

# Queenston Heights

*971 Queenston Rd, Stoney Creek*

## Tenant Handbook



Version 1 2013

Material covered in this handbook is available  
in an alternate format upon request.



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# Welcome



Welcome to Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. We hope your life here will be a happy one. This booklet will give you lots of information on what to expect living here, what your rights are and what we expect from you. More detailed information is written in your tenancy agreement and Lease Package. The tenancy agreement is a legal document. You should make sure you are familiar with what it says and what commitments have been made.

Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc have a comprehensive set of policies that govern how we run our buildings. If you would like to have information on a particular policy that you do not find in this handbook, please call Tenant Services at our main office 1 905 578-3833.

## Who is Stoney Creek Community Homes

Queenston Heights is owned by Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. a non-profit Housing provider. As such we are committed to affordable housing that allows our occupants/tenants to improve the quality of their lives and the lives of their families. Tenancy is open to everyone subject to eligibility based on criteria set by the Province, Region and City. We are committed to a better quality of life for our tenants. All of our tenants are treated equally. We accommodate tenants who need assistance through rent-geared-to-income as well as market rent tenants.

Stoney Creek Community Homes is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors to whom the General Manager is responsible. There is also a staff that assists the manager in efficient and competent management of the properties as well as implementing various board policies as they are developed.

Our staff at Stoney Creek Community Homes are committed to the tenants and occupants who live in the housing that we manage and care for. We are dedicated to ensuring a good and fair standard of living in housing that enhances the dignity of those who live within our walls.

Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc works with the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) to build a strong social housing sector and influence government housing policies.





# Central Office Hours

Our central office is open 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Closed on Weekends and Holidays

Local Office Times are posted on site and are subject to change

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## Important Phone Numbers

### Stoney Creek Community Services Corp.

**905- 578-3833 or 1-888-777-9320**

Tenant Services ..... Prompt "1"

Property Maintenance ..... Prompt "2"

24-Hour Emergency Maintenance ..... Prompt "5"

Fire, police, ambulance ..... 911

Landlord and Tenant Board: ..... 1 888 332-3234



## Who does what, at Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc.?

### General Manager

Oversees the management of our building and reports to the Non-Profit Board of Directors

### Property Manager

Oversees the Tenant Services Staff who handle correspondence, calculates rent-geared-to-income (RGI), answers the phone, processes applications for housing and transfers, provide rent tracking and cover all tenant interactions.

### Tenant Services Administration Assistant

They handle all tenant issues, collect rents, correspondence, calculate rent-geared-to-income (RGI) and processes applications for housing or transfers.

### Maintenance Manager

Oversees the maintenance staff that handles cleaning, maintenance and repair of the buildings and properties.

### Maintenance Staff

The maintenance staff are a team of individuals trained in the many aspects of facility maintenance and are dispatched by the central office. The Maintenance staff do not accept rent payments and cannot authorize changes or amendments to governing policies.

### Answering Service

Our Answering Service provides contact with After-Hours Personnel to assist in urgent maintenance issues.

### Board of Directors

The Non-Profit Housing Corporations are governed by a board of directors. All of the directors volunteer their time to be on the board. The Board approves the Housing Non-Profit Corporation policies and legal contracts..

### Tenants Association

Where they exist, Recognised Tenant Associations give feedback to the board of directors on how well the buildings are being managed. They also organize social events for tenants and funding may be available. Many housing projects maintain active and interesting associations.

***We encourage all tenants to form or join the Tenants Association.***



# Your New Home

## Moving In



### **Tenancy Agreement**

Prior to moving in you will be required to sign a tenancy agreement. This is a legally binding document. Our Property Manager or Tenant Services Administration Assistant will review the terms of the tenancy agreement with you and answer any questions you may have. Please keep the lease package and agreement in a safe place for reference.

### **Inspections**

Our staff will inspect your unit before your move in date when possible. When you pick up your keys, our staff will provide an inspection form for you to complete after you move in. Please complete the form and forward it to the Main Office. If there are any concerns with the unit these inspection reports will have sections to document the issues. You will receive a copy of that report to keep for your own records.

Routine inspections will be performed annually and may be performed any time with the required posted notice, to keep track of the condition of the unit. A final inspection will also take place when you move out of the unit. You may be responsible for any damage that is not caused by normal wear and tear.

### **Locks and keys**

Before you move in, you will receive a key for your unit, and your mailbox and if applicable the garage. If you lose any of these keys, the management must charge a fee for replacement. If you want to change your lock, we can do this for you. A fee will be charged to cover our staff time and the cost of a new cylinder. You must tell us if you want to add an extra lock. To add an extra lock you must obtain an Alteration Request Approval and provide us with a key so that we can enter your unit if there is an emergency in your unit when you are not home.

### **Key “Buddy”**

Leaving a spare key with a trusted neighbour or friend is the best way to avoid being locked out of your home. If you lose your key during working hours, the maintenance department will let you into your unit within 2 hrs. If you lock yourself out after working hours, you will have to call a locksmith at your cost. After Hours maintenance call out is \$100 per occurrence for lost keys.

### **Disposing of your moving boxes**

Cartons must be broken down and tied in bundles before being placed in the recycling bin for paper products.



