



July 7, 2021

MR. RONALD BONNETROUGE  
MLA, DEH CHO

**Oral Question 710-19(2)**  
**Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Local Housing Consultations**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised on May 27, 2021 regarding the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation local housing consultations.

Communication for all local stakeholders, including Local Housing Organizations (LHO), is very important. This is a priority of mine and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWT HC) is committed to working in partnership with all Northwest Territories communities.

Currently wood pellet boiler systems are being used in some of the NWT HC multi-unit designs. For instance, we are currently interconnecting 53 units in 9 adjacent multi-unit buildings. This is primarily because the ongoing operation and maintenance of the system is of a sufficient scale to hire qualified companies under contract. We are not currently using this type of heat in the single family/duplex public housing units (including the new units in Fort Providence). This is due to increased health and safety risks to tenants combined with increased maintenance costs.

Although local circumstances vary, there are additional considerations around the selection of wood pellet systems:

- Community infrastructure for wood pellet delivery or storage.
- The availability of wood pellet suppliers.
- The availability of qualified wood pellet technicians/service workers.
- Space for storage silos, which could be the size of a small bedroom, proximate to the appliance.
- Access to the exterior to clean the site and wall surfaces of spilled pellets and wood dust.
- Protection of the pellets from the elements, especially rain. Wet pellets disintegrate.
- Some jurisdictions (e.g. Yellowknife) do not allow wood pellets as a primary heat source.

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Clearly, there are training and business opportunities here that can be developed as the technology evolves, operations and maintenance become less expensive, and climate change experts continue to recognize wood burning appliances as a preferred approach to reductions in climate change impacts and diesel fuel dependency. We will continue to watch the viability of these systems in smaller buildings, and then the appropriate training of LHO maintenance staff as required.

Thank you.



Paulie Chinna  
Minister Responsible for the  
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Legislative Coordinator, Executive and Indigenous Affairs  
President and CEO, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation