

Information for your Tenants/Members

Do you require child care supports for:

Employment (to obtain or maintain)
School attendance (basic or post-secondary education). Including Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

Attendance in job-related training programs
Children with developmental (special) needs
Families/children at risk for healthy development

Community Services provides financial assistance for placements in:

Licensed centre-based programs

Licensed home-based settings

Recreation programs that meet the funding criteria for children from birth to 18 years of age

Other limited funding options may be available through discussion with a Children's Services Fee Subsidy Caseworker

For information on subsidized child care:

E-mail: childcarecosts@regional.niagara.on.ca

Telephone: 905-984-3750 or toll free 1-800-263-7215, extension 3897

Providing (subsidized) Recreation/Cultural Opportunities for Children/Youth (Pro-Kids)

Financial assistance is available to support the participation of children and youth from birth to 18 years of age in the recreation and/or cultural activity of their choice. To be eligible the applicant must be a parent/guardian meeting a minimum of one of the following three criteria:

In receipt of social assistance
Eligible for child care subsidy (with income less than \$40,000 as outlined on line 236 of the Federal Income Tax Notice of Assessment(s) or on the Canada Child Tax Benefit

For information on Pro-Kids:

E-mail: pro-kids@regional.niagara.on.ca

Telephone: 905-984-3750 or toll free 1-800-263-7215, extension 3897



Home Child Care
Program



Interested in becoming a
Home Child Care Provider?

Nurturing caregivers required to
Provide licensed quality child care in a safe
Home setting.

**To find out all the facts
CALL
(905) 984-3810**



HOUSING PROVIDER NEWS

A publication for housing providers in Niagara region

Issue 8 April 2008

Open Space Forum Contributes to New Strategic Plan for NRH



NRH would like to thank all those who attended our Open Space Forum at the Beacon Harbourside Conference Centre on October 30 of last year. Titled "Tomorrow's Faces and Places of Affordable Housing: Creating a Blueprint Together", the forum encouraged a full and meaningful discussion about issues of affordable housing in Niagara. Through this process, NRH has been able to plan for the future with a complete picture of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

NRH's 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, "Faces and Places of Affordable Housing" incorporates the insight of stakeholders, the guidance of our Board of Directors, the experience of staff and our legislative framework and places it within the context of current realities. As a result, we have developed a balanced plan with a clear goal – to provide access to safe and affordable housing for the citizens of Niagara.

To that end, our Strategic Plan can be captured in four main directions. In order to best provide affordable housing into the future, NRH must work toward:

1. Innovative affordable housing solutions
2. Environmentally responsive and sustainable communities
3. Strong partnerships with stakeholders
4. Adaptable service-delivery network

The full Strategic Plan can be viewed on our website at www.nrh.ca or you can request a copy by contacting us at 905-682-9201 ext. 3937. We look forward to continuing to work with Housing Providers to offer the citizens of Niagara with choices and opportunities for safe, secure, affordable 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

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NRH offices are located at Campbell East Regional Administrative Building, 2201 St. David's Road, Thorold

Mailing Address:

Niagara Regional Housing
Box 344
Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3

Phone: 905-682-9201, Dial 1, then the extension
1-800-232-3293 (Grimsby or outside the Niagara Region)

Main Fax: 905- 687-4844
Housing Access Fax: 935-0476

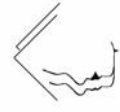


Housing Provider Forum

Mark your Calendars!

The theme for this year's forum is "Faces and Places, Keeping them Safe". It will be held on April 24th, 2008, at Club Roma from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Details and invitations will be out shortly.

Staff and board members will enjoy this informative day!



Housing Programs Staff Updates

Housing Program Staff welcomes two new Housing Administrators, Liz Brillinger and Lorraine Small. Liz Brillinger is taking over for Sarah Phillips who is off on medical leave. We wish Sarah well in her recovery and look forward to her return in the fall.



Liz Brillinger

Lorraine Small

NRH staff changes and updates

Mira Fearnside	Acting Manager of Housing Programs	Ext. 3926
Liz Brillinger	Housing Administrator	Ext. 3933
Deborah Firmin	Housing Administrator	Ext. 3918
Lorraine Small	Housing Administrator	Ext. 3914
Paula Silta	Program Support Co-ordinator	Ext. 3917
Jeanette McKay	Housing Access Supervisor	Ext. 3928
Margaret Smith	Rent Supplement Co-ordinator	Ext 3932

NEW HOUSEHOLDS MOVING IN?

Now is the time to get complete and accurate information.