### **Parking**

Your parking entitlement is covered in your lease. You may rent additional vehicle parking if there are available parking spots. Contact our office to apply for renting of a spot, or to be entered into the waiting list. In order to rent a spot your car must be registered and insured. In all cases, vehicles parked anywhere at Queenston Heights must be roadworthy at all times. Non Licensed vehicles will be towed away at the tenant’s expense. If someone else parks in your spot, please contact the Office. **Visitor parking is for daytime visitors.** Overnight parking is by permit only. Please contact the office in advance of overnight guest stays to obtain an overnight permit. All non – permit vehicles may be subject to fines or towing after 11pm.

### **Cable TV**

Cable TV is provided by COGECO. SCCHI has negotiated a preferred rate for cable TV service. It is the tenant’s responsibility to obtain a digital converter from COGECO by calling 1-855-628-7531. The tenant must return this equipment to COGECO when moving out.

### **Satellite Dish- All**

To have a satellite dish installed the tenant must first obtain an alteration request approval in writing. This request may, or may not be approved based on many factors. Please obtain the Alteration Request Document from our office.

### **Telephone**

Each apartment has at least one telephone jack. You must call a telephone service provider to hook up your own telephone service. Any charges are the tenant’s responsibility. Please note, there are many telephone service providers.



### **Drapes**

Please make sure that your drapes or curtains fall at least three inches away from the heat registers and air vents.



### **Bicycles**

Unfortunately we cannot guarantee the storage or security of your bicycle if it is outside your unit.



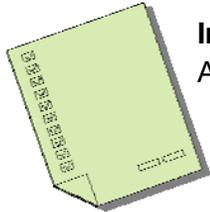
### **Personal Mobility Devices (handicap scooters)**



All PMD’s, scooters and E-Bikes are to be stored inside the tenants unit at all times Before purchasing a PMD, the tenant should evaluate the storage and charging requirements. There are currently no approved locations in our facilities to store PMD’s. Tenants will be assessed and charged for damages caused by PMD usage inside their units and on the patios.

## Redecorating

Before you start any decorating, such as painting or wallpapering, you must get permission in writing. An alteration request must be submitted, approved, and a copy of the approved request must be kept for future reference. See attached appendix A



## Installing Ceiling Fans

Any installation of ceiling fans is not permitted.

## Air Conditioners and Electrical Fixtures

Any installation of air conditioners or other electrical fixtures or wired-in appliances must be inspected by the Local Hydro Service Company and the property manager at your expense. **Window A/C units that are not installed correctly may damage the window frame, or leak water inside the unit** and create mould or other damage. The tenant will be responsible for all costs to repair the damage during or after the tenancy.

## Insurance

As your housing provider we are not responsible for your personal property. Our insurance covers our property and building only. Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc is only responsible for damage to your personal property if it is proven to be caused by negligence on our part. **Tenant Content Insurance** to protect your belongings against theft, fire or other damage should be purchased by the tenant.

## Yards, balconies and porches



You may not use balconies or porches as storage areas. Please clear the snow off your patio as water can leak in under the door. BBQ preferred locations are at the rear, away from the building. BBQ use may create problems for other tenants and the burning coals and fumes are fire and health hazards. **Any open air burning, at any time, is strictly forbidden anywhere on Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. Property** . Please don't shake rugs or mats from your balcony. Yard space in the front, and in the rear of your rental unit is considered a common area. Installation of fences, barriers or any permanent structure is not permitted.





## **Pets**

You are allowed to have a pet as long as it does not disturb other tenants. If you have a dog, please leash it when you take it out of your unit. Do not allow your dog to run free outside, and remember to “stoop-and-scoop” after your pet. Please review your lease and lease addendums regarding pets.

***The Ontario Dog Owners Liability Act applies to all persons in the province and includes a ban on all dogs that have an appearance and physical characteristics that are substantially similar to Pit Bulls or Bull Terriers.***

You can be evicted for allowing your pet to cause damage, or to disturb the peace of any other tenant or neighbour. There are also many by-laws controlling the type and number of pets you can keep. All of City of Hamilton City By-Laws “Dogs and other Animals” apply at Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. including reporting of vaccination and rabies shots.

We also recommend you have your pet spayed or neutered. Dog and Cat licences are mandatory. Cats must not be left to roam free.

City of Hamilton will enforce all By-Laws and Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. will monitor compliance to set policies as attached.

## **Surveillance Systems**

Surveillance systems may be in use in common areas.

These systems are to aid in prosecution of crimes committed against the facilities. Access to any surveillance records by tenants is not permitted for any reason.

Law enforcement agencies may request surveillance records through the Management Office only.





## Fire Safety

Avoid storing flammable materials or liquids such as gasoline, paint thinner or solvents in your home. Recycle your old newspapers; they become a fire hazard if you let them accumulate.

The most common causes of fire are:

1. Smoking in bed
2. Fires on a stove
3. Disposal of lighted cigarette ashes in the garbage

Make sure you know the fire safety plan in your building.

It is a good idea to practice your evacuation plan with friends and family. Have visiting children participate in this important activity.

In Apartments, The fire safety plan tells you the best way to get out of the building. The plan is posted by the entrance doors. Make sure you know where the fire alarms are in the hallways. If you hear the fire alarm, follow your safety plan immediately. Never assume it is a false alarm. Discuss any questions with our staff.

