

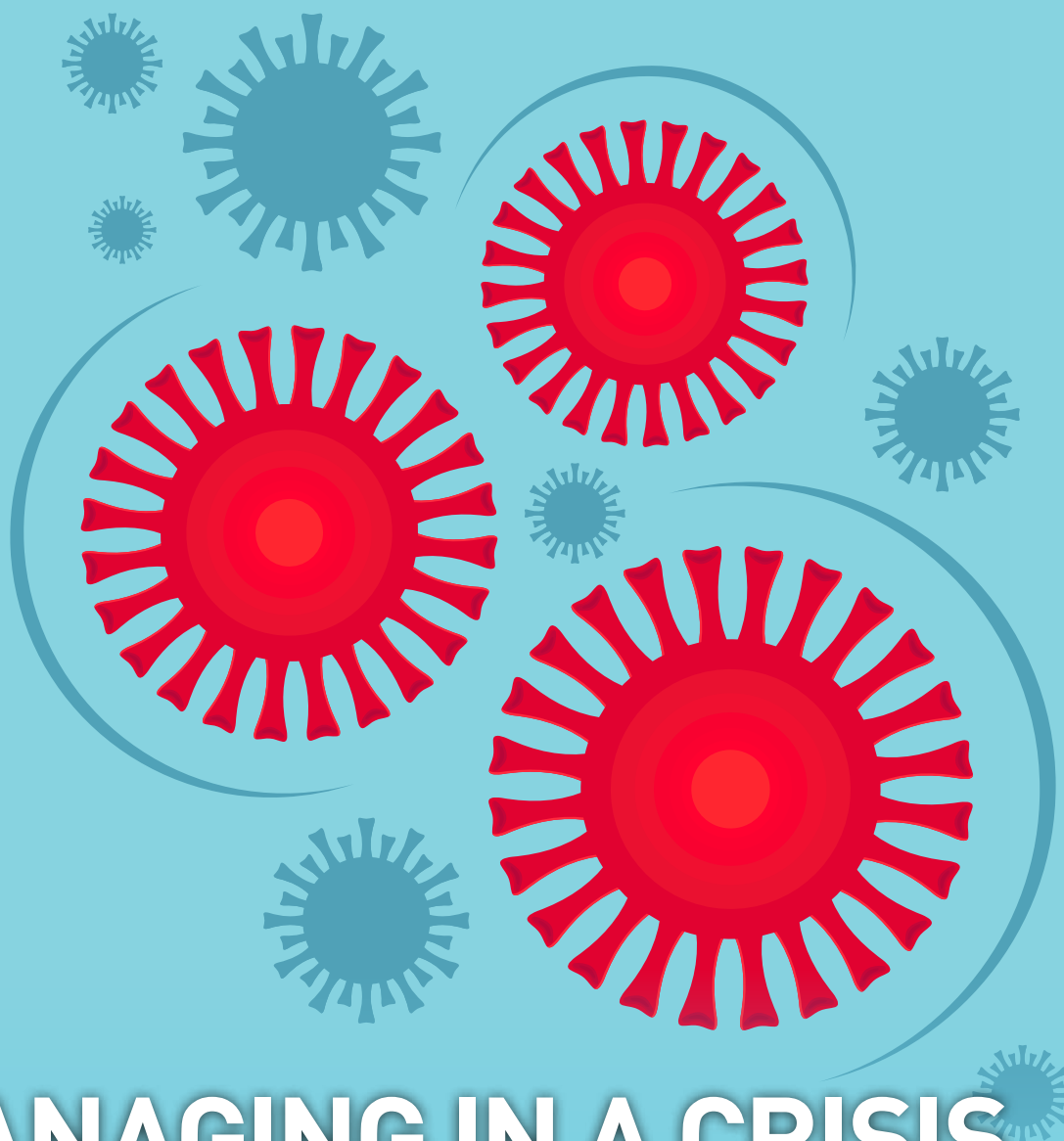
MARCH/APRIL 2020



FRPO'S **FAIR EXCHANGE** OF  
RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS 

RENTAL MARKET UPDATE  
PROPERTY INSURANCE  
COVID-19 LEGAL ADVICE  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

THE VOICE OF THE FEDERATION OF RENTAL-HOUSING PROVIDERS OF ONTARIO



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# FE

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RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS



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MARCH/APRIL 2020



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## THE VOICE OF THE FEDERATION OF RENTAL-HOUSING PROVIDERS OF ONTARIO

A PUBLICATION OF:



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# HEARTFELT GREETINGS FROM HOME

We're all in this together



**TONY IRWIN**  
President & CEO  
FRPO

**A**s I write this column, 2020 has taken an unexpected and unprecedented turn due to the global coronavirus pandemic. We're now living in a world that has literally been shut down by COVID-19, which is having a huge impact on all FRPO members -- and, undoubtedly, on everyone reading this month's issue of FE.

Nonetheless, this is only a temporary state of affairs. Longer term, there are reasons to be optimistic about progress in several areas, including rental housing. Since I arrived as FRPO CEO in September 2018, I have heard countless stories from FRPO members expressing their difficulties over:

- Scheduling hearings at the Landlord and Tenant Board;
- Increasing delays in time between scheduling a hearing and when it takes place;
- Delays in receiving orders, and having those orders enforced by the Sheriff.

Over the past few years, the situation has worsened, causing stress for housing providers, and in some cases, making life unpleasant for residents.

I assure all FRPO members that I have heard you loud and clear, and this has been a major focus for FRPO's government relations advocacy this year and will remain so for the rest of 2020.

When I travelled around the province earlier this year meeting with property owners, many expressed frustrations with a system that seems to make it harder to provide rental housing. With a serious housing shortage in the province, it's more critical now than ever that the government pursue policy changes that encourage good operators to stay in the business — and to attract newcomers to our industry rather than drive them away.

Once the storm of the pandemic has passed, we hope the government will turn its attention to badly needed reforms of the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) and the Residential Tenancies Act. (RTA). The LTB falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Attorney General, while the RTA resides with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. FRPO has raised operational concerns with both ministries, and in a recent meeting with the Ministry of the Attorney General, we were assured that the vacant adjudicator positions would be filled soon. This is great news, but we know more needs to be done and will continue to press for additional reforms.

Since taking office in June 2018, the Ford government has made significant progress on improving the viability of building more rental housing across Ontario — something that is desperately needed. The 2019 provincial vacancy rate was 2.0%, which coupled with all-time high demand, makes for an unhealthy rental market. We are starting to see an increase in applications for purpose-built rental and expect this to continue as components of Bill 108 are fully implemented.


FRPO thanks Housing Minister Steve Clark for listening and being accessible as we maintain engagement on important issues impacting our members.

Asquith Allen, FRPO's Director of Policy & Regulatory Affairs, is working with our government relations and supply committees to gather more evidence and research to bolster our positions with government. This will also be shared with the Liberals and New Democrats as part of our political outreach.

We welcome input from our members, so please reach out to Asquith at [aallen@frpo.org](mailto:aallen@frpo.org) with any feedback.

Once the shutdown ends, FRPO will be at Queen's Park attending meetings with politicians, political staff and bureaucrats. A big part of our mandate includes educating and informing policy makers about our industry, and sharing our members' experiences.

In our current climate, this continues to be very important since the media often reports incomplete accounts of the real relationship between rental property owners and residents. We've seen this type of negative reporting happening amid the pandemic too, so I encourage you to get involved. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your input and feedback — and keep in mind as you read this issue that most of the content was put together before the health emergency was declared.

I thank you for your continued support. 



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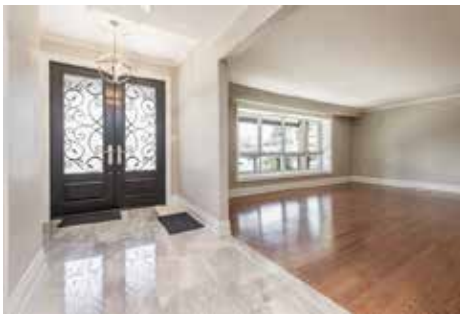
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# UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

TBD

## 2020 RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT SEMINARS *Postponed until Fall*

FRPO's annual Residential Tenancies Act seminars will be taking place this fall. These half-day events will highlight a variety of important items to assist our members in navigating the RTA. This year's seminar will focus on the impact of innovations in building operations, tenant services, and office administration on day to day property management and, in particular, the challenges of making changes while attempting to comply with regulatory restrictions imposed by the RTA. As always, the seminar will also provide important updates on legislation and the processing of applications at the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB). Presenters will highlight any changes that have occurred at the LTB over the past year.

