

Irving “Bing” Leblanc, P.Eng.

Irving is the Director – Infrastructure/Water at the Assembly of First Nations. His responsibility is to represent the AFN and advocate on the various initiatives and committees related to infrastructure, water and sanitation, source water protection, and other infrastructure related issues affecting First Nations. Irving leads a team of dedicated staff whose goal is to improve the quality of life for our members. The Infrastructure/Safe Drinking Water Sector is supported by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure, regional technicians and Regional Water Coordinators.

Irving's background in projects involving First Nations has provided him with first-hand knowledge of conditions related to water, housing and infrastructure needs in First Nations. His experience at the Assembly of First Nations and with Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation has created a large network of like-minded supporters and contacts.

Currently he is Co-Chair of Networks of Centres of Excellence – Knowledge Mobilization (NCE-KM) at UBC. Irving also represents AFN on the Canadian Network of Asset Managers (CNAM). Irving is also a technical committee member on Canadian Standards Association (CSA) in areas related to First Nations infrastructure.

One of Irving's passion is to support and ally with organizations to provide easier access to engineering for First Nation students and to ensure gender balance is achieved.

Irving received his civil engineering degree from the University of Waterloo in 1971 and is a member of Professional Engineers Ontario. Also a member of American Water Works Association (AWWA).

Irving is an Odawa of the Three Fires Confederacy and a member of Wiikwemikoong Unceded Territory located on Manitoulin Island in Northern Ontario, Canada and is fluent in his Odawa language.

Kerry Black, PhD, P.Eng

Dr. Kerry Black is an advisor to the Assembly of First Nations as a technical and policy expert in water. She previously served as Senior Policy Advisor and has worked with First Nations on water issues for over 15 years. She is currently Assistant Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Civil Engineering, at the University of Calgary, in Treaty 7 territory. Her research engages in a transdisciplinary research platform, incorporating technical civil and environmental engineering principles and research, with policy and socio-economic components, focusing on sustainable infrastructure for healthy and resilient communities. Over the past 15 years, she worked extensively in the academic, public, private and non-profit sectors, employed in technical, scientific, policy, and management roles. The majority of this experience has included working with and in partnership with First Nations communities on urgent and pressing water, sanitation, sustainability and infrastructure issues across Canada. As a non-Indigenous settler, her research work is guided by Indigenous partners and First Nations, and in full and meaningful partnership and collaboration.