



Greater Sudbury Housing Corporation

Tenant Information Handbook



# Table of Contents

---

## Welcome

Residential Tenancy Agreement .....	1
Responsibilities as a GSHC Tenant .....	1
Responsibilities as your Landlord .....	1
Move-In Inspection Report .....	2
Paying your Rent .....	2
Monthly Rental Payments .....	2
Utilities .....	2
Tenants Insurance .....	2
Making Changes to your Home .....	2
Keeping your Home in Good Order .....	3
Reporting Damages or Repairs .....	3
Skating Rinks and Swimming Pools .....	3
Windows, Doors, Screens, Balconies .....	3
Noise Levels .....	3
Keys and Security Access Cards .....	4
Lost, Stolen Keys or Security Cards .....	4
Intercoms and Safety .....	4
Tenant Parking .....	4
Parking Restrictions .....	4
Rental Statements for Income Taxes .....	5
Rental Adjustments .....	5
Lease Renewals .....	5

## Tenant Services

Information on Health and Social Services .....	6
---	---

## Safety and Security

Safety and Security Tools .....	7
---------------------------------	---

## Fire Safety

What To Do If There is a Fire .....	8
Fire Safety Plans .....	8

## Fire Prevention Tips

Smoking .....	9
Electrical .....	9
Heating .....	9
Candles .....	9
Basements .....	9
Kitchens .....	10
What To Do If a Cooking Fire Starts .....	10
Around Children and Pets .....	10
Smoke Detectors .....	10
Barbeques (BBQ) .....	11
Open and Closed Fire Pits .....	11

**Pest Control**

Preventing and Exterminating Pests ..... 12  
Bed Bugs..... 12  
Ants ..... 13  
Cockroaches ..... 13  
Bees, Wasps, Hornets ..... 14  
House and Deer Mice ..... 14  
Reporting Pests to GSHC ..... 14

**Mold Prevention**

How Do You Check for Mold in your Home ..... 15  
Prevent Mold in your Home ..... 15  
    General Interior ..... 15  
    Bathrooms ..... 16  
    Kitchens ..... 16  
    Closets and Bedrooms ..... 16  
    Basements ..... 16  
    Furnaces ..... 16  
    Laundry ..... 16  
    General Exterior ..... 17  
Eliminating Mold..... 17

**When You Move Out**

Abandoned Goods or Property ..... 18  
When a Tenant Breaks their Rental Agreement ..... 18



# Welcome

---

## **This Handbook Outlines Information About:**

- Your rights and your responsibilities
- The rights and responsibilities of your landlord, Greater Sudbury Housing Corporation (GSHC)
- Information for your health, safety and security

## **Residential Tenancy Agreement (Your Lease)**

Read your Residential Tenancy Agreement carefully before you sign it to make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities as a tenant as well as your landlord's rights and responsibilities.

## **As a GSHC Tenant, You are Responsible For:**

- paying your rent on time
- paying your utility bills, if utilities are not included in the rent
- notifying GSHC of any decrease or increase in your income
- informing GSHC about any change in the number of people living in your home
- keeping your home safe for all occupants and visitors
- ensuring your home is clean and free of damage
- repairing, to an acceptable standard, any damages caused by you or visitors to your home, as soon as possible. (The landlord may give you a written request to make these repairs)
- complying with the terms of your tenancy agreement, and The Residential Tenancies Act, available at: [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)
- complying with GSHC's rules and regulations, as attached to your lease agreement.
- ensuring you and your guests don't disturb others or endanger the safety of others in the building or on a neighbouring property

If you do not meet these responsibilities, you may be asked to leave. (See page 43, for more information)

## **As your Landlord, GSHC is Responsible For:**

- repairing your home within a reasonable time
- ensuring your home is reasonably safe by having proper doors and locks
- ensuring your home is available on the day your tenancy is to begin
- providing a rent receipt when you pay your rent in cash
- paying your utility bills, if utilities are included in the rent
- investigating any complaints about a tenant disturbing other tenants or neighbours and trying to resolve the problem
- respecting your tenancy agreement and The Residential Tenancies Act
- providing at least 24 hours notice before entering your unit to do repairs, except in an emergency.

