



SHIN Newsletter

Social Housing In Niagara

September 2003 Issue

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Questions? Comments? Contact Mira Fearnside, Editor for
SHIN at 905-682-9201 ext. 326

Niagara Regional Housing Staff Changes

NRH is pleased to announce that Sarah Phillips has joined Housing Programs Division as a Housing Administrator. Sarah will administer a small portfolio of housing providers and will also be involved in supporting the development of new affordable housing units in the Region.

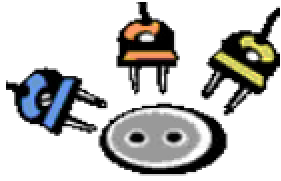
Energy Conservation

On Thursday, August 14, 2003 the largest power outage in history struck parts of Canada and the eastern part of the U.S. Only parts of Niagara Region were affected. An estimated 50 million people were affected by the blackout.

Power was restored to all areas by late afternoon on August 15, 2003.

The power outage reinforces the need for housing providers to have an up-to-date emergency plan that provides clear direction to staff on how to handle such emergency situations.

In cases of extended power outages or other emergency situations, emergency procedures should include checking on tenant/member's well-being (especially senior citizens). A regular walk-through of buildings is also recommended to ensure the safety of tenants/members.



How to Conserve Energy

Niagara Regional Housing continues to promote energy conservation on an ongoing basis.

Here are some tips on how to conserve energy in your community:

- ? Turn air conditioners off if possible, especially when you leave home. When in use, set at 25.5 C or 76 F.
- ? Close curtains.
- ? Reduce lighting levels and turn off lights when leaving a room.
- ? Use microwaves for cooking instead of ovens.
- ? Use cold water for clothes washing.
- ? Where possible hang clothes to dry.
- ? Minimize use of hot water (take showers instead of baths).
- ? Use appliances during non-peak hours from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.
- ? Try using lower wattage bulbs.

NRH Notices Update

The following NRH Notices have been issued since the last edition of the *SHIN* Newsletter:

- 03-09 Senior Citizen Government Pension Income
- 03-10 Application for Social Housing in the Niagara Region
- 03-11 Revised Lease/Occupancy Agreement
- 03-12 Reinstatement of the Non-Rental Revenue Incentive
- 03-13 Geared-to-Income Assistance Review Forms
- 03-14 Social Housing Investment Funds
- 03-15 Operational Reviews

The Notices are also available on our website at www.nrh.ca.

ACCESS – Reporting Requirements Reminder

Housing Access relies heavily upon housing providers to report information in a timely fashion in order for the centralized waiting list to remain as up-to-date as possible. Ensuring current data is displayed to all housing providers is extremely important for all users of the centralized waiting list.

As indicated in Directive 02-01 (July 26, 2002), the following is a reminder of the information that must be reported as soon as providers become aware of it:

. Vacancies must be reported via the Notice of Vacancy Form (fax to Housing Access @ 905-935-0476).

. Former tenant/member arrears must be reported as soon as the tenant/member vacates. In some cases, a tenant/member vacates with arrears and immediately completes another application for the centralized waiting list. Since Housing Access is not aware of the arrears, the tenant/member is subsequently deemed eligible. Providers can still report arrears to Access even if the full amount of the arrears is unknown. The actual dollar amounts can be added at a later date.

. Offers of housing made to an applicant. If the offer is reported as soon as it is made, Housing Access can ensure that the applicant's record is placed "on offer". This temporarily removes the applicant from the waiting list while the applicant is deciding whether or not to accept the offer. This process has been put into place so that duplicate offers by different housing providers can be avoided.

. For applicants that are housed or have been offered a unit, please include the following in your report to Housing Access:

1. Address of the accepted unit
2. Effective date of move in
3. Whether the new tenant/member has been housed as RGI or market
4. Refusals of offers by an applicant.
5. Refusals to offer a unit by the housing provider including the reason for the refusal.
6. Any other information you find as a result of contacting an applicant (i.e., new telephone number, change in household composition)

Reporting changes can be done via the "ADD COMMENT" option when accessing your subsidiary waiting list online. Many housing providers already use this option as it is the most convenient. You may also fax the information to Housing Access at the above-noted number, to the attention of Jeanette McKay.