TBD

## 2020 SPRING HOPE FOOD DRIVE *Postponed until further notice*

Typically held every April, this year's Spring Hope Food Drive has been postponed due to the ongoing health crisis. Please check the FRPO website regularly for updates on this and other events that have been impacted by COVID-19. In the meantime, please remember to donate to your local food bank. Donations are desperately needed.

NOV  
4

## APARTMENTALIZE 2020 *Postponed until November*

2020 Apartmentalize has been postponed to November 4-6, 2020 and will now take place in Dallas in conjunction with the Assembly of Delegates meeting. If you choose to attend the event in Dallas, more information will be communicated in June 2020.

MAY  
13

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *May 13, 2020 | 9:30am-11:00am*

Meeting on May 13th, 2020 via webinar due to the current shutdown. This meeting will include an overview of the past year, Chair's & President's address, approval of the financials, appointment of auditors and election of directors. We encourage all members to attend this important event. Please register in advance on our website.

JUL  
20

## FRPO CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC *July 20, 2020 | 11:00am to 8:00pm* Rattlesnake Point Golf Club, Milton

The FRPO Charity Golf Classic will be held on Monday, July 20th at Rattlesnake Point Golf Club in support of Interval House. This is an ideal opportunity to network with others in the industry. Enjoy a fun day out with your team and raise funds for Interval House. Registration for this event will open in spring 2020. Stay tuned for more info.



**COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED SEVERAL OF FRPO'S SCHEDULED EVENTS. AS THIS IS A DEVELOPING SITUATION, PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE REGULARLY FOR EVENT UPDATES. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT FRPO EVENTS, PLEASE CONTACT LYNZI MICHAL AT LMICHAL@FRPO.ORG.**





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# FEDERAL SUPPORT DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

CFAA's advocacy for rental housing providers

BY ■ JOHN DICKIE, PRESIDENT, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF APARTMENT ASSOCIATIONS



CFAA's core function is to advocate for federal government programs, policies and action that support rental-housing providers. The COVID-19 situation is fast changing, and so advocacy also has to be flexible to address the current pain points, as well as to position advocacy and government action for the best interests of the rental-housing industry in the long run.

As this article closes, CFAA's main priorities are:

1. Improving government messaging to emphasize that tenants who can pay their rent, should pay their rent.
2. Encouraging the federal government to provide financial support for provincial programs which deliver rent support, and especially rent support paid directly to rental housing providers, including the program FRPO is advocating.
3. Encouraging CMHC, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions and the government to require the banks and other lenders to provide deferrals as needed when rental providers cannot make their mortgage or loan payments in full, due to COVID-19.
4. As a back up, if steps 1, 2 and 3 do not address all the critical payment issues, creating a fund from which landlords can obtain low interest loans to support building operations and financing

payments in the face of income losses due to COVID-19.

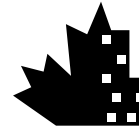
5. Supporting the availability of construction financing, so that rental housing development projects which are currently underway can continue.

CFAA is also working with our provincial affiliates (including FRPO) and other rental housing allies to support lobbying at the provincial and municipal level. All of us are concerned with the politics of landlord and tenant behaviour.

## SUPPORT PROGRAMS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE (AS OF APRIL 10)

The federal government introduced the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) on March 25, 2020. The CERB is to be managed by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). It will take the form of a payment of \$500 per week to workers who have lost





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income because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The amount is taxable, but no tax will be deducted at source.

In government-speak, "workers" include employees and the self-employed, including consultants, Uber drivers, and those who work in the "gig economy". Under the current plan, workers may receive the CERB for up to 16 weeks. Payments can be effective as far back as March 15, 2020, or can continue until the scheduled program end date, which is October 3, 2020.

The CERB replaces two measures announced previously, namely the Emergency Care Benefit and the Emergency Support Benefit.

By design, the eligibility for CERB is broad. The main requirements are:

- to be a Canadian resident
- to be at least 15 years old
- to have earned at least \$5,000 of income from work in the 52 weeks before their application, or in the previous calendar year [anywhere in the world]
- not to have access to paid leave or other income support

- to have lost income due to COVID-19 other than by quitting
- to have no income for at least 14 consecutive days of the four-week period that is applied for.

The CERB is open to:

- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick, or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.



## CFAA Rental Housing Awards

As the CFAA Awards Program is conducted completely online, it will continue for 2020, despite COVID-19 concerns.

However, CFAA understands that many people are working from home, and may not have access to all the files they need to complete their applications. As a result, CFAA has extended the deadline for applications to Monday, May 4.

In addition, as a precautionary measure due to COVID-19, this year's Rental Housing Awards will not include an Awards Dinner. Winners will still be acknowledged on CFAA's communications, website and Twitter, and will still receive a trophy. We are looking into ways to do a live announcement of the finalists and winners, so that contestants can still experience some of the anticipation and excitement of a live event. A final decision on that will be made soon.

For more information about the CFAA Rental Housing Awards Program, visit [www.cfaa-fcapi.org](http://www.cfaa-fcapi.org).

## Becoming an Awards judge

Each award category is assigned to a panel of volunteer experts, who will judge the submissions. All awards submissions will be sent to judges online, and judges will meet through CFAA's conference line. Judging does not require any face-to-face contact.

If you are interested in becoming a judge for the 2020 Awards, please email [awards@cfaa-fcapi.org](mailto:awards@cfaa-fcapi.org).

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**ON MARCH 27, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT IT IS ROLLING OUT AN EMERGENCY PLAN TO PAY A 75% WAGE SUBSIDY TO MANY BUSINESSES.”**



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- workers who are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

The federal government says the web portal and automated phone application system for CERB applications is to open on April 6. The CRA says that applicants will receive their CERB payments within 5 days through direct deposit or within 10 days by mail.

### THE NEW WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

On March 27, the federal government announced that it is rolling out an emergency plan to pay a 75% wage subsidy to many businesses. The subsidy would apply on the first \$58,700 of salary which translates to about \$847 per week. The program will be back-dated to March 15. The roll-out date is as yet unknown. Some small landlords may be able to access that funding to pay their employees, especially landlords with high wage costs such as managers of manufactured home communities.

As of March 31, the plan for the wage subsidy is that a business needs to have lost 30% of its revenue to receive the funding, and is not required to make the pay up to more than the subsidy. It seems that the revenue shortfall will be based on a month to month comparison (e.g. March 2019 versus March 2020).


Commentators believe the wage subsidy program will be of little direct use for most rental housing providers, although it should provide better incomes for many employed people who were laid off, and that will help numerous tenants to pay their rents. ■



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# COVID-19'S IMPACTS ON THE GTA RENTAL MARKET

Insights from Urbanation Inc.

According to new data from Urbanation, total lease transactions in the GTA condominium market grew 16% year-over-year during Q1-2020 to reach 7,002 units — the highest first quarter total on record. However, in measuring the performance of the market in the pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 periods (the start of the post-COVID-19 period being the week beginning March 16), there was a clear shift in activity.

The pre-COVID-19 period within the first quarter saw year-over-year growth in leases of 25%, while the post-COVID-19 period saw a steep decline in activity, with lease volume down 25% compared to the same period a year earlier and falling 39% compared to the first half of March. The decline in rental transactions can clearly be related to the impact of the protective measures and economic uncertainty stemming from the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, with renters less willing or able to take on a new lease at current rents, as well as the closing of Canadian borders and the logistical challenges with showing units and planning for a move in the current environment.

Of importance, rental supply did not experience the same degree of decline as leases, with new listings decreasing by a more modest 7% in the post-COVID-19 period from a year earlier. The relatively more stable level of new listings may be attributed to a rise in condo completions in the first quarter, tenants unable to pay their rent providing notice to vacate, and some short-term Airbnb units becoming available in the long-term market.

Units leased in Q1-2020 transacted at an average rent of \$3.35 per square foot (\$2,374), up 2% from a year ago. This confirmed that a slower inflationary environment for rents was already in place leading into the health crisis, with same-building rents flat year-over-year in the first quarter. As demand fell faster than supply in the second half of March, rents experienced a slight decline. The average monthly rent in the post-COVID-19 period decreased 0.7% year-over-year.