- ⇒ Request household's application from Niagara Regional Housing
- ⇒ Confirm legal status in Canada. If status is not permanent ensure that immigration documents have not expired.
- ⇒ Have household complete an Income Declaration Package and provide all supporting documentation in accordance with the definitions on the Income Declaration Package
 - Current Income verification
 - All assets must be declared including homes and property
 - Notice of Assessment
- ⇒ Calculate rent/housing change based on current income and asset verification
- ⇒ Orient household to their new housing community and sign Lease or Occupancy Agreement



How does *your* garden grow?

Smart Gardening is Niagara Region's way of promoting environmentally friendly lawn and garden practices. Niagara's Smart Gardening represents a number of "green" programs developed and managed by the Region's Public Works and Public Health departments. Smart Gardening will include an ever-growing range of environmental initiatives.

You can be a smart gardener today by composting, leaving grass clippings on lawns (grasscycling), conserving water, reducing the use of pesticides, choosing alternatives to salt for snow and ice melting, using mulch, participating in the organics collection program and protect yourself against the West Nile Virus.

Other topics will include tips on backyard composting, water conservation and the use of drought resistant plants in your lawn and garden.

Grimsby

Monday, April 7, 2008
Coles Garden Centre
[147 Main Street East](#)
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

St. Catharines

Monday, April 14, 2008
Broadway Gardens
[74 Broadway Ave.](#)
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Pelham

Tuesday, April 22, 2008
Rice Road Greenhouses
[1361 Rice Road](#)
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Niagara Falls

Wednesday, April 23, 2008
Gauld Nurseries
[8865 Mountain Road](#)
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Door prizes to be won!

Space is limited, so sign up today! To register, call the Region's Waste Management Information Line at 905-356-4141 or 1-800-594-5542.



Learn all about Smart Gardening - for free! Niagara Region invite you to attend a free seminar to learn more about Smart Gardening including how to prepare your lawn and garden organically this spring and troubleshooting common weeds and pests such as earwigs, slugs, lawn grubs and Gypsy moths naturally!

72 HOUR Emergency Preparedness Guide

Is your family prepared?

Your emergency preparedness guide

You should be prepared to take care of yourself and your family for a minimum of 72 hours. If a disaster happens in your community, it may take emergency workers some time to get to you as they help those in desperate need. By taking a few simple steps today, you can become better prepared to face a range of emergencies – anytime, anywhere. Use these tips to create your own emergency plan. These basic steps will help during an emergency.

Step 1 – Know the Risks. Know your Region

To learn more about emergency preparedness, or to order self-help publications on planning for earthquakes, storms, power outages and other risks, call:

1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)

TTY: 1 800 926-9105

Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time

Or visit: www.GetPrepared.ca

Step 2 – Make a Plan

Every Canadian household needs an emergency plan. It will help you and your family know what to do in case of an emergency. You will need meeting places, plans for children, people with special needs and plan for your pets. You can find all this information and information on evacuation orders at www.GetPrepared.ca.

Step 3 – Prepare a Kit

In an emergency you will need some basic supplies. You may need to get by without power or tap water. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. Make sure everyone in the household knows where the emergency kit is.

Basic emergency kit

- Water – at least two litres of water per person per day. Include small bottles that can be carried easily in case of an evacuation order
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (remember to replace the food and water once a year)
- Manual can-opener
- Flashlight and batteries
- Candles and matches or lighter (remember to place candles in sturdy containers and to put them out before going to sleep)
- Battery-powered or wind-up radio (and extra batteries)
- First aid kit
- Special items such as prescription medications, infant formula and equipment for people with disabilities
- Extra keys for your car and house
- Some cash in smaller bills, such as \$10 bills (travellers cheques are also useful) and change for payphones
- A copy of your emergency plan and contact information

St. John Ambulance and Salvation Army kits can be purchased from the following retailers: Zellers, Home Outfitters, Rexall, Pharma Plus, Canadian Tire, IGA

Moonstone Fire

On September 7, 2007 a devastating fire broke out at Moonstone Co-op located on Roehampton Avenue in St. Catharines. The \$2.5 million dollar fire tore through Building B in the late afternoon. Luckily there were no serious injuries or deaths. However, Building B was virtually destroyed and 32 households were left homeless. A coordinated effort resulted in the displaced households finding alternate accommodation within a month or two. Residents are hoping that they will be able to move back into Moonstone in the fall of 2008.

On December 1, 2007, ninety-eight (98) of the Moonstone residents got together for an evening of fun and to catch up with each other. Local businesses donated gifts for the children and Santa was on hand to distribute the presents. By the end of the evening friends had reconnected and everyone's spirit were lifted.

The board of directors and Chardon Property Management want to express their sincere thanks to the housing providers and their residents who donated and provided support to Moonstone Co-operative. The donations and support from the community helped tremendously.