Affordable Housing Program

The Province of Ontario and Government of Canada signed an agreement on May 30, 2002 for the provision of affordable housing in the province. All three levels of government will play important roles in the implementation of this new initiative.

Community Rental Housing funding was offered across the province to areas identified with the highest need for affordable rental housing. A total of 3,200 units was allocated across twelve municipalities. Niagara Region was not chosen as one of these municipalities.

Currently in Niagara, there are over 4,000 households on the waiting list for affordable housing.

During May and June 2003, four public consultation sessions were held on the affordable housing program and community rental housing initiatives. The goal was to assess the level of interest and resources that were available in the community to support the development of new affordable housing in the region of Niagara.

The sessions clearly indicated that there was considerable interest in the development of affordable housing in the region. As a result, in August 2003, NRH and the Regional Municipality of Niagara obtained Council approval and submitted an *Expression of Interest* to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in an effort to secure an allocation of 150 units under the Affordable Housing Program. If provincial approval is secured, NRH will issue a tender call in an effort to meet the housing needs of citizens in the Region of Niagara.

SHSC Sets 2004 Natural Gas Price

In August 2003, the SHSC emailed all local housing corporations and service managers recommending that they budget 28 cents per cubic metre for natural gas for 2004. SHSC is providing this price for budgeting purposes and will refine the price, if necessary, in the fall at the start of the "gas year", once more gas has been purchased for 2004.

SHSC's natural gas purchasing program is open to non-profits and co-operatives, as well as LHCs. For more information, please contact Lorelei Friesen (SHSC) at 1-866-261-4451.

Provider Advisory Group (PAG)

NRH has recently established an advisory group to act as a provider resource and liaison between the NRH Board of Directors and staff. This group is envisioned to be representative of the larger housing sector and available for consultations relating to areas of service manager flexibility under the SHRA 2000, policy, procedural and guideline development and representation to appeals committee.

Current members of this group include Catherine Jolliffe, Chair (NRH Board member); Betty Ann Baker (NRH Board member), Glen Crawford, Carol Koch, Joseph Tonnos, John Osczytko, and Judy Crawford. In

addition, Karen Drake and Sarah Phillips of NRH will also participate and be a resource to the group.

Members are asked to seek input and provide feedback to their representative stakeholder group so that the opinions and insight that they bring to meetings will reflect not only their perspective, but that of their sectors.

The Provider Advisory Group will meet quarterly.

To find out more about this advisory group or to learn how you can participate in providing input into areas of discussion relating to the provision and administration of social housing, please contact Sarah Phillips, Housing Administrator at (905) 682-9201 ext. 331 or email sarah.phillips@regional.niagara.on.ca.

Anniversary Celebrations

Lots of cause for celebration over the summer months:

Residence Richelieu

In June 2003, Residence Richelieu celebrated its 25th year anniversary.

Residence Richelieu was originally funded under the Federal Non-Profit Program and administered by Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation, before being transferred to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing and to Niagara Regional Housing under the *SHRA 2000*.



The majority of residents as well as dignitaries from all levels of government (Federal, Provincial, Regional and Municipal) took part in the celebrations.

There was also representation from various French-speaking groups in the region and a number of Club Richelieu members and their spouses. Just before the meal, Father Jacques Fortin, Father Regis and Brother

Daniel from Sacred Heart Parish lead residents in prayer to kick-off the celebrations.

This anniversary's theme "*Already 25 years*" was well-attended and well-received by all who participated thanks to the Residence executive and the social committee, chaired by Yvette Bisson.

Bernard Rodrigue founding member and still active on the Residence Richelieu Board of Directors was honoured for his outstanding continued contribution to the board and was given a framed aerial picture of Residence Richelieu from a local photographer Thies Bogner.



The evening under the tent concluded with music and dance and everyone left with a little souvenir of "*Already 25 Years*".



Congratulations Residence Richelieu!

