

MAY/JUNE 2020

# FE

FRPO'S FAIR EXCHANGE OF  
RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS

COVID-19 RELIEF UPDATE  
WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES  
PANDEMIC RESPONSE  
TENANT RELATIONS

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

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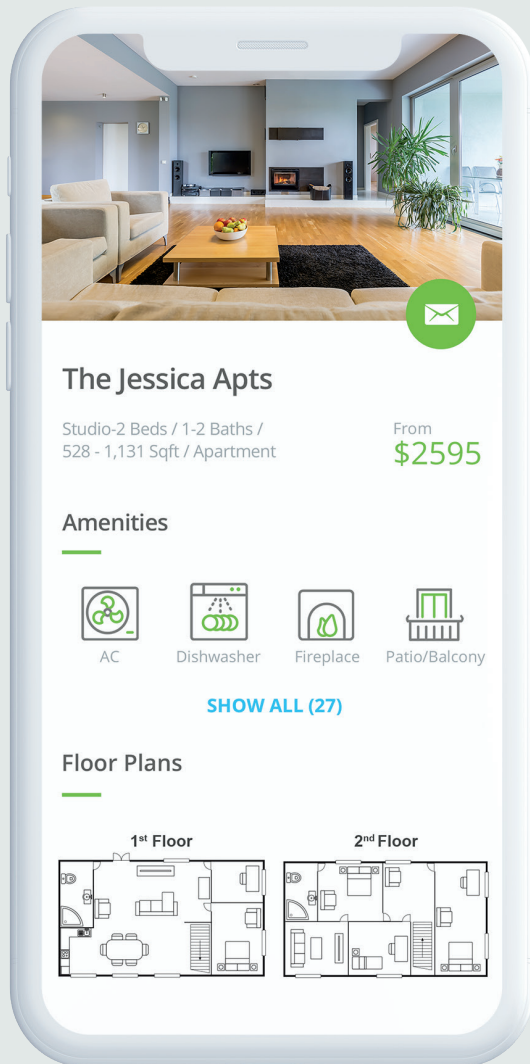
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# WELCOME BACK!

Heading into the “new normal”



**TONY IRWIN**  
President & CEO  
FRPO

COVID-19 has caused a near-unfathomable amount of uncertainty for Canadian citizens and businesses, including rental housing providers and their residents. Before the pandemic, FRPO was focused on convincing government to create a framework to make it easier to build more towers on existing rental sites, and continuing to press for changes to the Landlord & Tenant Board, including filling vacancies, increasing the allocation of adjudicators, improving timelines and other policy changes.

Over the past three months, our advocacy efforts have primarily focused on COVID-19 and the measures government needs to take to alleviate challenges faced by the rental-housing sector during this crisis. While it appears the vast majority of residents have been able to pay their rent in April and May, many Ontario families are in financial distress, which is why FRPO has proposed a direct rental assistance program to assist residents who are unable to pay their rent.

Rental-housing providers are working with their residents to navigate these very challenging times. This has included providing alternative payment arrangements to residents who cannot pay their rent due to COVID-19, helping residents apply for government assistance programs and buying groceries and medicine for elderly residents unable to leave their homes.

We are now at a significant turning point as countries around the world, including Canada, begin to ease lockdown measures in efforts to reopen their economies and kickstart recovery efforts. Premier Doug Ford has appointed Housing Minister Steve Clark to the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee which will focus on developing a plan to stimulate economic growth and job-creation in the weeks and months ahead.

FRPO has provided a seven-point plan in collaboration with the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association and the Co-Op Housing Federation, and participated in a roundtable discussion with the minister in which we emphasized the need for more supply of purpose-built rental housing and reforms to the Residential Tenancies Act and Landlord & Tenant Board. FRPO supports Bill 184, which makes many positive changes to the RTA and passed second reading in the legislature at the end of May.

