



**Niagara Regional Housing**

# HOUSING PROVIDER NEWS

A publication for housing providers in Niagara region

**Issue 7 Fall 2007**

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Woodrose's Banner a handprint for every member and staff person

*Happy 20th Anniversary  
Woodrose Co-operative Homes  
Welland, Ontario*



President and 20 year resident of Woodrose Janice Cartmell accepts a plaque of recognition from Sharon Black Vice-president of the Golden Horseshoe CHF.



Woodrose Co-ordinator Doug Sider Presents recognition awards to Betty Hines, Lucy Doucet, Marilyn Burger & Denna Northcott

## **Thank You to Our Partners**



On behalf of the Board and Staff of Niagara Regional Housing (NRH), I would like to thank our housing providers for the extraordinary contribution to affordable housing in Niagara. NRH has undergone considerable change over the past five years and our providers should be commended for their hard work, co-operation and patience.

As partners in housing, we face the challenges of economic and social pressures together. We are entering a period of development and renewal, as new communities emerge and established communities confront aging infrastructure and outdated perceptions. The Niagara Region has recently seen major renovations to more than 40 existing communities and the occupancy of five new developments. We look forward to the eleven outstanding projects that have been approved for development.

Change is constant and we will see continued transitioning with our increasing environmental, physical and social responsibilities in affordable housing. This is both exciting and daunting, but I am confident that the relationships we have built will serve us well. I thank each of our housing providers for their role in Niagara Regional Housing's successful first five years. I invite you to take a look at our Annual Report to see how far we have come.

*Lora Beckwith  
General Manager, Niagara Regional Housing*

NRH wants to hear from you. Please submit your comments, news or questions for upcoming editions of the Housing Provider News to [deborah.firmin@regional.niagara.on.ca](mailto:deborah.firmin@regional.niagara.on.ca)

## Housing Provider Forum

The theme of this year's Forum was Tools and Resources for Success. Housing providers have told NRH that they want tools to help them with their day to day work and NRH is responding.

Information booths arranged by Woman's Place of South Niagara, the Cooperative Housing Federation, Social Housing Services Corporation, Ontario's Disability Support program, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities of the Niagara Region and the Niagara Region Community Services Department, seniors services displayed tools and resources. Representatives from the various agencies were there to provide information.

Alan King, a member of the NRH board of directors, welcomed everyone and set the tone for the day. "Niagara Regional Housing listens to your requests for tools and resources and responds with Housing Forums like today."



Evictions cost everyone. A panel representing NRH, Woman's Place of South Niagara,

Niagara Region senior services, Canadian Mental Health Association, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities of the Niagara Region and Ontario Disability Support Services all spoke about tools and resources to **prevent eviction**. Information Niagara is a great resource that can help tenants/members find the community supports that they need. Information Niagara is available by calling 211 or through their web-site [www.informationniagara.com](http://www.informationniagara.com).

Page 4 of this publication has information about Community Support Services of Niagara Region, an agency to help seniors live independently.

Following the panel discussion, there was an information session on **pandemic planning**. Cathy Martin, Public Health Nurse, Infectious Disease Team, explained, "it is not **if** a pandemic occurs but rather **when** the pandemic comes, will you be ready?" For more information on pandemic planning please see [www.regional.niagara.on.ca](http://www.regional.niagara.on.ca). Pandemic Planning in 'Quick Links' will take you directly to the pandemic planning section.



The **Social Housing Services Corporation** was represented by Deb Thompson who explained the resources that SHSC is working on to assist housing providers with their day to day work. One area is the Green Light Initiative. Carl Henderson gave a quick presentation of the Performance Indicators system. "The **Performance Indicators** is a great way for housing providers to assess their costs against similar housing providers. This is a fantastic tool for analyzing various costs and adjusting to make your complex more efficient." For more information go to [www.shscorp.ca](http://www.shscorp.ca)

Lunch was a great time for networking and sharing information.

Barry Demo, president of

Commonwealth Co-op certainly learned a few things. "[I] found out [things] we didn't know existed. Things we can work with that are good for us to know."