## **Move-In Inspection Report**

When you move into a GSHC unit you will receive a move-in inspection form to be completed within 7 days of moving in. This is for you to note the condition of your home and any repairs that are required. GSHC will use the report to inspect your home when you leave. You will be held responsible for any damages beyond normal wear and tear.

## **Paying Your Rent**

All new GSHC tenants will be given a tenant identification card when signing your lease. Each card will include a personal tenant identification number that must be used when you pay your rent.

## **Monthly Rental Payments**

Rental payments are to be paid to GSHC using one of the following options:

- Direct payment by phone or internet: Charges may apply, so please check with your financial institution.
- Pre-authorized payment (PAP): Monthly rental payments can be automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the first business day of the month. The bank or financial institution may charge a fee for this service. GSHC will charge a fee for each returned PAP.
- Post-dated cheques: You can pay your rent monthly by cheque or money order. Write your GSHC tenant identification number on the front of all cheques or money orders. GSHC will charge a fee for each returned cheque.
- Cash or Debit: You can pay your rent with cash or your debit card at the GSHC office located in Suite 401, 10 Elm Street, Sudbury (In the Rainbow Centre downtown). Note: Do NOT send cash by mail.

## **Utilities**

- Water is included in your rent, so you do not have to contact the local water department.
- You must contact Sudbury Utilities when you move in to arrange for hydro, if it is not included in your rent.
- Phone, cable and internet access are not included in your rent.

## **Tenant's Insurance**

GSHC is not responsible for your personal property. For your own protection, we strongly recommend you buy tenant's insurance. Tenant's insurance covers damages to your personal property from fire, flood, theft and other events. Contact an insurance company or agent to find the best coverage for your needs.

## **Making Changes to your Home**

If you want to make changes to your home, you must send a written request to the GSHC office for approval. Changes may include: adding portable air conditioners or satellite dishes, wallpapering, painting, carpeting, installing grab bars or fencing. If you get permission to make changes, you must return your home back to its original condition before you move out. If you do not get written permission to make changes, or if you move out and do not return the unit to its original condition, you will be held responsible for any related costs.

## **Keeping your Home and Property in Good Order**

- For your safety, avoid storing or piling too many items in your home, especially around entrances, in hallways and basements. (Piles of items can be a fire hazard and they may get damaged if there is a sewer back up or flooding.)
- All tenants are encouraged to recycle as much garbage as possible.
- Put your garbage in plastic bags, tie them securely and place them in the containers provided. (Don't use toilets, sinks or sewer drains to dispose of garbage.)
- Maintain your grounds, shrubbery, private walkways and driveways. This includes removing snow from steps, walkways, driveways and parking spots, cutting your grass regularly (weekly is recommended.)
- Clean up any trash, junk or derelict cars on your property, including the parking area.
- Co-operate with building superintendents when asked to move vehicles.

## **Reporting Damages or Needed Repairs to your Home or Property**

Report any damage or repairs promptly to the GSHC office at 705-674-8323

Please note: the tenant is responsible for any damages beyond normal wear and tear.

## **Skating Rinks and Swimming Pools**

- Backyard skating rinks and swimming pools are not permitted.
- Small kiddie pools are permitted only if they are supervised by an adult when in use, and are emptied immediately after every use. They must also conform to any relevant city and municipal bylaws.

## **Windows, Doors, Screens, Balconies**

- Make sure no one – child or adult – leans against window screens.
- Keep children away from windows.
- Make sure children's beds are not located beneath windows.
- Don't leave windows and doors open when it's raining or snowing. Excess moisture can damage property. Open windows and doors may also cause pipes to freeze and break.
- Immediately report any broken windows to GSHC.

## **Noise Levels**

- Tenants are responsible for the actions of their children, other family members and guests. Please ensure noise levels are kept down and there are no disturbances.
- Children should be supervised at all times.

## **Keys and Security Access Cards**

- You will be given a security access card and/or your keys during regular business hours before you move in. Your first security access card is provided free as part of your tenancy agreement. There may be charges for additional keys or cards.
- You are responsible for all keys and security access cards you receive from GSHC.
- Keep your key and security access card in a safe place.
- Do not let anyone else use them.
- Do not let anyone you don't know into the building when you are entering.