Not included in the data discussed above are furnished long-term rentals, which experienced a 29% year-over-year increase in listings during the first quarter to 1,382 units. At the same time, lease transactions for furnished rentals declined by 4%

to 562 units. Rents for furnished long-term condo rentals were priced almost 20% higher than unfurnished units at an average of \$2,836 (unchanged y/y). The growth in furnished long-term condo rental listings followed the city's short-term rental bylaw amendments that came into effect in November. The province's Airbnb suspension announced in early April will be captured in the second quarter data.

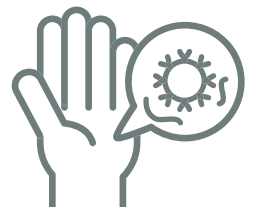
## PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL MARKET RESULTS

Urbanation's quarterly rental survey includes data collected for every new purpose-built rental apartment project that has been completed in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) since 2005, as well as new purpose-built rental projects under construction and in the pre-construction development stage.

Within the 72 purpose-built rental buildings completed in the GTA since 2005, the average surveyed rent for available units during Q1-2020 was \$2,481 per month, which was based on an average unit size of 748 sf and typically excluded most utility costs and parking costs, with the latter averaging \$140 per month for the GTA. On a same-building basis (i.e. excluding new completions during the past 12 months), average monthly per square foot rents increased by 2.6% year-over-year in Q1-2020.

The vacancy rate surveyed within rental buildings in the GTA completed since 2005 (excluding projects still in their initial lease-up period) averaged 1.0% in Q1-2020, rising slightly from 0.8% a year earlier.

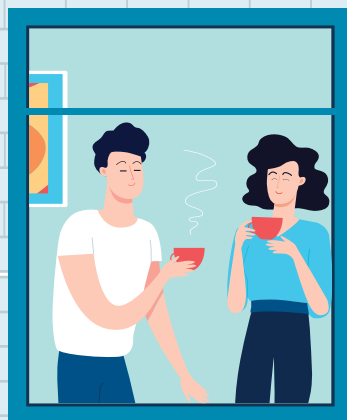
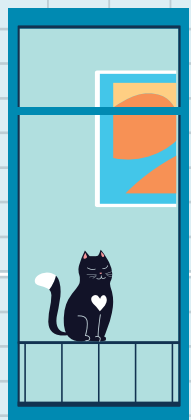
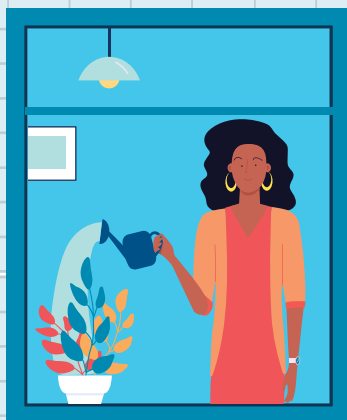
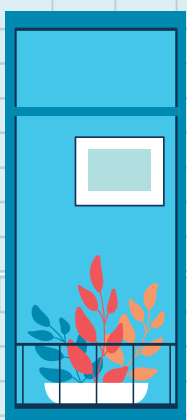
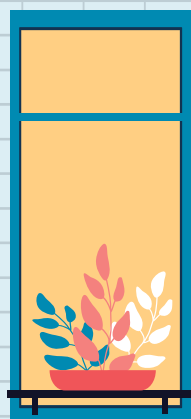
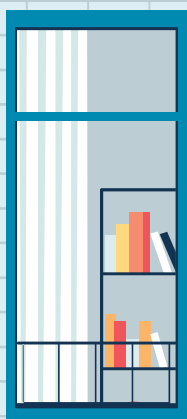
At the end of Q1-2020, the number of purpose-built rentals under construction in the GTA reached 13,580 units, up from 11,557 a year ago to reach the highest level since the 1970s when modern rent controls were enacted.





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# PROTECTING YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY

Getting the most from your insurance policy

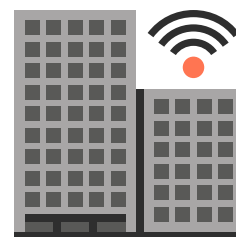
BY ■ JAMES MALCOLM, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF PERSONAL LINES, A.P. REID INSURANCE



As a landlord, it's imperative that you have the proper insurance coverage to protect you and your rental property in the unfortunate event of loss or damage. However, as insurance premium costs continue to rise due to significant increases in accidental or negligent damage to rentals, as well as personal liability claims, more landlords are looking for new ways to save on their policies.

“

**ENSURING YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY IS EQUIPPED WITH AN ALARM SYSTEM AS WELL AS SECURE LOCKS ON ALL THE DOORS AND WINDOWS WILL REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BURGLARY, IN TURN REDUCING YOUR PREMIUM.”**



#### Speak to a Licensed Insurance Broker.

Choosing the right insurer is essential. But with so many insurance providers offering home insurance for rental properties today, how do you know which is best for you? The answer: find a provider who specializes in rental property insurance – these providers are likely to have the coverage options most suitable for your needs, and possibly for a lower cost.

If you have more than one rental property, insuring them all with the same insurance provider in a bundle could also help you save more on your premium. Talk to your broker about custom coverage options and bundling your insurance needs to get more savings.

#### Be Selective and Educate Your Tenants.

The tenants living in your rental property may also have an effect on your insurance premium. For example, insurers are more readily willing to insure working professionals, and at a lesser cost than university students as the claims risk associated with insuring these individuals differs. Your premium may also be higher if you allow tenants to have pets in their rentals, or if smoking is permitted. Educating your tenants on items like keeping the doors and windows closed during the heating season, and making sure the taps are turned off before leaving the apartment will significantly reduce the potential for claims.


While your insurance policy protects you and your rental property, it's also important that you encourage tenants to carry the proper tenant insurance coverage in case of loss. Many tenants assume they'll be covered under their landlord's policy; however, this is not the case. Tenants are responsible for the insurance of their own belongings within their rental, as well as held liable for damage to the property or the property of other tenants. A key coverage available under a tenant's policy is Additional Living Expenses which covers the tenant for housing costs, etc. in the event they are required to leave their unit due to a claim. This protects you from covering these costs. Asking for proof of insurance as a prerequisite for tenancy is a good way to ensue both parties are protected, before potential loss or claims.

Enforcing mandatory tenant insurance may reduce premiums as insurers know they will not be paying out on claims caused by tenants such a grease fires or overflowing tubs. When a tenant has insurance, his or her liability coverage takes care of any damage for which they are legally liable. This saves you, the landlord from having to repair damage out of pocket or pay a deductible through your own policy.

**Finally, invest in premise security.** Ensuring your rental property is equipped with an alarm system as well as secure locks on all the doors and windows will reduce your risk of

burglary, in turn reducing your premium. Ask your broker about additional discounts such as those for fire alarm or sprinkler system installation.

There are many factors at play when it comes to calculating your insurance premiums, however, by following the tips outlined in this article, you could see significant savings.

When it comes time to purchase insurance for your rental property, be sure you're getting the most comprehensive policy for your needs, at the most competitive pricing. Talk to your broker today to find the right coverage for you. 

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# SUPPORTING STRONG, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Greenrock's legacy of "Giving Back"

BY ■ TY LIVELY MANAGER, MARKETING AND LEASING, GREENROCK RESIDENT SERVICES



**G**reenrock Real Estate Advisors (GREA) is a family business with a long history of giving back. The goal of Greenrock's philanthropic endeavors is to empower employees, residents, commercial tenants, and our clients to directly influence social change within their communities and across the country. This is accomplished by creating a culture that enables tenants and staff to have a voice in what philanthropic opportunities are pursued. The formation of the Greenrock IMPACT Committee has provided a platform to discuss, develop, and pursue innovative strategies to better our community.

Greenrock IMPACT sets a trailblazing precedent within the rental housing industry for its unwavering commitment to philanthropy and is encompassed by Greenrock's many annual donations, events, volunteer initiatives, and campaigns.

Every year, Greenrock gifts its time, efforts, and hundreds of thousands of dollars through its charitable trust to charities to support its mission of building stronger, healthier, and environmentally sustainable communities. Greenrock's IMPACT Committee has created a unique annual resident donation program that directly involves residents in the nominating and voting process to select the winning charities.

Beyond these donations, Greenrock's IMPACT Committee organizes a variety of annual philanthropic efforts, including staff volunteer days at local charities and food drives. Greenrock is also a platinum level







sponsor of the Greater Toronto Apartment Association's (GTAA) efforts to combat homelessness in Toronto.

When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, Greenrock's Board of Directors stepped up immediately to provide relief and support measures to its residents and communities.

