

Community News

Produced for Housing York
Tenants by the Community and
Health Services Department



SPRING/SUMMER 2011

Welcome Thornhill Green

Thornhill Green Co-operative Homes Inc. (Thornhill Green) is a mature community of townhouses located near Royal Orchard Boulevard and Yonge Street in Markham, close to the Highway 407 connection.

Originally a privately owned rental property, this large social housing community has operated as a Cooperative Corporation since 1993. In 2011, ownership of Thornhill Green was transferred to Housing York.

A meeting was held with residents in January to introduce the new property management team, to share information, and to provide opportunities for questions and feedback.

Thornhill Green features:

- 101 townhouses situated on 6.4 acres of land
- Three-bedroom and four-bedroom homes
- Built in 1966
- Mix of subsidized and market rent units
- Family and senior tenants

At the meeting, staff confirmed Housing York’s commitment to well-maintained and safe homes for all Thornhill Green residents.

“We want residents to continue to enjoy their homes as they have in the past. Addressing urgent repairs, planning for future renovation projects and building positive relations are our focus. We look forward to working together over the months ahead to make the transition a success.” Doug Manson, Director of Housing York.

Please join Housing York in welcoming the Thornhill Green community.



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Tenant Insurance Offers Protection, Peace of Mind

Nick Savino, Manager, Operations, Housing York

If you followed the news coverage of the large apartment fire that occurred in downtown Toronto late in 2010, you will have heard that many tenants still have not returned home. This reminds us of the impact of a fire of this magnitude and the importance of being prepared for an emergency.

Housing York has also experienced fires and floods within its communities over the years. Tenants often believe that the landlord's insurance will look after the entire loss, including tenant's belongings. Unfortunately, this is not the case. When unforeseen accidents and problems arise, items such as furniture, clothing and emergency accommodations become the tenant's responsibility. Without insurance, tenants must depend on family, friends or local charities for a place to stay, to supply living essentials and to replace belongings.

Tenant insurance generally costs about 40 cents a day or \$13 a month to protect you and your family in the case of fire, water damage or theft. We encourage you to consider tenant insurance. There are many insurance options and providers, including SoHo Insurance, a group insurance plan designed for tenants of social housing.

If you are interested in receiving information about the group insurance plan for tenants of social housing, call SoHo Insurance at 1-866-440-2492 or visit www.sohoinsurance.ca.

Staff Announcement

Welcome Cristian Cupen, CGA

Housing York is pleased to announce the appointment of Cristian Cupen as Finance Program Manager.

Cristian brings several years of financial management experience to the housing team. He has a Bachelor of Commerce and a Certified General Accountant designation.



NOTABLE 2011 DATES

Friday, April 22, 2011
Good Friday

Monday, April 25, 2011
Easter Monday

Monday, May 23, 2011
Victoria Day

Friday, July 1, 2011
Canada Day

Monday, August 1,
2011
Civic Day

Monday,
September 5, 2011
Labour Day

REMINDERS

- The Housing York office is closed on statutory holidays.
- Worldwide celebrations for Earth Hour take place on Saturday, March 26, 2011. Tenants can take action against climate change by turning off lights at home from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- Earth Day 2011 is on Friday, April 22. Show your support by joining a community clean-up day or taking a walk in York Regional Forest.

Building Improvements

Kevin McCann, Manager, Technical Services Housing & Long Term Care

Every year, Housing York sets aside funds to perform major work on its buildings. This ensures that buildings continue to be well maintained, keep up with changing codes and regulations and use less energy.

In 2010, the federal and provincial governments provided some additional capital funding to social housing providers in an effort to stimulate the economy. The extra funding allowed us to undertake additional jobs that may otherwise have waited for several years to complete.

Staff members strived to keep everyone informed and to minimize the inconvenience brought on by major work but sometimes issues arose that could not be avoided. We would like to thank all tenants for their patience and understanding during the course of the work that took place.

In 2011, we will be returning to a regular schedule of renovation and repairs. A list of the work planned for your building will be posted in the weeks ahead.



Annual Unit Inspections

Anne Aqui, Property Manager

Every year Housing York completes an annual unit inspection at your home. Why do we do these inspections?

- To make sure safety standards are met. We test your smoke detector, check that window restrictive devices are in place, test your GFI (ground fault interrupter) outlet and make sure your door closure is working properly.
- To review the overall wear and tear of your home including the condition of the flooring, drywall and plumbing.
- To identify any accidental damage, such as burn marks or holes in drywall.