## **Lost, Stolen Keys or Security Cards**

- If your key or security access card are lost or stolen or if you are locked out of the building after regular business hours, call GSHC

## **Intercoms and Safety**

Most GSHC buildings have an intercom system.

- Don't let strangers in. When people buzz your home, make sure you know and trust them before you let them in. Intruders often buzz all the suites in a building until they convince someone to let them into the building.

## **Tenant Parking**

- It is important that you report if your vehicle or registration changes immediately to the GSHC office.
- Only registered vehicles with a GSHC issued sticker can be parked in the parking lots.
- Please park within the boundaries of your allotted space.
- Visitors can park in designated visitors' spots where provided.

## **Parking Restrictions**

The following restrictions apply to all GSHC parking areas:

- Storing vehicles that do not run in GSHC parking lots. Vehicles must be able to be moved for emergencies, snow removal or repairs.
- Parking in fire lanes or in front of garbage bins.
- Performing major vehicle repairs such as removing engines, transmissions or rear-end assemblies, in parking areas.
- Dumping oil or other automotive fluids in parking areas.
- Damaging asphalt surfaces or electrical outlets.

Failure to comply with any of these restrictions means your vehicle will be towed at your own expense without notice or you will have to pay for damages.

## **Rental Statement for Income Taxes**

If you need a rental statement for your income tax, contact the GSHC cash office.

Note: Revenue Canada allows only one tenant to claim this tax deduction. To receive your rent receipt, you must have made all rent payments.

## **Rental Adjustments**

If there is any change in your income, you may be eligible for a rental adjustment. Contact GSHC if you have any questions about eligibility.

Be sure to apply for an adjustment for every month that your income has changed. If you are applying for an adjustment to your rent, you must submit all required documents, including proof of all income that applies to you.

Required documents may include:

- Employment Insurance (EI) – letter or cheque stub
- Employment pay stubs
- Canada Pension Plan – letter from Service Canada
- Old Age Security – letter from Service Canada
- Interest/investment income
- RRSP income
- Rental income
- Farm income
- Private Pensions – letter or cheque stub from company
- Letter from Department of Veterans Affairs, cheque stub or your bank book
- Training allowances – letter from sponsor agency(s)
- Compensation/disability – award letter or cheque stub
- Child support/alimony – Copy of the order or agreement
- Self employment – income and expense statement by certified accountant
- Student Loans – OSAP paperwork
- Children 16 and over, not in school – letter from employer or cheque stub
- Children 16 and over, in school – written verification of attendance/registration from school (current schedule)

## **Lease Renewals**

Lease renewals are completed annually. Your circumstances will be reviewed to determine if:

- Your household is still eligible for rent-geared-to-income housing.
- the rental charge will change.
- your unit size is appropriate based on the size of your household.

For annual renewals be sure to submit all required documents to ensure your tenancy is maintained. The documents that may be required for an annual renewal are the same as those required for a rent adjustment (see pg 11) with one exception.

In an annual renewal you will also need to submit a certified copy of your most recent income tax return (Option 'C' Print) 1-800-959-8281.



# Tenant Services

---

## Information on Health and Social Services

The GSHC office may be able to help you get information about health and social services. Staff can help you with independent living in the community as long as possible by:

- Providing information about health, social services and community programs and services.
- Supporting tenant groups, such as tenant associations and tenant advisory committees
- Providing information on education and training programs
- Supporting community programs and resource centres
- Referring tenants to appropriate support service providers an/or agencies
- Working with tenant groups and other agencies to co-ordinate various onsite support services such as:
  - Income tax clinics
  - Health clinics
  - Community senior services
  - Health fairs
  - Income assistance programs
  - Food banks
  - Community mental health services where relevant
  - Programs for parenting children and youth
  - Seniors support services



# Safety and Security

---

## Safety and Security Tools

GSHC works with tenants, tenant associations, committees and other groups and agencies to promote a positive presence in our communities.

