



PRESS RELEASE



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Gingerbread House Building Competition Raises Funds for Shelters

TORONTO, Ontario, December 14, 2004 — Toronto-area media celebrities participated in Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC's) Second Annual "Building Housing Dreams" gingerbread house competition today. The event was held to raise funds and awareness for shelters in the Greater Toronto Area.

Lunchtime crowds gathered to watch the teams face off at Commerce Court in downtown Toronto. Teams built and decorated a gingerbread house for a GTA shelter that has received assistance from CMHC over the last two years.

"Shelter is the foundation upon which healthy communities are built," said the Honourable Joe Volpe, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "Since 1999, we have partnered with the provinces and communities across Canada to create 8,800 permanent beds or units in shelters, transitional and supportive housing."

Funds raised from the sale of gingerbread cookies during the event will support shelters in the GTA, including: Native Men's Residence, North York Women's Shelter, Redwood Shelter, Emily Stowe Shelter for Women, and Youth Without Shelter.

"The Gingerbread House competition captures the spirit of the season by being festive, yet focused on the serious issue of people who will be spending the holidays living in shelters," said Mark Salerno, Ontario Corporate Representative, CMHC. "It is a great opportunity to raise the profile of these shelters and for our staff to connect with the shelters CMHC has helped to build, renovate or enhance. These shelters fill an important need in our community."

When the spatulas and icing tubes were finally put to rest, the Citytv team received the Media Builder Award for the most creative gingerbread house. People who stopped to watch the festivities at Commerce Court walked away with a greater understanding of the need for affordable housing, and the knowledge that they helped residents living in shelters during the holiday season.

CMHC is Canada's national housing agency with a mandate to help Canadians gain access to safe, quality and affordable housing. CMHC supports the Canadian housing industry and improves the living conditions of Canadians through its activities in mortgage loan insurance and securitization, assisted housing, research and information transfer and the promotion of Canadian housing exports.

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