The afternoon's discussions reconvened with **Capital Assessment Management**. The long term viability of affordable housing in Niagara depends on taking action now. Mitigation strategies include ensuring that reserve funds are fully invested and earning the highest interest rate possible. Preventative maintenance programs; energy saving products; bulk purchasing and sharing best practices can all help housing providers stretch capital dollars. Advocating for affordable housing and its importance to the Niagara region is ongoing. NRH shares this responsibility with all housing providers in Niagara.

Mira Fearnside, Housing Administrator, NRH, explained the New **Operational Review Process** and Sarah Phillips, also a Housing Administrator, spoke about the revised **Annual Information Return**.

The Annual Forum concluded with Deal or no Deal meets Jeopardy with an NRH twist. No one in attendance will ever forget Donna Mino



exclaiming, "It's the banker!" Check the NRH web site for the questions and answers!

## Training

Through surveys we have learned—

### **Staff are interested in workshops related to:**

- Roles and Responsibilities of Staff/Board
- Reports for your board of directors
- Budgeting and Financial Management
- Internal controls/Best practices
- Documentation – what to write and what not to write
- Energy Programs Initiatives
- Preventative Maintenance Program
- Tendering Process/Specifications

### **Board members would like workshops about:**

- The Legal Responsibilities of the board
- Roles and Responsibilities of Staff/Board
- Effective Board meetings
- Centralized waiting list (refusing a member)
- Financial and other reports & what to look for
- Financial Planning

**Currently Scheduled  
Fraud Prevention & Minimization  
October 16 and November 8, 2007**

**Watch your mail for other training sessions**

## NRH Contacts

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Housing Administrator

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AA to manager of Housing Programs

## NRH Notices

The following NRH Notices have been issued since the last issue:

NRH Notice 06-12 2007 Market Rent Index for  
Section 103 Housing Providers

NRH Notice 06-13 Imputed Rate of Return

NRH Notice 06-14 2007 Minimum Market Rent &  
Cost Factor for Municipal 1978  
(Section 95) Housing  
Providers

NRH Notice 06-15 2006 Ingoing Tenant Income  
Limits Section 26 & 27  
Housing Providers

NRH Notice 07-01 Annual Information Return for  
2006 and Guide

NRH Notice 07-02 Residential Tenancies Act

NRH Notice 07-03 SHSC—Green Light Initiative

NRH Notice 07-04 Direct Deposit of Subsidy  
Payments

NRH Notice 07-05 Revisions to NRH's  
Operational Review Process

NRH Notice 07-06 Housing Provider Requests  
for Benchmark Change

NRH Notice 07-07 Ongoing Eligibility for Geared-  
To-Income Subsidy

NRH Notice 07-08 Housing Provider Annual  
Reporting—5 year Capital Plan

NRH Notice 07-09 Provincial-Municipal Fiscal  
and Service Delivery Review

NRH Notice 07-10 Former Tenant/Member  
Arrears

NRH Notice 07-11 Protocol for Housing Provider  
Board Member Requests

NRH Notice 07-12 Housing Provider Good  
Governance: Arrears  
Management

NRH Notice 07-13 2008 Rent Control Guideline

If you are missing a notice you can obtain a copy  
from the NRH website: [www.nrh.ca](http://www.nrh.ca)

NRH is populating the website with sample  
forms. If there is a form you need that isn't there  
please let us know (905-682-9201 ext. 3918).

## Community Resources

This page is dedicated to providing you and your tenant/members with information about organizations that provide services in your community.



### Community Support Services of Niagara



Do you need a ride to a medical appointment or a social activity?



Do you have difficulty cooking and would appreciate receiving a nutritious meal delivered to your home? Do you like to eat out with friends?



Is housework becoming too heavy?



Would you like to have a volunteer visit or give you a call? A friend to share stories, play cards or to go for a walk together?

#### Services Available

**Meals on Wheels**

**Lunch Out**

**Talk a bit**

**Volunteer Visiting (includes assisted shopping)**

**Transportation**

**Home Maintenance & Repair**

Please call for service or more information.

**Welland/Pelham:**

**905-788-3181**

**West Niagara:**

**905-563-9501**

**In St. Catharines, Thorold, Niagara Falls, NOTL,**

**Fort Erie and surrounding areas:**

**905-682-3800**



**Volunteers are always welcome!**