### What Can You Do to Help?

Call 911 for any of the following matters:

- any disturbance involving violence of any kind
- illegal drug use, drug dealing, drug production or cultivation
- prostitution and related activities
- unlawful sale of liquor
- unlawful use or sale of intoxicating substances
- sexual abuse or exploitation of a child or related activities
- possession or storage of an unlawful firearm, weapon or explosive
- a break-in

After you call the police, please call GSHC at 705-674-8323.

You can also contact GSHC for less urgent matters including:

- noise or disturbances in your building or on your property
- any unauthorized or suspicious people loitering around your building or home

Also, call GSHC to report:

- suspicious people or activities that have the potential to start a fire
- any build up of garbage or other materials that could be a fire hazard
- any shrubs, snow or other materials that may be blocking fire safety equipment
- baseboard heaters, thermostats or furnaces that aren't working
- faulty wiring or broken cover plates
- a broken smoke detector

Everyone is responsible for keeping GSHC homes and properties safe from fire. **Call 911 if:**

- you see a fire being started or one is started anywhere in your home, property or community.
- you see a building that has smoke or fire.
- You are in a building where there is smoke or fire

# Fire Safety

---

## What To Do If There is a Fire

### In Your Suite:

1. Immediately, **get everyone out**. Stay low to the ground as you leave and close the door of the room where the fire is located.
2. **Pull the fire alarm** on your floor to let others know there is a fire.
3. Go down the nearest stairway. **Never use the elevator**.
4. Exit the building and **call 911**
5. Once you have left the building, **stay out of the way of firefighters**
6. Tell the fire department/firefighters if you know of anyone trapped in the building.
7. Go to the predetermined meeting place in your family's fire safety plan.

### In Your Building:

1. When you hear the fire alarm, check the corridor for smoke or fire. If the corridor is smoke-free, use the nearest exit.
2. If the corridor is blocked, shut your door and stay in your suite.
3. Call 911 to report that you are in the building and give your apartment number.
4. Keep your door closed and put wet towels around your door to keep out smoke. Turn off your air conditioner and fill the bathtub with water.
5. If the front door is hot, wet it down with wet towels. Open the windows a few inches unless there is smoke coming from below.
6. Don't panic. In a fire resistant building, you are safer in your suite with the door closed than attempting to escape through fire and smoke.

### If Your Clothing Catches Fire:

1. Stop, drop and roll. Drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands and roll until the fire goes out.
2. If you can't do this, grab a towel or blanket and smother the flames.

## Fire Safety Plans

GSHC has fire safety plans for buildings that have a common area and for high-rise/low-rise buildings:

- Printed plans are posted near the elevators and in the lobbies of the buildings.
- If you don't live in a unit where you have a shared common area, then you must develop a fire safety plan for yourself.
- You should develop a fire safety plan with your entire family. Draw your plan to include two ways out of every room including the windows. Pick a meeting place outside and well away from the building.

# Fire Prevention Tips

---

GSHC needs your help to prevent fires in your home, buildings and community. Here are a few tips to follow:

## Smoking

- Never smoke in bed.
- Avoid careless smoking. Always use proper ashtrays that don't tip.
- Dispose of smoking materials such as cigarette butts and the contents of ashtrays with caution.
- Never empty ashtrays into combustible containers such as garbage cans or refuse containers.

## Electrical

- never overload electrical circuits
- ensure all extension cords and electrical devices are in good condition. Check regularly for loose connections and frayed or exposed wire and discard defective cords.
- Insert plugs fully into outlets. Poor contact may cause overheating or electrical shock.
- To avoid overheating, do not coil or bunch an extension cord while in use.
- Never use extension cords under carpets or rugs, across doorways or any place where they will be stepped on or rubbed.
- Make sure you follow the recommended wattage noted on your light fixtures. Do not use bulbs that exceed the amount.

## Heating

- Keep clothing, boxes, bags, papers and other flammable materials away from furnaces, baseboard heaters, and space heaters.
- Keep space heaters away from walls.