### Exiting the building in an emergency

When the fire alarm system is activated, the elevators return to the ground floor and stop working. You will need to use the stairwell to get out of the building.

Apartment units are designed to contain most fires. If you are unable to evacuate you may choose to stay in your unit. Seal off your units entrance with wet towels. UNLOCK YOUR DOOR to allow emergency responders to help you and call out from a window or balcony. Use a phone to call 911 with your location information.

If you encounter smoke – keep low to the ground .

If the fire is in your unit – leave your unit taking everyone with you. Close all doors where possible. Do not lock the door.

Pull the fire alarm and yell “fire” as you leave the building.

### If you need assistance to leave the building;

Stoney Creek Community Services Corporation will do our best to provide information to fire fighters about who in the building needs assistance to exit because of mobility problems and who might have a medical condition which could increase their need for assistance, for example use of oxygen. If you think you fall into this category, please make sure you notify our Office Staff.

Call **911** as soon as you can when you are a safe distance from danger.



## Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

Your home has a smoke detector on each floor and a carbon monoxide detector near the bedrooms.



**It is always unwise to tamper with a Smoke, CO or Heat Detector and it is a CRIMINAL OFFENSE.**

The Smoke and CO detectors will sound continuously with **3 LONG BEEPS** repeating when smoke or a CO issue is present.

**This is an alarm condition and emergency action is required!**

Smoke and CO detectors at Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc. that are reaching the end of their life will signal 2 times every 30 seconds.

- This is NOT an emergency situation and 911 should **not** be called.
- Contact maintenance at 1-888-777-9320 or submit a Maintenance Request.

*The End of Life signal can be reset a maximum of 10 times for a total of 30 days. After 10 resets the end of life signal can no longer be silenced and the alarm must be replaced immediately.*

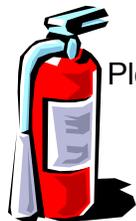
### **SMOKE DETECTOR GENERAL VISUAL AND AUDIBLE INDICATOR OPERATION**

**Red LED Indicator:** The red LED will blink in conjunction with the alarm sound. Therefore, the red LED will blink during a smoke alarm, a low battery mode chirp, a unit error mode chirp or at end of unit life.

**Fault Mode Indicator:** These alarms monitor strategic functions of internal electronics. If a problem is detected the alarm will enter a fault mode. If this occurs the alarm will produce a single “chirp” approximately every 30 seconds and blink the Red LED 2-12 times.

**End of Unit Life Indicator:** Ten years after initial power-up, this unit will “chirp” twice every 30 seconds to indicate that it is time to replace the alarm. This alarm has End of Life Hush® which allows you to silence the trouble chirp for three days giving you extra time to replace the unit at a more convenient time. To activate, press the Test/Hush button. The End of Life signal can be reset a maximum of 10 times for a total of 30 days. After 10 resets the end of life signal can no longer be silenced and the alarm must be replaced immediately.

While in the End of Life Hush® mode, the alarm will still detect smoke.



Please call MAINTENANCE 1-888-777-9320 and report any fault immediately.

## **NUISANCE ALARMS**

This Smoke alarm is designed to minimize nuisance alarms. Cigarette smoke will not normally cause the unit to alarm, unless the smoke is blown directly into the alarm. Combustion particles from cooking may set off the alarm if it is located too close to a cooking appliance. Large quantities of combustible particles are generated from spills or when broiling. Using the fan on a range hood which vents to the outside (non-recirculating type) will also help remove these combustible products from the kitchen. If the alarm does sound the smoke alarm pattern of 3 long beeps, check for fires first. If a fire is discovered, get out and call the fire department. If no fire is present, check to see if one of the reasons listed in "Locations to avoid" may have caused the alarm.

**Some Units have SMART HUSH™ CONTROL:** The SMART HUSH™ feature has the capability of temporarily desensitizing the alarm circuit for approximately 10 minutes. This feature is to be used only when a known alarm condition, such as smoke from cooking, activates the alarm. The smoke alarm is desensitized by pushing the Test/Hush button on the smoke alarm cover. If the smoke is not too dense, the alarm will silence immediately and the red LED blinks every 10 seconds. This indicates that the alarm is in a temporarily desensitized condition.

**In case of fire, call 911 immediately.**



# Repairs



For all maintenance requests, other than emergencies, please fill out our maintenance request form (available in the Laundry Room) and deposit in the main floor office mailbox across from where you pick up your personal mail. You may also complete a maintenance request on the web at

**[www.communityhomes.ca](http://www.communityhomes.ca)**

We take our responsibility for doing repairs and maintenance very seriously. If we are not able to make the repair within three working days we will contact you and explain why. Delays may occur if we have to call in a contractor, or if the supplies we need are not in stock.

Please report water stains that appear on the walls and ceiling.

There is no charge for repair due to normal wear and tear. **However, any damage you, your visitors or your children cause will be charged to you.** This includes refrigerator parts such as bottle bars or butter dishes, broken windows or torn screens, and broken light shades. It is unfair to have all tenants pay for damage caused by a few.

The Property or Maintenance Manager is responsible for preparing and authorizing the charge for any repair of damage. If you have any questions about a charged repair, you should discuss them with the Manager.