Résidence Richelieu – déjà 25 ans

Vendredi, le 13 juin 2003, les résidents et résidentes fêtaient les 25 ans de l'existence de la Résidence Richelieu.

Cet anniversaire qui avait comme thème, déjà 25 ans, fut un succès retentissant. Sous la présidence du R/Michel Séguin, les membres de son conseil d'administration et quelques membres du Club Richelieu, le tout s'est déroulé à merveille. Il faut souligner la contribution du Comité de la Bonne Entente sous la présidence de Mme Yvette Bisson qui avait préparé les salades et les hors d'œuvres.

Grâce à la présence d'au moins 95% des résidents et résidentes, le succès de la fête était assuré. Leur présence exprimait à la fois leur solidarité, leur coopération, leur appréciation et leur gratitude envers le conseil d'administration de la Résidence Richelieu Inc.

À cette occasion, le R/Bernard Rodrigue, membre du C.A. depuis 1978 fut honoré. On lui présente un encadrement d'une photo aérienne de la résidence par un photographe renommé, Thies Bogner.

Notre maître de cérémonie a souligné la présence des politiciens des différents paliers venus célébrer cet heureux événement avec nous ainsi que la gracieuse présence de l'équipe de pastorale de la paroisse du Sacré-Cœur.

Cet fut une soirée remplie de souvenirs et d'enthousiasme. La joie régnait à plein sous la tente.

Greenvale Co-op

In August 2003, Greenvale Co-op celebrated its 10th anniversary.



Greenvale Co-op is a 62-unit family townhouse complex located in St. Catharines.

The day was well attended by the co-op membership.



The celebration was arranged by the co-op's "10th Anniversary Committee" and activities included a disc jockey, dance, children's face painting, pony rides and a catered meal.

Staff from the Golden Horseshoe Co-operative Housing Federation, Niagara Regional Housing and the Property Management Company also attended the celebrations.

Judy Crawford, property manager described the co-op as "a very family oriented and quiet complex. The membership is a very informed membership with high participation in various workshops."

Greenvale Co-op's turnover is quite low and the current waiting list is long.

Congratulations Greenvale!

St. Charles Co-op

In August 2003, St. Charles Co-op also celebrated its 10th anniversary.



St. Charles Co-op is a 54-unit family apartment/townhouse complex located in Welland.

Activities included face painting and various games for the children. A commemorative pen was given to each participant. A disc jockey provided the entertainment and the co-op held a street dance in the evening along with a picnic-style dinner.



Guests included dignitaries from provincial and municipal governments, staff from the Golden Horseshoe Co-operative Housing Federation, Niagara Regional Housing and the Property Management Company.

The day was a success and a good time was had by all.



Cutting the Cake - Karen Drake NRH; Sue Beck, Betty Ann Baker and Ken Goka, NPH.

Congratulations St. Charles!

Profile:

**Town of Pelham Non-Profit Housing Corporation
(Pelham Seniors Apartments)**



Pelham Seniors Apartments

Pelham Seniors Apartment is a 65 unit senior citizen apartment building located in Fonthill, Ontario. This building was developed under the 56.1 Non-Profit Program, and continues to be governed under a tripartite operating agreement. All units in this building are 1-bedroom units.



Pelham Seniors Apartments has an active and dynamic tenant's association and is to be credited for addressing the social needs of its members, including coffee hour, bingo, cards, teas and receptions. The tenant's association also organizes various bus trips, barbeques and bake sales.



Left to Right – Carl Sasse (President); Catherine Kuckyt (Director); Harland Young (Manager)

“The 21-year old building has recently been transformed through strategic and creative capital improvements into a contemporary warm environment where the needs of its aging population are enhanced by peers, staff and the community” Harland Young, Manager says in describing the complex.

Harland Young adds that “the first comment from visitors is usually how clean the building is. This is intentional. With the co-operation, support and occasional assistance of tenants, the superintendents keep the buildings, yards and sidewalks clean and in good repair.”

The nine member board is appointed for a 3 year term by the Town of Pelham. 3 of the 9 board members are residents of the building.