## Candles

- Place all candles in sturdy holders that won't burn or allow wax to drip onto tables, floors or rugs.
- Extinguish all candles before you leave the room.
- Keep a careful eye on children and pets when candles are lit.

## Basements

- Keep entrances clear.
- Remove lint from dryers after each load.
- Do not place plastic or rubber items in the dryer.
- Do not place items that have been exposed to chemicals in the dryer.

## **Kitchens**

- Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen.
- Be careful that grease doesn't splatter or spill when cooking.
- Do not use tin foil or any other metal substance in the microwave.
- Wipe appliances and surfaces after cooking to prevent grease buildup.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking. Do not leave the room unless absolutely necessary.
- Never leave your home while food is on the stove, in the oven or microwave.
- Keep the stove and surrounding area clear. Dish towels, pot holders, curtains and aprons can catch fire easily, so keep them away from the stove at all times.
- Turn pot handles towards the centre of the stove
- Never wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Always heat oil slowly over moderate heat.
- Turn off all stove and oven elements and unplug small appliances when not in use.
- Keep all heat-producing appliances away from the wall and away from anything that might burn.

## **What To Do If a Cooking Fire Starts**

- If a pot or pan catches fire, carefully slide a lid over the pot or pan and turn off the stove. Leave the lid on until the pot or pan is completely cool.
- If there is a fire in the oven or microwave, keep the door shut.
- Never throw water on a grease fire. Water will cause grease fires to spread.

## **Around Children and Pets**

- Keep children and pets away from fires, candles, stoves, fireplaces and flammable materials.
- Do not store cookies, cereal, or other treats for small children near the stove.
- Keep young children at least one metre (three feet) away from the stove while older family members are cooking.
- Older children should cook only with permission and under the supervision of a grown-up.
- Cover unused wall outlets with safety caps.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach, preferable in a locked cabinet. Use only child resistant lighters.

## **Smoke Detectors**

- You should regularly test your smoke detector to make sure that it is working properly.
- Get into the habit of checking each day to see if the red or green indicator light is on. If the light is on, your smoke detector is working. If the red or green indicator light is not on, call GSHC.
- Following an electrical storm, you should check your smoke detector to see if the indicator light is on.

- Once a month, depress the test button on the detector; within five seconds the alarm should emit a constant sound. To stop the alarm, release the button. If the alarm does not sound, contact GSHC.
- Never tamper with smoke detectors, under any circumstances. Once activated, they will stop on their own. Tampering with a fire alarm system or any fire protection equipment is a criminal offence, subject to a heavy fine, imprisonment, or both. You would also seriously jeopardize your tenancy with GSHC.

## Barbeques (BBQ)

- BBQs are NOT allowed on balconies. This is a City of Greater Sudbury by-law and is enforced on GSHC properties.
- You are responsible for your BBQ and must ensure that it is:
  - operated only outdoors in a well-ventilated area
  - not operated within an enclosed area or near combustible materials
  - used under constant adult supervision
- The propane tank used for your BBQ must:
  - be kept upright at all times
  - be closed at the valve when stored in a vehicle, building or below ground level
  - not be stored within two meters (6.5 feet) of a portable BBQ when not attached to the BBQ
  - not be stored on a balcony that is enclosed by a screen or glass
  - not be more than 20 pounds when attached to the BBQ
  - not have a valve closer than 900 millimeters (three feet) from any door or window that is lower than the valve
  - be equipped with a quick connect coupling valve (Q.C.C.V.) and an overfill protection device (O.P.D.)

## Open and Closed Fire Pits

Open and closed fire pits are not allowed on GSHC properties.



# Pest Control

---

GSHC has a pest control program in place in order to maintain a healthy, safe environment for you and your guests. This includes getting rid of any pests that appear in your home and helping you avoid pests.

## Preventing and Exterminating Pests

- GSHC can provide you with information on how to identify and prevent pests in your home. GSHC also arranges information sessions on how to maintain a pest-free home.
- An appointment with a professional exterminator will be scheduled to exterminate any pests. Your belongings will be respected while your home is treated. With your co-operation, any pest concerns can be treated without complications.
- GSHC will provide you with information about what is needed to prepare in advance for the exterminator and what the treatment and follow-up will involve.