## Emergency Maintenance

**905-578-0833 or 1-888-777-9320 Prompt “ 5 “**

**Prompt “ 5 “ should only be used in a serious emergency, such as flood, power failure to the whole unit, no heat, or when someone’s safety is at immediate risk.**



## Notice of Entry

We shall give you at least 24 hours notice of the fact that we are coming to do repairs or an inspection of your home, unless it is an emergency situation. All repairs will be done between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. per regulation (exception for emergency repairs.)

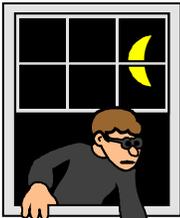
## Annual/Semi-Annual Inspections

We inspect all our units a minimum of once each year. From the inspection reports we work out our maintenance plans for the next year and prepare our annual maintenance budget. We shall send out notices of the inspection schedule before we come into your unit.

# Security

These hints will help you keep your home secure:

1. Lock your doors and windows when you are out. A good lock for a sliding door or window is a broom handle or other piece of wood fitted into the bottom rail.
2. Attach a lamp to a timer to go on when you are out in the evenings.
3. Tell the post office and newspaper carrier if you are going to be away, or arrange for a neighbour or friend to pick up your mail and any flyers.



## Vandalism

If you see anyone damaging Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc property, or any others property, you should phone the police right away and notify the office. Increased costs often mean increased rents.

## Mischief

Please remember that children must not play in roadways or parking areas. Children should not ride toys or bikes in the hallways. Scratches are costly to repair and skid marks cannot be removed from flooring. You are legally responsible for any damage caused by your visitors, visitor's children, or their guests.

# About Paying Your Rent

## Types of Rent

There are two types of rent in Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc.. Some tenants pay a rent-geared-to-income, also called RGI. Some tenants pay a conventional market rent.



### **Rent-geared-to-income**

Rent-geared-to-income (RGI) is subsidized rent. A tenant paying rent-geared-to-income will pay rent equal to about 30% of the combined income of everyone living in the home, plus some utilities and additional charges such as parking. The funding government departments set the rules for how RGI is calculated.

#### RGI Rent Increases and Decreases

If you are paying rent-geared-to-income, your rent will change when your income changes. This may be more frequently than once a year. We do a review of your income at least once each year. We shall ask you to provide updated proof of income. However, you must let us know immediately if there is any change in your income or as a result of death, marriage (including common-law) and separation or divorce. These changes can affect your rent.

New government rules, under the *Housing Services Act 2011*, require all RGI tenants to report any change in household income or household size to the Property Manager within a specified number of days (usually 10 business days). If a RGI family fails to report within the designated time period, they may lose their eligibility for rent-geared-to-income. This means that they will have to begin paying the full market rent with no option of returning to RGI rent status.

You will receive at least 30 days notice of a rent increase resulting from an increase in your household income.

If you have any questions about how your rent is calculated, or what proof of income is required, please check the attachment to your lease, or speak to someone in Tenant Services at the office.

### **Market Rent**

Market rent is close to the same amount of rent you would pay for your unit if a private landlord owned it. Even this amount of rent does not pay for all the costs of running your unit and paying your unit's share of the costs.

### **Market Rent Increases**

Market rents are changed once a year. Since STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC. is a non-profit corporation, and the amount of government money we receive is fixed, cost increases are often covered by increased rents. This is why it is important that tenants be concerned about reducing energy consumption, reporting damage to the property and maintenance requests promptly, and anything else that helps keep costs down. Rent at Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc is not controlled by rent control guidelines but is approved by *Social Housing Regulation*.

### **Applying for Rent Subsidy**

If you are paying market rent now and your income decreases, you may wish to apply for rent subsidy assistance. This is administered by City of Hamilton Housing through the wait list. The waiting list is administered by a government body outside of our influence

### **When to Pay**

Please remember that your rent must be paid by the first day of every month.

### **How to Pay**

You may pay your rent by personal cheque, money order or Debit Card.

Debit Machine transactions are available at our office, and portable units are carried by the Tenant Services Staff. Cash is only accepted in person, and only when paid to our Tenant Services Staff. When paying cash you will always be issued a receipt and we ask you to keep that receipt for tax purposes. We are also happy to accept post-dated cheques. We will hold your cheques and deposit them on the first day of each month. Please make your cheque payable to: STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC. and print your name, address and apartment number on the front.

### **The most convenient method of rent payment is Automatic Withdrawal**

Please speak to our office staff if you are interested in automatic withdrawal of rent from your bank account each month, or if you want to pay your rent by debit card.

For after hours drop off, use site mail drop located in the main lobby marked as OFFICE MAIL.

## **No Rent Reminder Notices**

Because of the high cost of processing and delivering rent reminder notices to tenants who do not pay their rent on time, we will not be sending reminder notices anymore.

If you do not pay your rent by the first day of the month, you will receive a Notice of Termination of Tenancy.

If you always pay your rent on time, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your consideration. If you wish to discuss your rent, please call our office.

