



The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act



All Manitobans have the right to live in safe neighbourhoods, free from illegal activity that threatens their safety. *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* was introduced in 2002 to help protect neighbourhoods.

Members of the Public Safety Investigation Unit enforce this act. Their investigators look into complaints about drugs, booze cans, prostitution activities, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse of a child, possession or storage of unlawful weapons, firearms, explosives and criminal organization offences. For these kinds of things to be dealt with under this act, they must be habitual (happens regularly) and they must cause an adverse (harmful) effect on the neighbourhood.

The investigators act on complaints from the public. All complaints are confidential and the person's name will not be released. After receiving a complaint, investigators begin their work. If there is evidence to proceed, the investigators will contact the owner or landlord of the property where

the problem is happening. If the property is a rental unit, the landlord must sign and serve the tenants with a five-day *Notice to Vacate* order. Investigators monitor the unit until the tenants move out. If the owner of the property or the landlord doesn't co-operate with the order to vacate, he or she is served a *Community Safety* order, which shuts down the property for 90 days.

So far, the Public Safety Investigation Unit has closed down 520 homes where people were using them for criminal activity.

If you suspect that a house or rental unit in your neighbourhood is being used for any illegal activities, call the Public Safety Unit in Winnipeg at 204-945-3475; or toll free at 1-800-954-9361.

To subscribe to Open Doors, order bulk copies, change your mailing address, give us your comments, or get more information, call 945-2476 in Winnipeg, toll free 1-800-782-8403 or visit manitoba.ca/rtb.

Spring Cleaning 101



Spring is here and for many, the urge to start spring-cleaning has hit. Landlords and tenants each have responsibilities for some of this cleaning.

In a residential complex, tenants are responsible for cleaning the:

- inside of windows and tracks
- inside and outside of doors/windows that open onto a balcony
- rental unit

In a residential complex, landlords are responsible for cleaning the:

- outside of windows in a multi-level complex (including the main floors) except for balcony doors and windows
- eaves troughs
- routine yard maintenance in common areas

Cleaning windows once a year is part of a landlord's responsibility in maintaining the appearance of a rental unit.

Tenants in single dwelling one-storey homes are responsible to clean their windows. Often, tenancy agreements have these tenants responsible for the general yard maintenance as well. Tenants in townhouses and duplex/triplexes are often responsible for the routine yard maintenance for their part of the yard. If you are unsure, ask your landlord or look at your tenancy agreement.

Spring and summer is also the start of garage sales and the City of Winnipeg sponsored give-away weekends. Be careful when bringing items into your home from these sources. Always inspect items for signs of bed bugs before you bring them into your rental unit.

If you are unsure of what to look for, visit our website at www.manitoba.ca/rb and read our fact sheets on bed bugs. You can call or email the provincial bed bug hotline at 1-855-3MB-BUGS (1-855-362-2847) or email bedbugs@gov.mb.ca to get more information.

Condominium Information for Tenants

When you move into an apartment, you may think that, as long as you follow the rules, you can stay in the unit for as long as you want. It may be a big surprise to you when you get a notice from your landlord telling you the building is being converted to a condominium or is being sold as a condominium.

What does this mean to you as a tenant?

Some complexes are not registered as a condominium and if the owners or landlords want to register it, they must follow several steps. You, as a tenant, must receive:

- **Notice** of the proposed registration of declaration: This notice is to tell you that your landlord plans to convert the complex to condominiums. You must get this notice six months before the landlord plans to register the complex.

- **Notice** of the registration of declaration: This notice tells you that the landlord has registered the building and about your **right of tenure**. A right of tenure is the length of time a tenant is allowed to live in a unit after it has been converted to a condominium. For example, if you moved into a building on January 1, 2006 and the landlord registered the building as a condominium on January 1, 2012, you would have the right to stay in the unit for at least six more years, after the declaration is registered, until December 31, 2017.

If you have right of tenure, your landlord can't give you notice to move out during your tenure for any reason except cause (ex: not paying rent, damaging the property, etc). If your landlord decides to sell the units in the complex, he/she must give you the chance to buy your unit at the same price that would be charged to sell it to the public.

Sometimes, the complex where you live was registered as a condominium before you moved in, and the landlord should
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tell you this. Your tenancy agreement or Notice to New Tenant form should have a box that is checked if the building is already registered. If the landlord doesn't tell you the building is registered as a condominium before you move in, you get a two-year right of tenure from the date that you find out the building is registered

If you live in a building that was registered as a condominium before you moved in and your landlord decides to sell these units and:

- you are in a fixed term tenancy (ex: one year), you must get three months notice from the landlord to move out if the new owner wants vacant possession of the

unit. This notice must correspond with the end of your tenancy agreement.