## Bed Bugs

### Look for these signs:

- Itchy red welts on your skin. These welts can be many sizes and can appear in groups of two or three.
- Dark red or brown stains on furniture, bed sheets and clothing.

### Where do you find bed bugs?

Some of their favourite hiding places are:

- Within 6 feet of where you sleep
- Behind baseboards
- Under loose carpets and rugs
- Inside couches/sofas, mattresses, box springs and bed frames
- In furniture and luggage

### How do I stop bed bugs from getting into my home or coming back?

- Check furniture and other household items regularly.
- Maintain your home and keep up with the cleaning.
- Keep your home free of clutter and avoid keeping clothing, toys and other household items on the floor.
- Regularly wash all bedding and clothing in HOT water and/or dry them in a HOT dryer (high heat - 40° / 120°F) for a minimum of 20 minutes.
- Vacuum all mattresses and mattress frames.
- Consider having a bed bug-proof mattress cover installed.
- Watch for bed bugs hiding in cracks, creases, folds, seams and tears.
- Watch for dark red or brown stains on bed sheets, clothing and mattresses/box springs, especially around the edges and round the seams.
- Look closely at any second-hand furniture, suitcases or clothing before bringing them into your home.
- Vacuum or shake out suitcases before bringing them into your home.

## **Ants**

### **Look for these signs:**

- If you only see a few ants (less than 10), it usually means there isn't an established colony.
- If you have carpenter ants in the wood in your home, the wood will often show damage – small bore holes.

### **Where do you find ants:**

- Ants are drawn to areas that are constantly moist.
- Ants may crawl across sidewalks, driveways and basement floors.

### **How do I stop ants from getting into my home or coming back?**

- Thoroughly clean your home regularly, wiping up any sticky spills immediately.
- Keep food stored in sealed containers.
- Remove any old and untreated wood, especially if it has visible bore holes.
- Report any ongoing moisture problems in your home to GSHC as soon as possible.

## **Cockroaches**

### **Look for these signs:**

- New cockroaches outgrow their shells, discard them and grow new ones. The old shells can be seen in the areas the pests are drawn to.
- You see cockroaches at night when the light is turned out. They scurry for cover when the light is turned on.

### **Where do you find cockroaches?**

- They are drawn to warm, humid areas, such as basements, kitchens, bathrooms, sewer pipes, gardens, greenhouses, damp pavement and walkways.
- They easily adapt to new surrounding and will survive on almost any source of moisture and food. They feed on human food, garbage, fruit, crumbs and a variety of other items including wood, leather, glue, cigarette butts, toothpaste and soap.

### **How do I stop cockroaches from getting into my home or coming back?**

- Give your home a thorough cleaning regularly, getting rid of any crumbs and food particles on counters and floors.
- Carefully inspect any used furniture, appliances or clothing you bring into your home.
- Check around cracked plumbing fixtures and floor drains for signs of cockroaches.
- Report any ongoing moisture problems in your home to GSHC as soon as possible.

## **Bees, Wasps, Hornets**

### **Look for these signs:**

- Wasps and hornets nests are large, grayish, papery cones and are usually found in protected cavities such as in wood piles, under eaves, protected limbs of trees and chimneys.
- Bee hives are large, brownish, lumpy cones and can be found almost anywhere.

### **Where do you find bees, wasps and hornets?**

- These insects are most commonly found outside, but they can invade homes, building nests in protected areas such as chimneys and under eaves.



### **How do I stop bees, wasps and hornets from getting into my home or coming back?**

- These insects are all attracted to sweet foods, decaying materials and other insects, so seal or eliminate any food source.
- Pollen and nectar are the main sources of food for bees, but they are also drawn to sweet, sticky food spills or food left out on plates.

### **House and Deer Mice**

- House mice are grey rodents (with large ears and small eyes) that measure 2.5 to 3.5 inches (6.5 to 9 centimeters). The tail is usually the same length as the body.
- Deer mice are grey to reddish brown rodents with two-tone tails and white undersides. They measure from 2.8 to 3.9 inches (7 to 10 centimeters).

