Cold Climate Housing Research Center Ready to Begin Quinhagak Prototype Home Construction

FAIRBANKS, AK – Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC) is proud to announce the active construction of the Quinhagak prototype home as part of its Sustainable Northern Shelter (SNS) program. As with the successful SNS project in Anaktuvuk Pass, CCHRC worked with the community to design a building that is extremely energy efficient, inexpensive and appropriate for the region's climate and culture.

“We are looking forward to breaking ground on this project,” says CCHRC President and CEO Jack Hébert. “Following the work in Anaktuvuk Pass, it is clear that a cost effective, very energy efficient building can be constructed in the rural areas of Alaska. The Quinhagak prototype is an important next step to demonstrating that this approach to building will work in other regions of the state.”

On August 30th, an aircraft will be loaded with building supplies in Anchorage. Construction of the 1,100 square foot Quinhagak Prototype home is scheduled to begin on site in Quinhagak September 1st and be completed before winter. CCHRC will be guiding the construction process in partnership with a local crew of community members working for the Native Village of Kwinhagak Housing Authority (NVK Housing). When completed, a family will move into the home. The structure will contain sensors to remotely monitor building conditions and energy efficiency throughout the winter.

With its intense wind, heavy rainfall and damp environment, the village of Quinhagak represents an optimal testing ground for new building technologies capable of withstanding Alaska’s extreme environment. In addition, the village’s remote location makes access difficult and the cost of fuel higher. The Quinhagak Prototype is designed to be comfortable and fuel efficient, as it is estimated to use only 160 gallons of fuel per year. The village is in the process of replacing its aging housing stock and hopes the Prototype Home will create a durable, energy efficient, less expensive model for the future growth of the community.

The Cold Climate Housing Research Center is a non-profit institution dedicated to research that improves the durability, health, and affordability of shelter for people living in circumpolar regions around the globe.

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