Niagara Regional Housing would like to remind all tenants/members that it is important to have content insurance to cover personal belongings and potential liability in the event that a tragedy strikes.

Capital Plans

Are you doing your five (5) year capital plan? Do you need some help with the SHSC Capital Forecasting Software? If so, please call your Housing Administrator for assistance. Don't forget the plan must be approved by your board of directors and signed by two(2) signing officers. Please submit the plan with your year end financial package.

Useful Tools & Resources

An updated RGI calculation Manual can be found at www.nrh.ca

Resource Centre forms, tools and best practices are available at shscorp.ca

Energy Saving Measures

Energy

Everywhere we look we see information about saving energy. The challenge is to figure out what is best for your building and residents.

Some key areas to consider are:

Lighting

- ✓ Compact fluorescent lighting uses up to two thirds less energy and lasts 6 to 10 times longer than traditional incandescent lighting.
- ✓ Use natural daylight when and where possible.
- ✓ Consider motion sensors.



Refrigerators

- ✓ If replacing refrigerators look for the Energy Star symbol and ensure that the old units are decommissioned and removed from the system



Heating

- ✓ Make-up air units – If electric, consider changing to gas. Whether gas or electric ensure that the equipment is running at top efficiency. Establish a preventative maintenance routine to ensure that filters are clean and equipment is running as intended. Timers can be used to reduce the run time and increase the comfort of the tenants (i.e. shut down in mid afternoon during the summer to reduce the amount of hot air being brought into the building)
- ✓ Thermostats - Use programmable or limiting thermostats.
- ✓ Radiators or vents – Allow for proper circulation by keeping radiators or vents free and clear



Laundry

- ✓ Dryers - If electric, consider changing to gas. Ensure filters are clean and equipment is working at top efficiency.
- ✓ Washers - Consider front load washers. Use cold water wash and rinse. Ensure that water level is set to use just enough water.

Water and water heating

- ✓ Low flow shower heads and faucets can reduce the amount of hot water used by half.
- ✓ Toilets – are your toilets 6 litre low flow?
- ✓ Consider switching from electric to gas hot water heaters or “on demand” systems
- ✓ Do you know that a lawn only requires 1” of water per week? Attend a Free Smart Gardening Workshop to learn more about water conservation in the garden www.regional.niagara.on.ca

Exit Signs

- ✓ Replace traditional EXIT signs (which must be lit 24 hours a day) with newer light emitting diode (LED) signs and you will be replacing 30 watts with as little as 2 watts per sign, and the LED bulbs can last 10 years without needing replacement!

Planning to reduce energy costs?

1. Consider your Building Condition Assessment/Reserve Fund Study and your 5 year capital plan
2. Compare your reserve fund study with the recommendations in your Energy Audit or Energy Assessment (less in depth). Determine how any ongoing savings will affect your operating budget. (If you do not have an energy audit you can do some calculations using the web sites listed below.)
3. When doing scenario testing using the SHSC Capital Forecasting Software consider if your reserve funds allow you to move any items forward in order to achieve savings more quickly.
4. Identify measures to be implemented and seek board approval.
5. Research available program incentives or loans.
6. Set completion dates to meet incentive program deadlines and earliest energy savings.

Keep an eye on the SHSC website for upcoming program details and information about Energy Audits, Financing, Green Products and Vendors and a Utility Management system.

Social Housing Services Corporation <http://www.shscorp.ca>

For more tips, calculators, and incentives check out

Ontario Power Authority <http://business.everykilowattcounts.com/com/programs-incentives-rebates.php?pir=ERIP>

Ministry of Energy <http://www.energy.gov.on.ca>

The Office of Energy Efficiency <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca>

Niagara Conservation United States http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/procurement/eeep_eccalculators.html



Tabitha Homes in St. Catharines is the first housing provider to receive the NRH Green Award for their Green Tip. In 2006 Tabitha Homes installed Niagara Flapperless toilets and showerheads in all their units. The board of directors estimate they have saved \$3,600.00 in total. The initial investment was \$12,000.00 but in four years the toilets will have paid for themselves. And, Tabitha Homes is helping to save the environment!

Send your Green Tip to deborah.firmin@regional.niagara.on.ca

Design Award Winners

The third annual Niagara Community Design Awards honoured two new affordable housing developments in Niagara, Genesis Court and Keefer Developments.

Genesis Court is 40 units of affordable housing on James Street in St. Catharines and was honoured as a larger scale project.

Phil Ritchie of Keefer Developments was honoured for Leadership for past and ongoing redevelopment of heritage and old manufacturing properties in Thorold.