To address the financial strain on residents, Greenrock is offering a rent assistance program whereby residents can apply to use their last month's rent as a credit towards their upcoming rent payments. Greenrock takes the position that the last month's rent deposit belongs to its residents and as such put the program in place as an act of principle. Residents can choose to use a portion of this credit or the full amount that can be replenished in the future at no additional cost or interest.

"They paid the last month's deposit so there's an argument that it's their money," Greenrock's chief operating officer Justin Taylor told CTV News.

All rent increase notices have also been deferred until after the pandemic is over.

To further support residents, all Greenrock managed suites were gifted \$100 grocery gift cards in April 2020 to help with their household's food expenses. All units will receive additional \$100 grocery gift cards in May and June 2020.



<<< THE GREENROCK IMPACT INITIATIVE, LAUNCHED IN 2018, GIVES TENANTS AND EMPLOYEES A VOICE IN GREENROCK'S PHILANTHROPIC PURSUITS.





<<< FROM DONATING BACKPACKS TO STUDENTS IN NEED TO VOLUNTEERING AT HOMELESS SHELTERS, GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY IS A CORE MISSION AT GREENROCK.

These initiatives and donations are part of Greenrock's COVID-19 Relief Fund, which was unveiled in March 2020. To date, Greenrock's Board of Directors pledged a total of \$1.5 million towards the relief fund through its properties and the Greenrock Charitable Trust to aid residents and community members who have been impacted by the pandemic. Of the \$1.5 million contribution, \$900,000 will be allocated towards charitable donations and \$600,000 will directly support residents.

Each charity to receive donations from Greenrock's COVID-19 Relief Fund have and will be carefully selected by Greenrock's IMPACT Committee, alongside a third-party consulting agency. Food security, mental health, domestic abuse, and senior care

have been identified as key areas of concern to address during the pandemic.

The first \$300,000 tranche of charitable donations was divided among the following Toronto-based charities in April 2020: Daily Bread Food Bank, Stella's Place, Kids Help Phone, The 519, The Redwood, and Sprint Senior Care.

A further \$600,000 will be donated through the Greenrock Charitable Trust in May and June 2020 to fund future relief efforts based on what Greenrock's Board of Directors and IMPACT Committee perceive to be the most vital needs at the time.

"I'm proud of our board and management team for making this happen," said Greenrock's chief executive officer Gloria Mogavero, "As we reach out to help each

other, if only in a small way, including all our residents in these measures is especially meaningful. It's a time of separation but we've never been closer."

Since Greenrock's announcement of the COVID-19 Relief Fund, many residents have come forward to express their gratitude and plans to pay it forward themselves. For example, one resident donated a portion of their grocery gift card to a local food bank.

It is truly special to see everyone come together during this pandemic. Showing compassion is extremely important in times of crisis and Greenrock believes in doing what is right for its residents. Greenrock's Board of Directors and IMPACT Committee will continue to seek ways to support its residents and communities moving forward. ■



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# ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES SAFE?

Best practices for occupational health and safety

BY ■ KIM REID, OWNER, TAEUS GROUP INC



Given the rapid spread of COVID-19, health and safety has never been so topical. Employers need to protect their staff and supervisors now, perhaps, more than ever. With “stay at home” orders now the norm across Canada, most employers are looking forward to resuming work as usual. When that day comes, we’ll all take comfort in the knowledge that so many lives were spared, and vital lessons learned, from this unprecedented era of imposed physical distancing.

Global pandemic aside, the law dictates that a copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) must be posted in the workplace addressing all areas of threat or danger. For property managers, this means every building. The OHSA (or “Green Book” as it is commonly referred to) is available from Service Ontario locations or online at [www.publications.serviceontario.ca](http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca) and you can learn more about the Act at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca).

Employers are also required to print (preferably in colour), a poster that summarizes workers’ health and safety rights, and responsibilities of employers and supervisors. Titled “Health & Safety at Work – Prevention Starts Here”, the poster must be displayed in English and the majority language of the workplace. An easily downloadable file is available at [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca).

In workplaces in which more than five workers are regularly employed, the employer must prepare a written Occupational Health and Safety Policy. Your policy is required to state the commitment of staff and supervisors to work toward a healthy and safe work environment. You must review that policy at least once a year and set up and maintain a program to implement it. A copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Policy must be posted in the workplace, where workers will be most likely to see it. Materials must be provided in English and in the majority language in the workplace.

#### KNOW YOUR WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION SYSTEM (“WHMIS”)

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training is legally required for all employees who are exposed or likely to be exposed to a hazardous material or controlled product at the workplace, and the onus is on the employer to ensure that his

**“WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY LATEX GLOVES AFTER I’M DONE USING THEM?”**  
— ASKS A CLEANER ABOUT NEW COVID-19 MEASURES

or her staff is properly trained. The type and amount of training will depend on whether a product is new to the workplace and/or newly classified as a hazardous product.

Staff in residential buildings may handle various cleaning products that are most likely WHMIS controlled materials, and training is needed for how to handle, store and dispose of them properly. This includes ensuring staff know what personal protective equipment (PPE) is advised (and when/how to use it) and what to do in the event of an accident with a chemical.

It is recommended that workers be trained and refreshed on topics each year and go no longer than three years without retraining.

**“CAN YOU PLEASE GO AND SEE IF MY MOTHER IS OK? WE’VE NOT BEEN ABLE TO REACH HER AND SHE’S ON HER OWN”**  
— ASKS A FAMILY MEMBER OF ONE OF YOUR ELDERLY TENANTS.

As well, employers are required to make sure that all hazardous products (as defined by the Hazardous Products Regulations) have an up-to-date Safety Data Sheet (SDS) when it enters the workplace. The SDSs must be readily available to the workers who are exposed to the hazardous product, and to the health and safety committee or representative.

Note that, as of December 1, 2018, there must be WHMIS 2015 labels and SDSs for all hazardous products in the workplace, and workers now need education on WHMIS 2015.

A free PDF of WHMIS pictograms are available for print at: [www.ccohs.ca](http://www.ccohs.ca).

#### FIRST AID

All employers covered by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act are required to have first aid equipment, facilities and trained personnel in all workplaces. Your building must have an easily accessible first aid station and there should always be at least one staff member on shift who has first aid training. As well, all vehicles used for work purposes, including personal vehicles, should also have a first aid kit and supplies.

#### A FIRST AID STATION MUST CONTAIN:

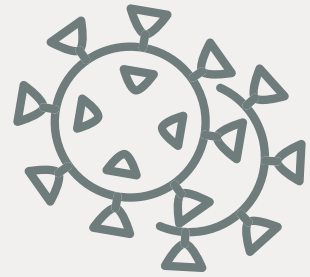
- (a) a first aid box;
- (b) a notice board displaying,
  - (i) the Board’s poster known as Form 82
  - (ii) the valid first aid certificates of qualification of the trained workers on duty, and
  - (iii) an inspection card with spaces for recording the date of the most recent inspection of the first aid box and the signature of the person making the inspection.

A first aid station must be placed in the charge of a worker who works in the immediate vicinity of the first aid station and who is qualified in first aid, and easily accessible for the prompt treatment of any worker at all times. You may assemble your own first aid kit for your workplace, or purchase ready-made kits from the supplier of your choice. More information, including a guide on what should be included, is available at [www.wsib.on.ca/WSIBPortal](http://www.wsib.on.ca/WSIBPortal).



## Emergency Pandemic Measures

Property managers and on-site staff are at higher risk of catching COVID-19 due to increased exposure levels in multi-residential buildings. Keeping them safe is a priority, and strict new measures should be enforced during this ongoing state of emergency. Here are some generic guidelines the City of Toronto released in late-March:



- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer or a hand washing station with soap and water should be placed at all building entrances.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be available in all common areas that remain open, such as laundry rooms.
- Close non-essential common areas such as bathrooms, gyms, playrooms, playgrounds and other high traffic areas.
- Routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces in common areas, including doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, toilet handles, counters, hand rails, touch screen surfaces and keypads, with common household cleaners and disinfectants.
- Organize the building to accept deliveries of essential goods, like medications, for residents to avoid non-essential trips outside.
- Post signage limiting the number of residents allowed in common areas, including laundry rooms and elevators, to ensure that individuals are able to maintain a two-metre distance. Consider allowing a maximum of three residents at a time in elevators.
- When showing units or suites for sale or lease, practice physical distancing – keep a safe distance of two metres from the resident and wash hands with soap and water, and or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, before and after the visit.