You can help us out in keeping your home safe and in good condition – don't wait for the annual unit inspection to report maintenance concerns. Fill out a maintenance request form whenever you notice something that needs fixing. If you have an urgent repair such as a faulty smoke detector, fill out a maintenance request form and then call us immediately for the repair.

211

New helpline launches in York Region

211 is a three-digit phone number, 2-1-1, and website, www.211ontario.ca, that provides personalized information about community, social, health and government services in your community.

The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for free and confidential information about community programs and services. 211 is also available in 170 languages.





CHATS
Community
Home Assistance
To Seniors

CHATS offers wellness and chronic disease self-management at Evergreen Terrace, Dunlop Pines and Maplewood Place in Richmond Hill

CHATS – Community & Home Assistance to Seniors is holding workshops at the Dunlop Apartments to provide residents with valuable information about managing chronic conditions. Health education and exercise programs are being delivered based on needs assessments conducted with residents. Currently, 50 residents use the assisted living program and 34 are enrolled in the weekly exercise groups.

Benefits to healthy aging include:

- Sense of well-being and confidence
- Less likely to fall and sustain injuries
- Gain knowledge about managing chronic conditions
- Less frequent visits to the emergency department
- Less isolation

Residents continue to report high levels of satisfaction with the exercise programs. The last reports confirmed that residents attend an average of twice per week. Depending on the level of prescribed activity, residents enjoy a variety of exercises to help with balance, strength resistance and maintenance. Upon reassessment, the last reports indicated that 73 per cent of residents who attended weekly sessions had improved overall levels of physical functioning.

For more information call CHATS at 1-877-452-4287 or visit www.chats.on.ca.

A Voice for All Tenants ~ Housing York Tenant Reference Group

Housing York established the Tenant Reference Group in 2009, recognizing that its services could improve with the advice received from tenants.

The Tenant Reference Group has representatives from Housing York communities across York Region. The group meets with staff members throughout the year to review services, policies and practices that will affect all tenants.

These past months, members have shared experiences and provided valuable input into tenant communications, maintenance and repair services, energy management, as well as future plans and new developments.



Pictured in the front row: Kristine Carbis, Edward Davis and Terri O'Reilly; Back row: Tom Pearson, Fran Davis and Thelma Lam.

Getting Organized this Spring

Carmela Volkmann, Social Worker, Housing and Long Term Care



Spring is in the air and with it comes the task of annual spring cleaning. Spring cleaning is a tradition that allows us to refresh our homes and get a head start on the active spring and summer seasons. Here are some tips in reducing all the extra “stuff” that may be piling up in the corners of your rooms and closets.

Find four boxes and label them as follows:

- 1. Trash/Recycling** - This box should include any items that you do not need and that you cannot sell or donate. Damaged and broken items should be included as well as junk mail, newspapers and old magazines.
- 2. Give Away/Sell** - Be generous with this box. Think about the uses someone else might get out of the items. Consider the financial benefits of selling your items.
- 3. Storage** - Put items in storage that you cannot throw out and do not need on a regular basis. A good way to clean out closets is to store out of season clothing. Storing larger items with friends or family also helps to keep your space clutter free.
- 4. Keep** - This should be your smallest box. These are items that you use regularly so they need to be on hand. Continually review these items to see if you really need them.

Work slowly from room to room, sorting items into the appropriate boxes.

When doing this task, please check that:

- Electrical outlets are free and clear of items
- Extension cords do not create a trip hazard
- Flammable items are not stored near heating and cooking devices
- There is a clear path to the fuse panel box
- Traffic areas are clear for safety reasons and there is access to exits at all times

If you find this task overwhelming or you need some support through this process, please contact me for help. Carmela at 1-877-464-9675 Ext. 2729.

milestones

These buildings are turning 40 in 2011:

- Fairy Lake Gardens (468), Newmarket
- Orchard Heights (55), Aurora
- Dunlop Pines (78), Richmond Hill
- 275 Woodbridge Avenue, Woodbridge



Energy Management Program Highlights

- Housing York has achieved a 20 per cent reduction in overall energy consumption and related green house gas emissions in just three years.
- The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association presented Housing York with the 2010 Going Green Award.
- Tom Taylor Place and Leeder Place received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the Canada Green Building Council.
- Five buildings will undergo major energy retrofits in 2011: Brayfield Manors, Fairly Lake Gardens (474), Keswick Gardens, Kingview Court, and Nobleview Pines.
- Solar walls will be installed at Evergreen Terrace, Fairy Lake Gardens (474) and Keswick Gardens. A solar hot water system will be installed at Rose Town.