***If you cannot pay your rent, you should contact the Property Manager before you miss the payment.***





## Energy Saving Tips

- lower your thermostat to 16 C at night and when you are not at home
- use a microwave oven, toaster oven or slow cooker to cook small portions
- remember it takes only 10 minutes for your stove oven to reach 350° F
- consider switching to energy efficient fluorescent bulbs
- turn off all lights when they are not needed
- ask your maintenance staff about energy efficient shower heads
- use an electric kettle or coffee maker instead of a stove-top burner
- wash your clothes in warm or cold water and rinse in cold; wait until you have a full load or use the small loads setting (if available) on the washing machine
- report any broken windows
- report dripping taps and running toilets

If you have condensation problems (water running down your window on cold days):

- vent moisture out of your home using the bathroom or kitchen fan;
- keep the window open a crack
- buy a dehumidifier
- make sure to vent the bathroom with the fan when you shower.

If the problem is uncontrollable, please call for maintenance.



# IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE



**Window screens will not hold any weight. They are not designed to hold any pressure.**

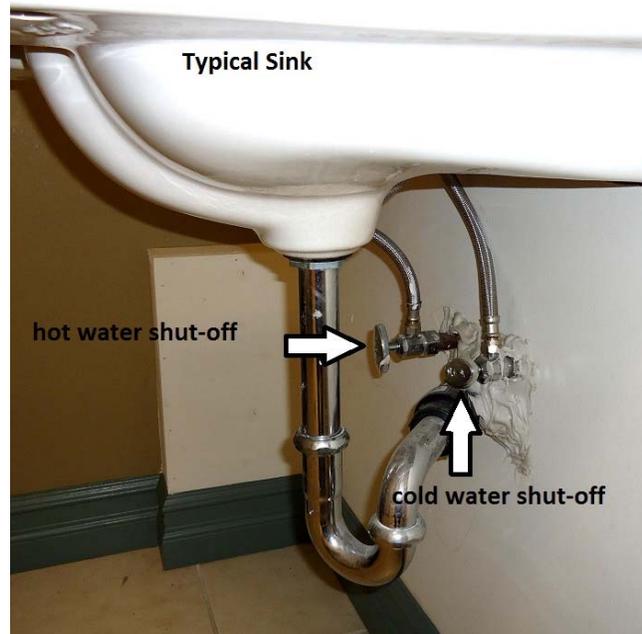
***When leaned on, window screens may come loose causing potential injury.***

All windows above 1<sup>st</sup> floor should have window opening restrictors that prevent the window from opening more than 4 inches (100mm).

***Please contact the office immediately if the window restrictors are not in place.***

## Water Leaks

Underneath each sink there should be two valves - one for the hot water, and one for the cold water.



In case of toilet overflow, shut off water at the bottom of the toilet tank.

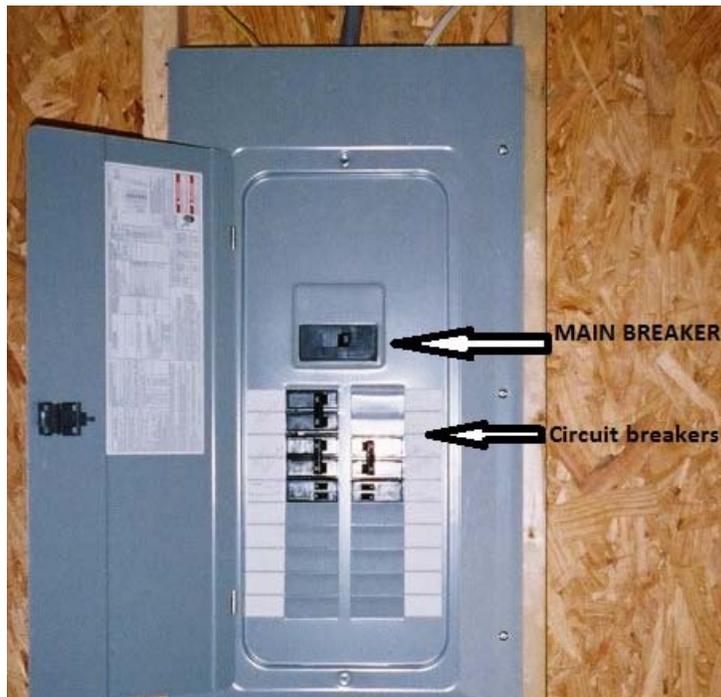


## Electrical Issues

How to Reset a Circuit Breaker. If a circuit is overloaded or it shorts, the breaker will trip and cut off electricity to prevent fire and/or electrocution.

Follow these steps to turn the power back on.

1. Turn off the light switches and unplug appliances in the room that has lost power.
2. Find your circuit breaker box and open the cover.
3. Locate the tripped breaker. Circuit breakers are small, usually horizontal switches labelled by the areas of the house they serve (for example, "kitchen," "bathroom" and so on). The tripped circuit breaker will be in the "off" position or in a middle position between "on" and "off."
4. Reset the breaker by moving it to the full "off" position and then back to "on." That may clear an overload and return power to the room. If the breaker re-trips, you may have too many lamps and appliances plugged into the circuit; a damaged cord or plug; a short circuit in a receptacle, switch or fixture; or faulty wiring.
5. Identify and correct the malfunction before resetting the breaker.



## **Non-Profit Housing and the Residential Tenancies Act**

There are several protections under the *Residential Tenancies Act* if you are a market rent tenant:

### **Rent Increases**

The rent cannot be increased more than once every twelve months, and you will receive 90 days notice of a rent increase.