Additional information regarding Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Guidance for Commercial or Residential Buildings can be found [www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/8ecd-General-Infection-Prevention-and-Control-Practice-and-Disinfection-Guidance-for-Commercial-or-Residential-Buildings.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/8ecd-General-Infection-Prevention-and-Control-Practice-and-Disinfection-Guidance-for-Commercial-or-Residential-Buildings.pdf).

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The people in your leasing and management offices are your most important customer service ambassadors. However, they are also on the frontlines of nearly every tenant issue.

Safety training for them begins the moment a potential tenant walks in. This includes practices on showing units, especially after hours and on weekends. These staff members should be well-versed in effective communication and conflict resolution strategies to handle the variety of requests, complaints – and even potential harassment claims – they may encounter.

The OHSA sets out roles and responsibilities of workplace parties with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment, including developing and implementing policies and programs and providing information and instruction on these. Visit [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca).

Sadly, your on-site staff members are often the ones who respond when issues of tenant suicide or death arise. Clear policies should be in place surrounding entering units where a suspected death or suicide may have occurred.

### LIFE SAFETY

When an emergency – such as a fire, flood, injury or illness – occurs, all staff need to be ready to respond quickly and efficiently.

During these incidents, the most valuable role your staff can play is assisting emergency services personnel in gaining the appropriate access to the building and knowing how to shut off elevators, water and power.

Ensure you have policies on fire and elevator safety, as well as an overall building emergency plan, in place.

### REPORTING WORKPLACE INCIDENTS OR STRUCTURAL HAZARDS

Employers covered by the OHSA may need to notify the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the workplace joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative, and the union (if there is one) when:

- Someone is killed or critically injured.
- One of your workers has an occupational illness.
- There is an accident, explosion or fire, or there is an incident of workplace violence and someone is injured and can't do their usual work or needs medical attention.
- There is an accident or unexpected event on a construction site, even if no one is hurt.
- You are made aware of a potential structural inadequacy of the building that could be a hazard to workers.

Visit [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca) for more information on these regulations.

### TENANTS CAN PLAY A ROLE

Tenant education can also be an important safety practice. Educate them not to let strangers into the building, including “friends” of other tenants who buzz up asking to be let in. Ensure you have clear signage in the lobby to reinforce this regulation.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

Workplaces with a positive health and safety culture have fewer injuries, are rated “better places to work” (for your residents, a better place to live), and have more satisfied, productive employees. These employees return to work more quickly after an injury or illness and produce higher-quality products and services.

But health and safety training and awareness isn't just about following the rules, or what's good for business; it's about the health and safety of your staff. Above all, it is the right thing to do. ■

*Taeus Group provides training programs, which include: leasing, customer service excellence, communication skills, OH&S, AODA, Human Rights and Privacy.*



# A DRIVE FOR HOPE

Rental-housing providers and residents working together

BY ■ CHLOE HILL, MANAGER, COMMUNICATIONS FRPO



This April 21st would have marked 21 years since we first launched the Spring H.O.P.E Food Drive, our annual mission to collect donations for those in need across the province. Though circumstances have required us to cancel this event, now donations are needed more than ever as more Canadians are out of work and relying on the kindness of others.

This initiative significantly helps stock the shelves of local food banks and has provided hundreds of thousands of pounds of food since its inception. It also provides a fantastic opportunity for residents and housing providers to come together and give back to their communities.

Organized by FRPO, as well as several regional associations including: the Greater Toronto Apartment Association (GTAA); Eastern Ontario Landlord Organization (EOLLO); London Property Management Association (LPMA); and Hamilton District Apartment Association (HDAA), we look forward to resuming our efforts when we are able.

The 2019 Hunger Report states: "Between April 1st, 2018 and March 31st, 2019, Ontario's food banks were accessed by 510,438 individuals who visited more than 3,059,000 times throughout the year. 33% of food bank visitors were children."

Living in poverty includes having a lack of access to necessities and services, like health care and information, as well as obstacles that make it difficult for an individual or family to participate in society in a meaningful way. The Ontario Association of Food Banks estimates that the number of seniors in need is actually higher given the stigma around asking for help and other barriers that may prevent one from accessing a food bank.

According to Statistics Canada and Canadian Feed the Children, Household food insecurity is strongly linked to poverty in Canada. One in eight households in Canada is food insecure, amounting to over 4 million Canadians – including 1.15 million children – living in homes that struggle to put food on the table.

Bonnie Hoy one of the founding members of the Spring H.O.P.E Drive, commented on the initiative: "It's hard to believe that after twenty-one years, we still need food banks in this country. It's an unfortunate reality. In turn, it's heartwarming to see landlords and residents working together to make a small difference for those in need." ■

*The SpringHope Food Drive has been postponed until further notice due to the COVID-19 Crisis. If you are looking for ways to help or donate during this time, please contact your local food bank.*

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**Dana Senagama,**  
Principal/Manager,  
Market Analysis (GTA)



**Arlene Etchen,**  
Outreach Specialist

# RENTAL DEMAND CONTINUES TO OUTPACE SUPPLY

Insights from CMHC's Rental Market Survey

BY ■ ANGELINA RITACCO, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING, MEDIA AND DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT, CMHC



**T**he national vacancy rate for rental apartment units declined in 2019 for a third consecutive year to 2.2%, its lowest level for all-bedroom types since 2002, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Rental Market Survey (RMS) released January 15, 2020.

"The national vacancy rate for purpose-built rental apartments declined for a third consecutive year in 2019, as strong rental demand continued to outpace growth in supply," said Bob Dugan, CMHC's chief economist. "Low vacancy rates in major centres underscore the need for increased rental supply to ensure access to affordable housing."

CMHC conducts the RMS annually in October to gauge how economic, demographic and other factors impact Canada's rental markets. The survey looks at purpose-built structures with three or more rental units in urban areas with populations of over 10,000.

At this year's annual CMHC Rental Market Breakfast, Dana Senagama, CMHC Principal Market Analyst presented the survey's top insights and trends to FRPO and GTAA members.



## TIGHT RENTAL MARKET CONDITIONS PREVAIL

Improved supply growth in the purpose-built rental market due to higher rental completions helped the average apartment vacancy rate to edge up to 1.5% in 2019 from 1.2% in the previous year.

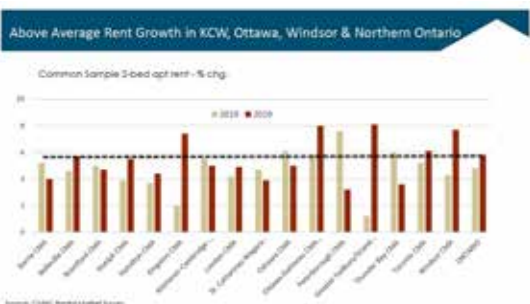
"Despite the increase, high homeownership costs coupled with tightened mortgage regulations have encouraged individuals in the GTA to continue to seek or remain in rental accommodation in 2019," said Dana Senagama, Principal Market Analyst.



## THE AVERAGE APARTMENT VACANCY RATE REMAINS LOW FROM A HISTORICAL STANDPOINT IN THE GTA AND ONTARIO.

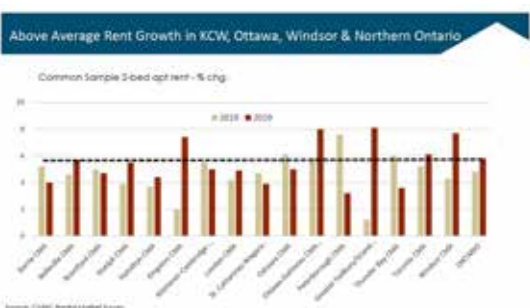
House prices continue to recover following unprecedented levels back in 2017, but remain elevated relative to previous years. Furthermore, prices of multiple-family dwellings such as condominium apartments and townhouses, which are typically more popular among first-time homebuyers, have showed stronger price growth than other housing types over the past 12 months, thus pushing demand towards the rental market.

Higher rental completions have helped to provide relief to the rental market and pushed the vacancy rate higher - especially noticeable within the City of Toronto where the average vacancy rate has increased above 2%.



## AVERAGE RENTS FOR THE PURPOSE-BUILT MARKET

Nationally, tighter rental markets were accompanied by strong rent growth, with average rents increasing by 3.9% for a two-bedroom apartment between October 2018 and October 2019. This is the fastest pace of same-sample rent growth since October 2001. In Ontario, we see above average rent growth in Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Ottawa, Windsor and Northern Ontario.



