor of two technical advisors. He and his team see to the tendering and completion of projects from start to finish, for example the construction, renovation and repair of homes, whether they are for the NWTHC's homeownership and public housing program or private dwellings. They also help the Local Housing Organizations (LHOs) with maintenance and repairs of public housing units, and conduct monitoring and inspections of all projects.

Tom said design and energy efficiency are his passion, specifically new developments that can reduce energy costs. He said he keeps an eye on new technology and if it can be incorporated into what the NWTHC is doing.