### **Interest on last month's rent on deposit**

If you have provided last month's rent it will earn interest each year equivalent to the Consumer Price Index. This interest rate is published each August by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Rather than give you a cheque at the end of the year, we will add this interest to your deposit account to cover any increase in rent for the upcoming year.

### **Subletting and assigning your unit**

Your tenancy agreement does not permit you to sublet or assign your unit to anyone else, even for a short period of time.

### **Abandonment of property**

If you move out and leave some of your property behind, we have the right to dispose of that property, without consulting you about it. However, we cannot seize your property to pay for rent arrears if you get behind in your rent.



### **Eviction**

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, you can be evicted if you:

- do not pay your rent
- frequently pay the rent late
- cause serious damage to your unit or the building
- make noise or act in a way that seriously bothers any other tenant or the landlord
- have more people living in the unit than health, safety or housing standards allow
- threaten the safety of another tenant
- break the law anywhere in the building or on STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC. property
- no longer qualify for rent-geared-to-income housing.
- misrepresent your income or household size if you are paying rent-geared-to-income

## **Right to make applications against Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc.**

Under the Residential Tenancies Act, a tenant can make applications against the landlord for problems such as:

- Inadequate maintenance
- Illegal charges
- Harassment

### **Landlord and Tenant Board**

The Landlord and Tenant Board make decisions about landlord and tenant disputes. We cannot terminate your tenancy without getting an order from the Landlord and Tenant Board. You are entitled to attend a hearing with the Board before a decision to evict you is made. You can get information from the Board about your rights by calling 1-888-332-3234.

### **The Human Rights Code**

The Human Rights Code says that landlords, people working for landlords, and fellow tenants cannot harass the residents or staff of a building. This is the law. Harassment can be based on race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religious beliefs, political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, physical and mental disability, or the receipt of social assistance.

Harassment means repeated actions or words that embarrass or humiliate a person. This includes insults, name-calling, racial graffiti, sexual remarks, etc. Grabbing, pushing or hitting are forms of assault, and only need to happen once for legal action to be taken.

### **Housing Services Act 2011**

The Housing Services Act (HSA) has many rules for tenants paying geared-to-income rent (RGI).

There are rules on applying for and being eligible for RGI housing and rules for calculating the RGI rent. The local municipality has also decided on some additional rules. Please speak to your Property Manager if you have questions about these rules.

**Occupancy Standards** There are rules about the size of unit you qualify for if you receive a rent subsidy. Property Standards Hamilton Bylaw dictates the occupancy of Market Rent Units.

## **Guest Policy**

One requirement under the HSA is that all social housing providers have a policy on short-term occupants of an RGI unit. This policy must be available to the tenants so that everything is very clear. Ask in the office for a copy of the STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC. policy. Failure to abide by the terms of the Guest Policy may result in a loss of eligibility for RGI rent.

## **Review of Decision**

The HSA requires housing providers to inform tenants that they have a right to a review of any RGI rent decision or unit transfer decision that affects them. Persons other than the original decision makers must conduct this review. To obtain a review, an application must be made in writing and it must be done within the specific timelines. See the office for details on this policy.  
Privacy, Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

The HSA imposes many controls on the collection, use, storage and disposition of any personal information on applicants or tenants of non-profit housing. For example, only necessary information can be collected; and no personal information can be shared with anyone, without permission, unless it is necessary for law enforcement proceedings, or on compelling health (to facilitate health or safety) or compassionate grounds (to contact next of kin or a friend who is injured, ill or deceased). Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc must safeguard all personal information in the files and must shred it when disposing of it. You have the right to see all personal information in your file and you have the right to request a correction of any errors or to have additional clarifying information added to the file.

Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc has a Confidentiality Policy that defines “personal information” and describes how we collect, protect, use and dispose of this information. Staff and volunteers with access to personal information must sign a Confidentiality Agreement that commits them to the proper use of any such information.

***A copy of this policy is available in the office on request.***



## **Our policy on harassment**

If you are harassed by Staff Members you should do something about it. First, if possible, you should tell the offender to stop. If you cannot confront the person who is harassing you, report the harassment to your Property Management office, or to the Board of Directors of STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC. Do so in writing, if you can, and keep a copy for yourself. Write down every incident, including the place, date and time the harassment took place, and details of the harassment.

When we receive a harassment complaint, Stoney Creek Services Corporation will make every effort to correct it. You also have the option of taking your complaint to the Human Rights Commission or a lawyer at any time. STONEY CREEK COMMUNITY HOMES INC will tell you immediately if it sends your complaint to the Human Rights Commission.

## **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence and abuse are criminal offences. If you witness abuse, if you think a neighbour is being abused, or if you are being abused yourself, call the police! If you are being abused in your home and you are paying rent geared to income, you will be given priority for a transfer to other non-profit housing if you apply to the local access centre. You can get information and assistance for the local shelter or from the assaulted women's help line at 416-863-0511, 416-863-7868 (TTY), toll free outside of Toronto at 1-866-863-0511, 1-866-863-7868 (TTY), and #7233 (#SAFE) from a Bell Mobility phone. Hamilton Crisis Line is 905-525-4162



## **Our Drug Free Housing Strategy**

Stoney Creek Services Corporation is committed to creating and maintaining a high quality of life within the buildings we manage. This means taking a hard stand against drug use and drug trafficking. We work closely with the police to keep drug use and trafficking out of our buildings.