Thank you to all tenants for making this important work possible!

Reminder about cash payments

Putting cash in your site drop box is not recommended. A cheque or money order is a better way to make a payment. If a cash payment is your only option, please bring it to the Housing York office at 1091 Gorham Street, Newmarket during business hours.



Golden Anniversary Celebration

Tenant Spotlight: Gary and Jacqueline Norton

Friday, September 24, 2010 was a day of celebration at Kingview Court. Friends united to express congratulations to Gary and Jacqueline Norton on fifty years of marriage.



Pictured left to right: John Meikle, Anne Williams, Gunter Stelzer, Edna MacKenzie, Fran Millard, Jenifer Merritt, Sharon Ireland, Cliff Kettlewell, Ruth Craig, Gary Sloan, Jacqueline and Gary Norton

Recycling Organics and Electronics to Help the Environment

Rose Town was one of the first apartment buildings to pilot the Town of Richmond Hill's Green Bin Program. The Green Bin Program turns organic waste into compost. It's part of the town's commitment to divert 65 per cent of waste from landfill.

Collecting organics is now an ongoing activity at Rose Town. The success of the pilot led to the launch of the Green Bin program at all high rise buildings in Richmond Hill, including three more Housing York buildings: Dunlop Pines, Evergreen Terrace and Maplewood Place.

Electronic waste collection will also get underway in 2011. The Town of Richmond Hill's E-waste program uses red bins to collect unwanted televisions, computers, stereos, speakers and other electronics for recycling into new items.



Pictured: Collette Valliear, Housing York Property Manager and Glenn Phenix, Town of Richmond Curbside Advisor introduce the Green Bin Program at Dunlop Pines.

Artist Brightens Kingview Court

Tenant Spotlight: Ruth Craig

At the suggestion of her son, Ruth Craig bought her first canvas and joined a group of local artists. Ruth painted with the same group for more than twenty years. Her inspiration reaches across all themes ranging from vibrant flowers and landscapes to captivating nautical and agricultural scenes.



Tenants and visitors to Ruth's building take pleasure in the artwork displayed. Ruth also enjoys exhibiting her paintings at local art shows. In September, Ruth won three prizes. She has donated one of winning pieces to the Kingview Court expansion opening later this year. Her tip for anyone who is drawn to painting, "just give it a try!" she says.

Property Managers and Tenant Services Coordinators

Office: 905-898-1007 or 1-877-464-9675 ext. 2700

Property Manager: Anne-Marie Cheung ext. 2701

Tenant Services Coordinator: Leanna Graham ext. 2714

- Armitage Gardens, Newmarket
- Brayfield Manors, Newmarket
- Elmwood Gardens, Whitchurch-Stouffville
- Fairy Lake Gardens, Newmarket
- Founders Place, Newmarket
- Oxford Village, Holland Landing

Property Manager: Anne AQUI, ext. 2762

Tenant Services Coordinators: Christina Bonham ext. 2705, Leanna Graham ext. 2714

- Hadley Grange, Aurora
- Heritage East, Newmarket
- Orchard Heights, Aurora
- Tom Taylor Place, Newmarket

Property Manager: Angela Lippensky ext. 2718

Tenant Services Coordinator: Christina Bonham ext. 2705

- Blue Willow Terrace, Vaughan
- Kingview Court, King City
- Mulock Village, Newmarket
- Nobleview Pines, Nobleton
- Springbook Gardens, Richmond Hill
- Woodbridge Lane, Vaughan
- 275 Woodbridge Ave, Woodbridge

Property Manager: Collette Valliear ext. 2725

Tenant Services Coordinator: Savitri Singh ext. 2706

- Dunlop Pines, Richmond Hill
- Evergreen Terrace, Richmond Hill
- Maplewood Place, Richmond Hill
- Rose Town, Richmond Hill
- Thornhill Green, Markham
- Trinity Square, Markham

Property Manager: Kerri Klywak ext. 2717

Tenant Services Coordinators: Savitri Singh ext. 2706, Christina Bonham ext. 2705

- East Court, Sutton
- Glenwood Mews, Keswick
- Keswick Gardens, Keswick
- Northview Court, Sutton
- Pineview Terrace, Keswick

**Community News
is your newsletter.
Send us your news,
stories and photos.**

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