## RENTS INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE THE PROVINCIAL GUIDELINE

Tight rental market conditions allowed landlords to charge new tenants higher rents and in turn, average rent growth in the GTA significantly exceeded the provincial guideline of 1.8% for 2019. The average rents for the matched two-bedroom units on a year-to-year basis have been growing at an increasing rate.

While this growth is predominantly driven by tight rental market conditions, a rising number of renovations may have also put some upward pressure on the average rents of existing units. The number of newly completed purpose-built rentals (which typically charge higher rents) has also been increasing in recent years, which has contributed to the growth of average rents for the market as a whole.

The turnover rate decreasing to 9.5% in 2019 from 11.2% in 2018 is indicative of existing renters remaining in their rental properties, likely influenced by the fact that recently the average asking rents charged for vacant units are about 25% higher compared to that of occupied units in the Toronto CMA.

Turnover rates in most centres remained lower, in Ontario the rate decreased to 13% from 14.9% in 2018.





## YOUNGER AGE GROUPS AND MIGRANTS DRIVE RENTAL DEMAND

Key sources of new demand for rental housing are newly formed households headed by younger age groups and migrants. As of October 2019, the population of individuals aged 25-44, a key demographic in the rental market, saw the strongest year-over-year growth in almost two decades at 4.9%. This demographic cohort has also experienced significant year-over-year growth in full-time employment, which enhances their ability to enter the rental market.

Economic conditions in the GTA have been improving with broad-based employment growth across industries (particularly in the technology sector), rising average weekly earnings, and a low unemployment rate.

These favourable economic conditions continue to draw immigrants and temporary workers to the GTA, which strengthen rental demand. Additionally, international students, another key rental market demographic, have been growing faster in the GTA than other major Canadian CMA.

## MOMENTUM IN RENTAL CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Strong rental demand in recent years has resulted in increased construction of rental properties across the GTA. Rental apartment starts have increased over the past five years following a dearth in construction during the preceding decade, but continue to lag that of condominium apartments.

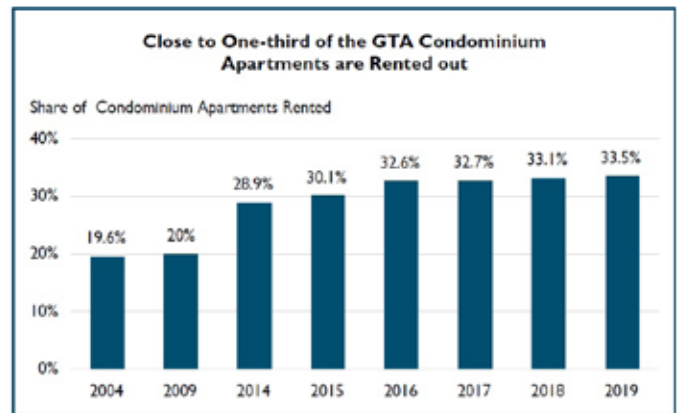
Total rental apartment starts jumped by 6% to reach 3,435 units over the 12-month period ending June 30, 2019 (which is the cut-off point for the survey) while condominium apartment starts rose by 3% to 22,124 units and continue to amount to less than a fifth of the total condominium apartment starts.

Rising rental starts activity has meant the pace of their completions has also risen with a 25% increase in rental apartment completions between the survey periods. A strong increase in rental apartment completions, along with conversions and units re-added to the universe after renovations, helped the total purpose-built rental universe to increase by nearly 1% in 2019.

The Halton Region recorded the highest growth in the rental universe (4%) with roughly 590 units added. Strong transportation networks such as the GO-Train service, which provide easy access to downtown Toronto, has made this region an attractive market for young renters.

## CONDOMINIUM APARTMENT MARKET REMAINS TIGHT

Tight rental market conditions in the primary rental market has extended to the secondary rental market, with the average condominium apartment vacancy rate edging up but remaining low from a historical



Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey

standpoint at 0.8% in 2019. The lack of purpose-built rental supply in the primary rental market has meant that the condominium apartment market has acted as the de-facto rental accommodation supplier for many years in the GTA.

This is no different in 2019, with the share of rented condominium apartments amounting to a third of the total condominium apartment universe, and is indicative of persistent investor demand. The share of newly completed units added to the condominium universe and leased are almost 50%. In the 12-month period ending May 2019, the cut off point for the condominium survey, condominium apartment completions were lower by 3% (at 15,303 units) from the previous year.

However, the stock of rental condominium apartments has grown by 6% in 2019 compared to a more restrained rate of 3% during the previous year. These supply increases are due to a higher share of newly completed condominium units and previously leased owner-occupied condominium units.

Relatively low interest rates, low yields for some other investment asset classes and stronger growth in resale prices have discouraged investors from selling at completion. In addition, low vacancy rates and higher rent growth have encouraged both new and existing condominium apartment owners to lease out their properties either as a long-term investment or in anticipation of future price appreciation, which is consistent with tight market conditions prevailing in the resale condominium sector this year.

As supply struggled to keep up with the increasing rental demand, property owners have been able to charge higher rents from tenants. The matched-sample average rent for condominium apartments is nearly 13% higher than the previous year, almost double the rate of increase recorded for private purpose-built rental apartments. ■

# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES IN A CRISIS

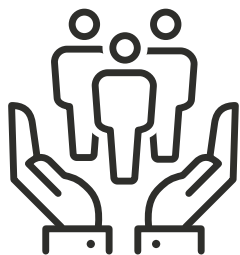


David Eisenstadt,  
Partner, tcgpr, Toronto

Fast, effective ways to address residents, employees and stakeholders

BY ■ DAVID EISENSTADT, PARTNER, TCGPR, TORONTO  
AND CAROL MERRY, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, FAHLGREN MORTINE, COLUMBUS, OH

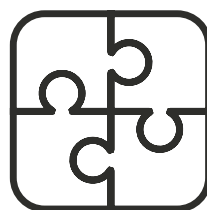
As the coronavirus situation continues to evolve, companies require quick and effective communications strategies for their various stakeholder audiences, with a focus on employees.



## CONSIDER ALL AUDIENCES – START FROM THE INSIDE

In uncertain times, employees will look to you for timely information on how your organization expects to be affected and how it will manage through the crisis. Coordinated, consistent and appropriately frequent

communication will be appreciated. Employees are the conduit to other concerned audiences, such as customers, investors, supply chain partners, local communities and in this industry, residents.



## REVISIT YOUR BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

As your IT, HR and Facilities Management teams are reviewing contingency plans, they will probably need help to communicate appropriately. It is important that the communications teams understand

the processes that will be employed if the business needs to close because of sickness, if it cannot obtain materials from suppliers or other disruptions. Keep communications consistent and from consistent trusted sources.



## USE DISCRETE COMMUNICATIONS

It is advisable to stick to the coronavirus topic and refrain from incorporating too much corporate strategy and goals into the communication. Empathy and

humanity are top of mind for employees. Don't induce panic, but express how seriously your organization takes this global threat. Continue regular business communication but keep it separate from instructions on the crisis situation.



## DEVELOP A PANDEMIC SCENARIO FOR YOUR CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Review your crisis communications plan to be sure you have a scenario that applies to the coronavirus.

Many crisis plans separate physical plant accessibility and reputation scenarios; today's challenge can affect both. Double-check the alignment between crisis communication and business continuity plans. It is always best practice to stage a crisis simulation exercise on a regular basis. A tabletop exercise specifically devoted to the threats associated with the coronavirus should be planned sooner rather than later.



## LEVERAGE CREDIBLE SOURCES

The World Health Organization and the Canadian Government (<http://www.canada.ca/en/services/health.html>) are continually providing information on the status of the spread of the coronavirus

as well as information on protecting yourself and identifying symptoms. In addition, these organizations provide Q&A and myth-dispelling information. Provide information to answer specific questions and refer to these sites where employees and others can educate themselves.



# WEATHERING THE COVID-19 STORM

“Small” landlords need “big” solutions to get through the crisis

BY ■ JOE HOFFER, COHEN HIGHLEY LLP

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**A**n early April survey conducted by FRPO shows that small landlords have been disproportionately hit by April 2020 rent defaults, which tenants attribute to COVID-19 loss of income. Many tenants whose incomes have been lost or reduced due to the pandemic were able to pay rent for April because of savings or receipt of paychecks for work done prior to the COVID shutdowns; however, they now face a cash crunch as May approaches and it is again expected that small landlords will be hit hard by the tenants' loss of income.