- you are in a month-to-month tenancy, you must get notice based on the vacancy rate. For more information on this, call the branch.

However, if the new owners don't ask for vacant possession as part of the purchase agreement, they must:

- rent to the current tenant
- honour all existing terms, benefits and obligations of your existing tenancy agreement
- If you receive a notice to move out, and you are not sure of your rights, call the branch for more information.

Condominium information for landlords

Converting a residential complex to a condominium can be a confusing process. Changes to *The Condominium Act* may affect you when you try to register your complex as a condominium. Outlined below are some things you should know before you start the process.

If the complex you own is not registered as a condominium and you want to register it, you must follow these steps. You must give tenants:

- **Notice** of proposed registration of declaration: This notice tells them that you plan to convert the complex to condominiums. They must get this notice six months before you plan to register the complex.
- **Notice** of registration of declaration: This notice tells them that you have registered the building and about their **right of tenure**.

A **right of tenure** is the length of time a tenant is allowed to live in a unit after it has been converted to a condominium. For example, if the tenant moved into the unit on January 1, 2006 and you registered the building as a condominium on January 1, 2012, the tenant would have the right to stay in the unit for six years after the declaration is registered, until December 31, 2017.

If tenants have right of tenure, you can't give them notice to move out during their tenure for any reason except cause (ex: not paying rent, damaging the property, etc). If you decide to sell the units in the complex, you must offer tenants their units at the same price you would charge to sell it to the public.

If you own a building that was registered as a condominium when it was built and you decide to sell the units:

- You must give tenants in a fixed term tenancy (ex: one year) three months' notice to move out if the new owner wants vacant possession of the unit. This notice must correspond with the end of their tenancy agreement.

- You must give tenants in month-to-month tenancies notice based on the vacancy rate. For more information on this, call the branch.

If your complex was registered as a condominium before tenants move in, you must tell them this. Your tenancy agreements should have a box you check to let new tenants know that the building is already registered. If you don't tell your tenants this, they get a two-year **right of tenure** that starts from the date they find out the building is registered.

Other new changes

- There is a four-year waiting period to register a complex as a condominium for complexes that have been granted an exemption under the rehabilitation scheme program. This waiting period begins when the exemption comes into force. A notice of the exemption will be registered with the Land Titles Office.
 - You must allow tenants who move out prior to condominium registration because of renovations, and who exercise their right of first refusal, to keep their right of tenure. The amount of time they are out for the renovation is added to the length of their tenure.
 - There is a waiting period of one year to register a complex as a condominium if any tenants have been given a notice to move for any reason other than cause. You must fill out a sworn declaration saying that you haven't, for example, given anyone notice to move for renovations.
 - There are changes to how municipalities and cities are able to put restrictions on the conversion of complexes into condominiums. You should check with your municipality or city to make sure there is nothing in place that might affect you.
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Preventing Arson

Arson – the intentional setting of fires – costs communities greatly. It is dangerous, even deadly for people and pets and it causes very costly property damage.

Most arson fires are started outside, in garbage containers, garages, or in debris left lying around. Fight arson by doing all you can to prevent your residential complex or rental unit from becoming a target:

- Keep leaves, firewood, overgrown bushes and shrubs away from buildings.
- Keep any flammable material safely stored in locked storage cabinets or locked garages.
- Make sure that all garbage is placed in sealed bags that go in bins with lids.
- Don't let flammable items (ex: mattresses, furniture) sit outside for long periods of time.
- Have enough outdoor lighting around complexes and rental units to discourage people from hanging around.
- Don't leave clutter around exits from your rental unit or complex.

Teach children about the dangers of fire and of playing with matches and lighters. Always control your children's access to flammable material and fire-starters.

Do your part to prevent arson in your community:

- Call the Winnipeg Police Service at 204-986-6222 in Winnipeg, or the police/law enforcement department in your area, if you see anyone acting suspiciously.
- Report any unsecured or abandoned property to police.
- Call 911 immediately if you see a crime in progress (ex: lighting a fire, vandalism).
- Call 911 immediately if you see property on fire.

Need information?

Online
manitoba.ca/rtb

Offline
in person or by phone

Visit your branch office Monday to Friday
from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Winnipeg at 302–254 Edmonton Street
or call 945-2476

Brandon at 157–340 9th Street
or call 726-6230

Thompson at 113–59 Elizabeth Drive
or call 677-6496

Toll free 1-800-782-8403

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Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to
Residential Tenancies Branch
c/o Unit 7 - 1715 St. James Street
Winnipeg, MB R3H 1H3