### **Look for these signs:**

- Small droppings near food sources, gnawed holes in bags and boxes containing food or garbage.
- Listen for noises made by their running, gnawing and scratching to locate them in your home – especially during the evening and night when they are most active. If food is scarce, they will also be active during daylight hours.

### **Where do you find mice?**

- Mice can survive outdoors in winter, but are drawn to buildings for protection and easier food sources.
- You can often hear mice because they build nests close to food, usually in between double walls, above ceilings, under floors and closed in areas around counters.

### **How do I stop mice from getting into my home or coming back?**

- Give your home a thorough cleaning regularly; remove crumbs and food particles.
- Store all garbage in containers with tight lids.
- Store food in sealed jars or tins as mice can often chew through plastic.
- Contact GSHC if you notice any cracks or crevices open to the outside of your home (eg: unsealed dryer vents, exterior water/gas hook-ups, etc.).

### **Is there a risk of getting sick from mice?**

- Mice (particularly deer mice) can carry the Hantavirus which can cause serious illness.
- Although reported cases are relatively rare, typical symptoms are flu-like and include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, muscle aches, diarrhea, abdominal pain and shortness of breath. Symptoms can occur any time between three days to six weeks (usually occurring around 14 days) after exposure. Hantavirus infection without symptoms is rare.

### **Reporting Pests to the GSHC Office**

- If you think you have pests in your home, phone GSHC at 705-674-8323
- To avoid causing any further infestations, GSHC does not recommend that you treat pest problems on your own.

# Mold Prevention

---

Mold can be a health issue for you and your family and it can also cause damage to your home. GSHC has an ongoing program to help you prevent mold in your home including:

- Annual inspections of all units and common areas of buildings for mold.
- 
- Renovation of GSHC properties to ensure adequate air intake and circulation.
- 
- Repair and replacement of roofs, windows and the outer shells of buildings.

## How Do You Check for Mold in your Home?

**Smell:** Mold generally has a musty, damp smell that is unpleasant and reduces the air quality.

**Visible growth:** Mold and mildew can grow in a variety of patterns and colours. The most common are black, grey-brown, grey-green, orange or purple. Black mold is generally a greenish black with a slimy appearance.

**Physical symptoms:** Some people are allergic to mold. If you have an increase in allergy symptoms or are having headaches or feeling dizzy when you're at home for an extended period, you may have mold in your home.

## Mold is Most Likely to be Found in:

- Kitchens and bathrooms where exhaust fans don't work properly.
- Around leaking taps, pipes or toilets.
- Anywhere there's excess moisture created on a regular basis, for example in the kitchen or bathroom or a water leak.

**Please Call GSHC at 705-674-8323 to report any of these conditions.**

## Prevent Mold in your Home

### General interior

- Keep your home well-ventilated and use the exhaust fans around the stove and in the bathroom.
- Remove any stored items you no longer use. Fabrics, paper, wood and other materials collect dust and hold moisture which can cause mold.
- GSHC will service your furnace on a regular basis.
- Have family and guests remove their shoes when entering your home.
- Vacuum often.
- Clean hardwood floors with a damp mop.
- Remove unnecessary, dust-collecting furniture.
- Avoid bringing in any furniture previously stored in a moldy place.
- Reduce the number of house plants you have and inspect the soil in the pots to make sure there is no mold on the surface.
- Keep furniture, boxes and clothing at least two inches away from the exterior wall to ensure adequate air movement.

## **Bathroom**

- Run the bathroom fan while you shower and for a few minutes afterward.
- Keep shower times as short as possible.
- Keep all surfaces clean and dry. Wipe up any standing water on the floor and around the bathroom sink/vanity.
- Keep drains in good working shape by removing debris from them.
- To clean a drain, follow these steps:
  - Pour a handful of baking soda into it.
  - Add a cup of vinegar.
  - Plug the drain.
  - Let the mixture sit for 20 minutes.
  - Run fresh water.