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Small landlords often have mortgages that are comparatively higher to value than those of large landlords and higher operating costs relative to revenue. The loss of rental income against constant expense costs will have an adverse impact on the ability of landlords, like their tenants, to meet their financial obligations.

For most small landlords, unlike owners of large rental portfolios, there are no "deep pockets" from which to weather a financial storm.

So what can small landlords take to mitigate rent losses and keep revenue flowing?

Where tenants are in arrears, find out why. If it is COVID-19 related, let them know you share their concerns about the financial impact of the pandemic and that you are willing to help them to meet their rental obligations and retain their housing. Make it clear to them that the rent must be paid. Educate yourself about the financial assistance programs available to your tenants and make sure your tenants are aware of, and where eligible, have applied for relief under those programs.

If the tenants are willing to work with you, and you with them, have the tenant "apply" to you for rent relief in a document where they set out what they can pay now (it should be no less than, say 50% of the monthly rent unless there are exceptional circumstances) and their plan for how they will make up the shortfall plus pay rent going forward. In some cases the only shortfall might be for partial April and May's arrears, with June to be paid in full, plus an additional amount to retire the shortfall from April and May (spread over 3 or 4 months starting in July). In other cases it might just be arrears from April or May that need to be recovered and in still others, the monthly payments might be reduced for three or four

months, with arrears recovery over a longer period. The goal at this early stage is to try to get and understanding of the cause of arrears; some control over revenue projections; and, to do what you can with the tenant and your own negotiating skills to come up with a realistic rent recovery plan with each tenant.

With tenants who are prepared to work with you, enter into an agreement with that tenant for repayment and ensure the agreement requires that they provide proof that they have applied for financial assistance from the government and that they provide the results of the request for that assistance (i.e. whether it is approved or rejected, you want to see something in writing from the agency to which the application was made).

Upon receipt of the results, the repayment plan can be adjusted based on income received: for example, if the tenant applies for and receives the full \$2,000 monthly subsidy, you can revisit whether that, combined with other sources of income, is sufficient to bring the rent into good standing. If the financial situation for the tenant is hopeless, then negotiate with the tenant to vacate and, if the tenant is unwilling to do so, issue an N4 and start the termination process. The termination process may provide the incentive for the tenant to pay the rent owed and if not, at least it will eventually result in a unit which can be put back on the market at a future date.

There will be some tenants who simply withhold all of the rent and make no effort to communicate with you. Usually, the best course is to simply issue an N4 and follow up with an eviction application. Recognize that some tenants will just stay in the unit "rent free" for as long as they can so if you fail to start the eviction and termination process right away, you will just prolong the time frame for

ultimately getting them out and replacing them with a paying tenant.

If you are renting to students who have guarantors, there is a further consideration to make before issuing an N4. COVID-19 has resulted in a high number of students attempting to "break" their leases in anticipation of a delayed school year or due to loss of income. If you issue an N4, you will be granting their wish because it lets them out of their lease by just leaving on the termination date. If the student has a guarantor, the guarantor is also off the hook if you serve an N4 and the lease is terminated. In such circumstances, rather than seek to terminate the lease, you have the option of filing an L9 (application for judgment for rent arrears only) in which case you can obtain a judgment without termination of the tenancy. You can enforce the judgment against the tenant or you can enforce the Guarantee. While it may take some time to get the judgment due to the LTB backlog, filing the application will get you into the queue and may prompt payment of the arrears by the tenant or the guarantor if only to avoid adverse consequences for their credit rating and it will preserve the tenancy.

In addition to measures to preserve revenue, another key is to educate yourself about the financial assistance and options available to you to reduce your expenses. The province's Emergency Order overrides your obligations under the RTA for "repairs and maintenance" unless the work is "strictly necessary" for health and safety reasons or for "essential operations" of the building. This will allow you to defer some maintenance expenses. Your municipality may have deferred electricity, tax, utility consumption bills and HST payments and mortgage payments may also be deferred upon proper application for same. Landscaping





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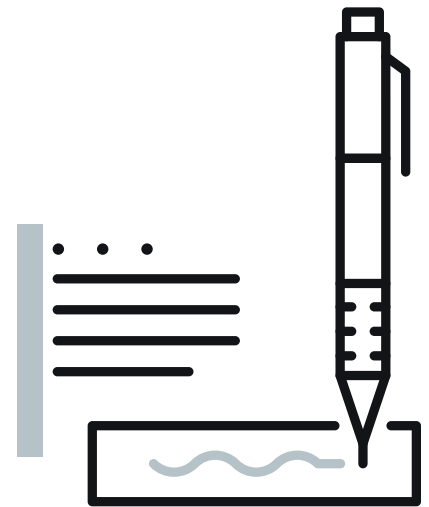
**COVID-19 IS AN ILLNESS WHICH WILL CREATE DISPROPORTIONATELY “BIG PROBLEMS” FOR SMALL LANDLORDS.”**

can be deferred (other than snow removal, salting, outdoor pest control, dangerous tree limb removal) but pest control, cleaning and sanitizing common areas cannot be ignored. The goal is to reduce and defer operations expenses without sacrificing “essential services” relative to health and safety.

Finally, if tenants vacate upon receipt of an N4 or “skip” after withholding rent for a few months, market and re-let the unit to a qualified prospect. The COVID-19 Emergency Order does not prohibit landlords from preparing rental units for suite turnover so if a tenant vacates, the unit can be cleaned, repaired and marketed for rental. In small buildings where rent defaults may lead to a landlord’s insolvency, a strong case can also be made to support a conclusion that work done

for suite turnover is strictly necessary for the “essential operation” of the rental property. Depending on where your building is located, there is still a market for rentals by qualified prospects. One error many small landlords make, however, is failing to properly screen tenants because they are desperate for the deposit cheque and first months’ rent and they disregard references, credit history or even income confirmation. The cost of poor prospect screening can far exceed that of COVID-19 if a “professional tenant” is accepted.

COVID-19 is an illness which will create disproportionately “big problems” for small landlords; however, those who are proactive in preserving revenue in a practical way, and reducing or deferring expense obligations, will better position themselves to find a cure. ■



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# BUILDING ASSESSMENTS MADE EASY

CRB's comprehensive audit review templates

BY ■ TED WHITEHEAD, DIRECTOR OF CERTIFICATION, FRPO



Recently, the Certified Rental Building Program expanded its Standards of Practice Disciplines to include the assessment of a building's overall state of condition. This was done to provide members with an added value – and the comfort of knowing that the conditional state of their properties would meet or exceed municipal property standards.

Of course, third-party audits are needed on occasion to identify key deficiencies that can lead to higher insurance premiums, inspection fees or other fines. But having access to an internal assessment tool helps asset managers regulate their buildings' condition while streamlining operations and ensuring an overall safe, well-managed property.

#### ACCESS & BENEFITS

To have access to this assessment tool, users must be a good-standing FRPO Member or LLBC and enrolled in the CRB program (Ontario or B.C.). To date, reports have been overwhelmingly positive, with cited benefits including: thoroughness of the assessment criteria; effectiveness of having one simple, low cost automation solution; and ease of implementation.

Moving towards any automation process requires identifying the "desired state", as well as the key areas of deficiency. It can be a long

and extensive process, not to mention a costly one. Using the CRBP audit templates can cut those time and costs significantly.

#### iAuditor: A Simple Low-cost Automation Solution

In our search for a low-cost automated software solution, CRBP reviewed several competing products and eventually settled on the iAuditor, developed by Safety Culture. Easy to use with a smart phone or similar device, this software provides flexibility and capability.

The corporate goal of iAuditor is to: "Provide an auditing process by making it easy for anyone to effectively manage safety and quality from a mobile device. Frontline workers are empowered to report issues quickly to prevent an incident due to inefficiency and limited visibility."

With more than 400 properties now having been successfully audited using this software in the last few months, we can confirm with confidence that the product works as intended.



## CRBP AUDIT TEMPLATES

The CRBP audit process involves reviewing over 500 individual requirements per building. Each of these areas is rated as one of the following: Meets Standard; Critical Deficiency (impacting life, health & Safety of residents and staff); Important Deficiency; or, Needs Improvement.

Our audit methodology is an evidence-based approach. Each CRBP-approved third-party auditor takes an average of 150 to 200 pictures per building audit as verification of what they've witnessed.