Neither we nor the police can control illegal drug activity without your help. You can assist in the campaign against the illegal drug trade by reporting any information concerning drugs by calling Crime Stoppers 519-750-8477 . When calling this service you do not need to identify yourself and the confidentiality of any information you supply is guaranteed. Residents found directly involved in illegal drug activity, or permitting illegal activity to occur in their homes, will face immediate eviction proceedings.

## **Our Code of Conduct**

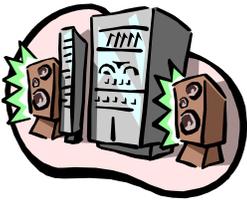
We have a code of conduct for staff to help ensure high standards of service and conduct. We are committed to the full practice of ***Mutual Respect***.

Staff may not:

- accept tips, money, or gifts from tenants
- sell items or services to tenants
- buy or take property or personal belongings from tenants, their families, or their estates; nor use it for personal gain
- accept gifts or other items from tenants in return for service
- accept payment for service during or after work hours
- borrow money or anything else from tenants
- witness a will, oath, or affidavit for a tenant, or act as the executor of a tenant's will
- be on the job in an unfit condition due to using alcohol or drugs
- abuse tenants, staff members, service agency representatives or anyone else in the work place, either verbally or physically.

## **Privacy - Noise Transmission**

Residents are reminded to respect your neighbours' right to privacy and enjoyment of their homes by keeping noise at a low level. Excessive noise is contrary to the terms of your tenancy agreement.



If you are faced with what you feel is an unreasonable noise situation, discuss the matter with our Tenant Services Staff. Keep a written record of the time and nature of the disturbances. Continued problems should be directed to the attention of the Property Manager in writing. This may result in investigation and action to remedy the problem. Excessive noise is a cause for eviction, if there have been repeated offences.

## **If you have a complaint**

All complaints must be sent to us in writing. This includes complaints about other tenants and Stoney Creek Services Corporation staff. If you have a complaint about a repair that has been done in your home, please fill out a work order form and return it to the Management Office. These forms are available in our office. All written complaints will be followed up.

## **Transfers**

If you would like to move to another unit or another building you must apply to the City of Hamilton Housing wait list, keep in mind that you will be placed on a waiting list according to Hamilton transfer policy.

Some people may have special priority for transfer:

- tenants living in a unit too large under RGI rules
- tenants who must move because they need a wheel-chair accessible or other type of unit in order to continue to live independently
- if a tenant's life is in danger where they are living now (due to violence or abuse, for example).



## **Housekeeping**

It is Stoney Creek Community Homes Inc responsibility to maintain the buildings and keep them safe and secure. It is your responsibility to keep the inside of your home clean and safe. Most tenants take pride in their homes and make an effort to keep common areas and grounds clean and tidy too.

## **Appliances**

Regular cleaning will keep your refrigerator in good shape and save energy. When cleaning the smooth surfaces of your appliances, use a mild soapy solution. A paste made of baking soda and water is good for cleaning off grease and dirt. Do not use rough cleansers because these will damage the surface of the appliance. Use a commercial oven cleaner for your oven.

## **Bathrooms**

Please do not use rough cleansers like Old Dutch, or Comet, on bathtubs, sinks and toilets. They scratch the surface and make them harder to keep clean. A good liquid or paste cleanser will prevent mildew from forming on tiles and porcelain.

## **Pests**

If you see cockroaches or other pests, such as mice, please call the maintenance department immediately. Keeping your home clean is the best defence and will help keep pests away.



## **BedBugs**

Bedbugs are not a reflection on cleanliness or housekeeping. Bedbugs can hitch a ride on any fabric and infest your home quickly. Used furniture should be avoided. Overnight vacations or stays out of country can bring bedbugs into your unit from clothes and luggage. Bedbugs are hard to get rid of. Start by washing all of your bedding and vacuuming your mattress, paying attention to the seams and indents where bugs may be hiding. High heat in the dryer will eliminate bed bugs in linens and clothes. Immediate store your clothes in plastic bags until you wash and dry clothing when returning from overnight or vacation stays.

**Contact our Office immediately if you suspect you have Bed Bugs.**



### **Taking out the garbage**

Garbage must be placed in bags before being placed in the garbage chute. Medical waste must never be put down the garbage chute. Sharps, needles or hazardous items must be disposed properly by the tenant. Please do not expose your neighbours or our employees to a health risk.

### **Recycling**



As a convenience to Tenants, blue bin totes have been made available in the basement recycling area. All recycling must be sorted correctly. Excess recycling must be bundled correctly. Cardboard must be broken down and fastened. This service is dependent on all tenants abiding by the recycling guidelines. Please respect all tenants and use this service appropriately.

### **Bulk Items**

Tenants must arrange for pickup of bulk items. When you have furniture or large items are delivered, make arrangements to have the old removed. Bulk Items left on the site may result in the Tenant being charged a handling fee of \$100.00 per item.

### **Charges for Extra Handling**

Tenants may be assigned charges for any abuse of waste disposal privileges.