## **Kitchens**

- If you have a fan over your stove that vents outside, use it when you cook.
- Avoid boiling liquids for long periods of time.
- Keep drains in good shape. Follow the steps above to clean your drain.
- Pull the refrigerator out to clean the drip pan at the back. At the same time, vacuum dust from the coils at the back of the refrigerator.
- Check for leaks under the kitchen sink.
- Remove garbage daily to prevent odours and spoiling.

## **Closets and Bedrooms**

- Remove any unused items.
- Don't over fill closets.
- Keep things tidy to improve air circulation.

## **Basements**

- Dispose of wet, badly damaged or musty smelling clothes, paper and furniture in storage. Keep only washable items.
- Keep the storage area tidy to encourage air flow.
- Store firewood outside.
- Don't use carpets on the basement floor.
- Clean the drain in your basement floor, occasionally, by adding a half cup (125 millilitres) of bleach to the drain. Let it stand for a few minutes then flush with plenty of water. Keep the drain trap filled with water.
- Use a dehumidifier in the basement to reduce moisture in the summer. Close the basement windows when the dehumidifier is on.

## **Furnaces**

- GSHC will regularly replace your furnace filter.

## **Laundry**

- Make sure your clothes dryer is connected to an outside exhaust vent.
- Remove lint every time you use the dryer. Lint build-up in a dryer is also a serious fire hazard.
- Avoid hanging wet laundry indoors.
- Wipe your laundry tub and washer dry after each use.

## General Exterior

- Report eavestroughs, downspouts and downspout extensions that are not connected or working properly.
- Report yard areas that slope towards your building.

## Eliminating Mold

- Mold patches that cover less than two or three square feet (.05 to one metre) are considered small, so you can usually clean the mold yourself.
- Always wear rubber gloves, safety glasses, a dust mask and a long-sleeved shirt when working around mold.
- If you find mold on a washable surface, scrub the area with soapy water, rinse with a clean damp cloth and then dry quickly.
- Clean moldy drywall with a damp cloth and baking soda or detergent. Do not allow the drywall to get too wet.

Note: For larger areas, or if you have recurring mold, call the GSHC office at 705-674-8323)



# When You Move Out

---

When you are ready to move out, contact the GSHC office right away. You must give at least two full calendar month's notice when you are ready to move.

- Make sure you clean your unit and return it to the same condition it was in when you took possession. The condition of your home will be verified when staff completes a move out inspection form once you vacate the property.
- Remove all personal property from the unit.
- Please note: To avoid losing any personal property when you move out, arrange to have all your property moved from the housing unit, on or before, your moving day.
- Return your keys and any security cards the day you move or by the next business day. If these are not returned, you will be charged for each card or key and your rental account will show you have money owing to GSHC.
- Make sure that you do not owe any back rent. If you owe rent when you leave, GSHC will file the account with a collection agency to collect money owed.
- Provide GSHC with a forwarding address, and make sure you send change-of-address information to all your important contacts before you move.
- Cancel your account and your pre-authorized payments for all your utilities.

## Abandoned Goods or Property

- Tenants must take all their personal property with them when they move out.
- If you leave any personal property when you move out, GSHC will follow the Residential Tenancies Act guidelines to dispose of it.
- If you do not want your personal property you are responsible for removal of it from your unit.
- Please note: You will be responsible for all costs involved in disposing of the abandoned goods.
- If you need to leave something behind, contact GSHC immediately with your new contact information and the date you will be picking the items up.

## When a Tenant Breaks their Rental Agreement

Tenants are expected to pay rent in full on or before the first day of each month. When a tenant is late paying the rent, a Notice of Termination may be issued to the tenant to vacate.

If a tenant doesn't move or pay their rent, an application may be filed at the Landlord and Tenant Board for an order of possession. Some other reasons that GSHC may issue a Notice of Termination to a tenant:

- a tenant or their guests risk the safety of others
- prevents other tenants from feeling safe in their homes
- a tenant or their guests damage the home or property
- a tenant or their guests disturb others in the building or nearby property
- changes locks or doors to a residential unit or complex
- fails to keep the home clean
- allows overcrowding
- interferes with the landlord's duties to keep the tenant's home safe and pest-free
- persistently late with paying their rent
- misrepresents their income
- a tenant ceases to qualify for rent-geared-to-income subsidy