### MAIN TEMPLATE

The main audit template provides an overview of the property, location, size, number of units, date property was audited, and the number of critical items/deficiencies noted by the auditor.

What follows next is an index of the various requirements that were checked during the audit. On the electronic version of the final report, items in the table of contents can be clicked on to view that particular area in detail and see the pictures and comments provided by the auditor.

**26X Duke Street, XXXX, ON - Dec 2019**  
 (PMP) - CRBP Building Audit (100 - 100%)

**Failed items**  
 4

**Address**  
 26X Duke Street, XXXX, ON - Property Manager - XXXX

**Building Exterior**  
 Photo 1

**Completed at**  
 4th Dec 2019 2:05 PM EST

**Location**  
 XXXXXX, Ontario, Canada (43.2584444444444, -79.8638888888889)

**Size**  
 How many floors & Fire Building?  
 6  
 How many suites & Fire Building?  
 All

**Failed Items**

**Asset Condition / Building Entrance (AC-05)**  
 AC-05c Intercom - A resident entry/intercom system is clean and operational and does not identify residents by suite number.  
**Critical: Identifies resident by suite number**

**Photo**

**Asset Condition / Fire Safety Box (OP-01)**  
 OP-01a Fire Safety Box - A locked Fire Safety Plan Box is located at the building entrance.  
**Critical: No Fire Safety Plan Box at building entrance**

**Asset Condition / Emergency Contact Sign (AC-08 & RM-01)**  
 AC-08f Emergency Contact Sign - An emergency contact sign that identifies who to contact in case of an emergency - 24 hours a day - is prominently posted in the lobby or other central area of the building.  
**Critical: Missing**

### (SAMPLE ONLY)

### (SAMPLE ONLY)

Asset Condition
Address Signage (AC-01)
Exterior Grounds, Walkways and Waste Area (AC-02)
Outdoor Parking (AC-03)
Building Exterior (AC-04)
Building Entrance (AC-05)
Fire Safety Box (OP-01)
Lobby (AC-08)
Emergency Contact Sign (AC-08 & RM-01)
Resident Notification Board (RM-01)
Mailroom (AC-09)
Elevators (AC-10 & OP-12)
Elevators (OP-12)
Elevator Room (AC-10 & OP-12)
Roof (AC-11 & OP-13)
Stairwells Common Area (AC-14)
Hallways (AC-13) (Auditor to select 3 floors minimum (Upper/Riser/Lower))
Hallway Garbage Chute Rooms (AC-15) (Resident Use)

Documentation Audit - Resident Focused Documentation
Human Rights & Resident Privacy
New Resident Information
Resident Communications, Forms & Notices
Toronto Only - Resident Communications, Forms & Notices (Noticeboard requirements)
Resident's File - Completed Information & Response Forms
Suite Inspection - Annual & Turnover
Documentation Audit - Building Focused Documentation
Building Emergency Planning & Fire Safety
Building Inspections
Building Operations Forms, Logs & Reports
Other Operational Forms, Logs & Reports
Toronto Only - Operational Forms, Logs & Reports

### SUB-TEMPLATE #1 - Building Condition Audit

Our goal is to examine the conditional state of a property from top to bottom and everything in between. CRBP-approved auditors are trained to thoroughly examine each requirement with a strong degree of criticality.

Key to each audit is an independent third-party audit review, which provides an objective and unbiased assessment. (Note: Our auditors are not engineers so any significant structural deficiencies flagged would still require an engineering study.)

As illustrated in Exhibit 1 & 2 (above), there is not much in a multi-res apartment building that we don't examine from a physical perspective. Each CRBP Building Condition requirement contains a "statement of ideal and approved conditional state" followed by a drop-down box the auditor can select from based on their observations. Here are a couple of examples from hallways and roof-top sections:

#### Example #1

**39. Hallway Fire Hose Cabinets** - Fire hose cabinets are maintained in a secure, litter free fashion and contain equipment that appears to be in working order with up-to-date inspection tags:

#### Associated Drop-down Boxes

- Meets Standard
- Critical: Hose cabinet - fire extinguisher not available **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Critical: Hose cabinet - extinguisher inspection labels not up to date **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Critical: Hose cabinet - glass was broken **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Important: Hose cabinet - door closing mechanism appeared broken; door would not remain closed



## MOVING TOWARDS ANY AUTOMATION PROCESS REQUIRES IDENTIFYING THE “DESIRED STATE”, AS WELL AS THE KEY AREAS OF DEFICIENCY. IT CAN BE A LONG AND EXTENSIVE PROCESS, NOT TO MENTION A COSTLY ONE.”

- Needs Improvement: Hose cabinet door - not closed
- Needs Improvement: Hose cabinet - litter and garbage were present inside

### Example #2

**29a. Roof Condition** - The roof is maintained in a clean, litter/debris-free fashion and does not appear to be in a deteriorated condition including having ponding water, vegetation growth, gravel degradation, exposed tar, missing flashing, or other signs of deterioration.

#### Associated Drop-down Boxes

- Meets Standard
- Critical: Roof deck: Unsecured litter and/or contractor debris were visible **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Important: Roof deck - ponding water was visible
- Important: Roof deck-roof membrane was visible
- Important: Roof flashing - appeared to be missing
- Important: Parapet walls - dirty, stained or showed signs of deterioration
- Needs Improvement: Roof deck - gravel coverage appeared uneven or there were gravel free/bare spots
- Needs Improvement: Roof deck - vegetation growth was visible
- Needs Improvement: Roof deck - mold, mildew, moss and/or algae was visible

### SUB-TEMPLATE #2 - Building Documentation Audit

While sub-template #1 deals with the conditional state of building and property, this template deals with daily property management practices, covering off human resources, resident operations, environmental operations, building operations and more. As above, each requirement contains a “statement of ideal and approved conditional state” followed by a drop-down box for the auditor to select from.

#### We have divided this sub-template into three areas:

**1. Resident-focused documentation** – These requirements include prudent practices to do with providing good quality service to residents, and of course cover off a number of best practices, along with municipal and provincial mandated requirements.

### Example

**74. Resident Escalation (One-Up) Process Document (RM-08b)** - A document is readily available to residents that explains the Escalation (One-Up) Process that can be used when necessary.

#### Associated Drop-down Boxes

- Meets standard
- Important: No document is readily available to residents at the building that explains the Resident Escalation (one-up) process

**2. Building-focused documentation** – These requirements focus on the necessary documentation that needs to be readily available to ensure daily operations are being carried out in compliance with provincial and municipal regulations. This is essential as outlined in best practice CRBP standards and requirements.

### Example

**91. Fire Log book (OP-01g)** - An up-to-date Fire Log Book that documents required inspections/tests and drills (daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly fire drill) is available on site.

#### Associated Drop-down Boxes

- Meets Standard
- Critical: No Fire Log Book on site **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Critical: Forms documenting weekly inspections/tests conducted were not available onsite **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Critical: Forms documenting monthly fire alarm tests conducted were not available onsite **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Critical: Forms documenting quarterly fire drills conducted were not available onsite **\*\*Mark as failed**
- Important: Daily fire safety checks were not logged
- Not Applicable: Quarterly fire drills are not required at this building

**3. Occupational Health & Safety Requirements** – Resident & employee safety are mainstays of the CRBP standards and are also the subject of several federal, provincial, municipal bylaws and regulations. Failure to adhere to these types of regulations can often result in a lower assessment risk with insurers, and or fines and penalties if inspected by government regulators.

### Example












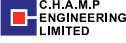









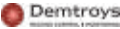







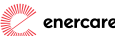





**107b. Basic Occupational Health and Safety Training** – On-site documentation and certificates verifying all building staff have received Basic Occupational Health and Safety Training.





































#### Associated Drop-down Boxes

















- Meets Standard: Employee training record/certificate verifying completion of basic Occupational Health and Safety training is available at the building site
- Important: Not all building staff have records/ certificates at the building that verifies completion of current basic Occupational Health and Safety training
- Not applicable: Records/certificates not available at building site  
FRPO's CRBP now has a PM property audit solution that will benefit members for years to come. It is highly detailed in nature and for the most part reflects the necessary daily inputs and processes that go into the prudent and effective management of a multi-res property. Small and medium size property managers can now easily streamline and automate their operations through joining FRPO's CRBP. 🏡



For more information on the benefits of Corporate Membership please contact us at [membership@frpo.org](mailto:membership@frpo.org).

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