### **Bathroom exhaust fans**

Please turn the bathroom exhaust fan on when you shower. The moisture from the shower can cause mildew and damage to your drywall if it is not vented.



### **Light bulbs**

Supplying and changing light bulbs in your unit is your responsibility. However, if you have a physical disability that prevents you from changing the bulbs and cannot find a friend or relative to do this for you, please contact the maintenance department when you need assistance.

***ANY and ALL modifications, adjustments to the agreement, alteration requests, paint colour changes, appliance issues, etc. must be documented in writing. Any verbal representation, by any staff, will not be valid until written permission is obtained from the landlord. Alteration Request Forms are available from our staff.***

## **Life Cycle Replacements**

Equipment, paint and flooring replacement schedules are determined from the annual unit inspections and work order condition reports. Each year the management will determine the schedule of replacements and renovations based on a number of factors.

## **When you decide to move out**

### **60 days notice**

When you decide to move out, you must give at least sixty days notice with your last day falling on the last day of the month.

### **Notice in writing**

To give notice, you should use Form N9, Tenant's Notice To Terminate the Tenancy. The Office will supply one to you on request

When we receive your notice to vacate, we will send an inspection form to you 30 Days in advance. Our staff will inspect the unit so that you will have an opportunity to repair and clean accordingly. At the end of your tenancy a final inspection will take place on your move out day. Any items that are in an unsatisfactory state of cleaning or repair a charge will be added to your account as outlined on the inspection form.

If you have questions about the items to be cleaned, or the charges, please contact the Maintenance Department in advance of your moving out.



## Cleaning Tips

Not everyone gets a "Martha Stewart" for a mother to teach them all the tricks to making a "place" feel like "home". Hopefully, this short list of tips will fill in any gaps you might be missing.



### Toilets

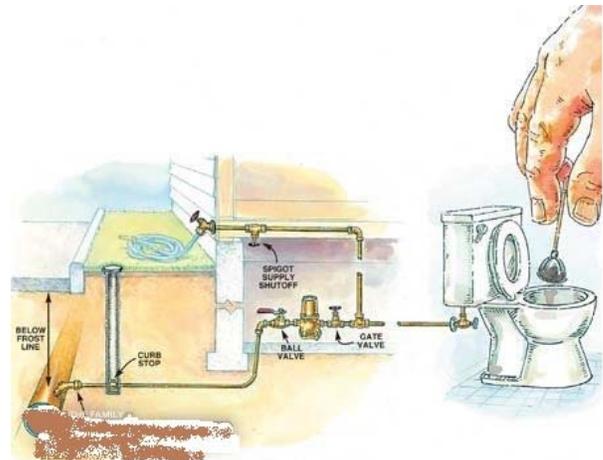
Toilet can get very nasty if left to care for themselves. Make it an easy cleaning chore by buying the right tools. There are 2 tools every toilet should have nearby, one is a plunger. A plugged toilet is usually easily unplugged in about 30 seconds, just by plunging it. The second must have tool is a toilet brush. If used somewhat regularly your toilet will always be sparkling, with minimal effort. Plugged Toilets are generally the responsibility of the tenant

### Plunging

When plunging place plunger gently into the toilet till it rests on the drain hole, once in position push quickly and firmly then let plunger regain shape by lifting slightly.

Do this 3 or 4 times then uncover hole to see if your plunging was successful, if successful the toilet will flush itself. If it doesn't work try being a little more aggressive.

If that doesn't work, please contact the Main Office. If you have a second toilet available, let the ON-CALL service know that it is not an emergency.



### Is mold forming around your bathtub?

If you catch mold soon enough, bleach will easily get rid of it. If it's not coming off with a quick scrub you can soak some paper towels, leave them on the problem areas for awhile and take them off later. Cleaning your bathtub regularly before mold even has a chance to grow is the best way to avoid this problem completely.

### Odours in the Fridge?

Putting an open box of baking soda in the fridge will help absorb bad food odors. Also keeping your fridge clean, and emptying old food will help.

## **Stoves**

Ovens can be cleaned quite easily with a strong oven cleaner. All that baked on burnt food just melts away.

## **Sinks**

Please do not pour grease down the sink. It coats the inside of the pipe and eventually plugs it up completely. Metal coffee cans make good alternate storage for grease. Hair and coffee grounds can also be death to a drain system. Tenants may be charged for plugged drains.

## **Laundry**

Develop a system for your laundry, knowing where to put dirty, clean, and "waiting to be folded" cloths, will keep your floors and tables clean. When using your dryer clean out the lint tray before each load. This will save electricity and help prevent fires from starting.

When loading your washer do not load it to full, put clothes in untangled and evenly spread around the edges. This will help it not to rattle and shake.

## **Windows and blinds**

While cleaning your windows and blinds, speak to your children about window safety and proper window screen and blind usage. Window screens will not hold any weight. They are not designed to hold under pressure

***When leaned on, window screens may come loose causing potential injury.***

All windows above 1<sup>st</sup> floor should have window opening restrictors that prevent the window from opening more than 4 inches (100mm).

***Please contact the office immediately if the window restrictors are not in place.***

Children should not play with window blinds as cords from blinds can cause choking. Plus, they are easily bent with little fingers.

***\*A good cheap cleaner for most hard surfaces is vinegar and water it's cheap and it's not a harmful chemical.***