We also look forward to providing our comments on the Bill to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

In order to plan for a future that will require measures to protect employees, residents, and the public beyond COVID-19, FRPO is holding four seminars with a focus on the following key areas: Protecting Frontline Employees, Building Operations, Resident Operations & Interactions and Building Systems. These workshops will help FRPO develop a set of best practices and inform our discussions with government regarding the challenges our industry will face on a daily basis to operate in the new-normal workplace.

Rental property owners are to be commended for handling the coronavirus crisis with humanity and compassion. We know from our members that they've gone above and beyond to ensure their residents are safe and secure in their homes, and will continue to do so in the recovery period. 🏠

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# UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

SEP  
15

## CANADIAN APARTMENT INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

*Sep 15-16 9:00am | 4:00pm*  
Virtual Conference

COVID-19 is testing real estate markets locally, nationally and globally. The multi-family market continues to show exceptional strength and resilience, today and into tomorrow. Year over year, the Canadian Apartment Investment Conference brings together owners, managers, developers, investors and lenders to provide valuable insights into the multi-unit residential market. Last year's conference attracted over 900 executives face to face that were interested in learning about major trends, issues, opportunities, and strategies in Canada's multi-unit residential market. The 2020 Canadian Apartment Investment Conference program will continue to bring together the industry as the need for market knowledge and networking are as important today as they were in 2019. 2020 will see a virtual conference being offered over two days providing the greatest possible value to owners, managers, developers, investors and lenders. Exceptional opportunities for networking will be available throughout this year's conference in our virtual space and attendance may also qualify for various continuing education credits. The Canadian Apartment Investment Conference is organized by the producers of The Real Estate Forums, in conjunction with a steering committee of apartment owners, lenders, brokers, and valuers. We hope you will take advantage of this very informative event.

NOV  
4

## APARTMENTALIZE 2020

*Nov 4- Nov 6, 2020 |*  
*8:00am - 2:00pm*  
Dallas, Texas

New Date. New Location! Apartmentalize has been rescheduled and we are headed to Dallas! We are excited to announce that this year's conference has been rescheduled to November 4-6, 2020 in conjunction with the 2020 NAA Assembly of Delegates meeting. Our main goal is to ensure a safe experience for all attendees. Event details will follow in the coming weeks, but you can continue to expect top-notch educational sessions, exciting keynote speakers and robust opportunities to network at Apartmentalize. We are also excited to announce that Apartmentalize will be adding a virtual component! This new option will allow you to have access to education sessions, networking opportunities and other cutting-edge content. Even if you can't join us in Dallas, we hope that you'll be able to join from wherever you are. Stay tuned for additional details on virtual options and pricing.

DEC  
2

## PM EXPO AT THE BUILDINGS SHOW

*Dec 2-Dec 4, 2020 | 8:00am - 4:00pm*  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre

COVID-19 continues to impact every facet of our personal and professional lives. We will continue to monitor the situation and look forward to seeing you December 2-4, 2020 as we come together to share experiences and expertise, network with our peers, put a face to a name, and stay ahead of trends and the competition. The Buildings Show provides an unforgettable experience as North America's largest event for products, services, educational programming and professional networking. We have been proud to host this spectacular event for the design, construction and property management communities for the past 32 years. Explore new innovations and connect with transformation influencers at Construct Canada and PM Expo in the South Building and HomeBuilder & Renovator Expo and World of Concrete Toronto Pavilion in the North Building.

JUL  
19

## 2021 FRPO CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

*Jul 19, 2021 | 11:00am-8:00pm*  
Rattlesnake Point Golf Club, Milton

The FRPO Charity Golf Classic scheduled for Monday, July 20th at Rattlesnake Point Golf Club in support of Interval House has been cancelled for 2020 due to COVID-19. This event will now take place on July 19th, 2021. 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 2021. Stay tuned for more info.

DEC  
3

## 2020 MAC AWARDS GALA

*Dec 3, 2020 | 5:00pm-9:00pm*  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The MAC Awards Gala is the most important annual event for our members and is well attended by rental housing providers ranging from hands-on managers to third party management and holding companies. This event allows us to recognize excellence in the residential rental housing industry and to advance the high standards that the Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario aims to promote. This year's gala is scheduled for Thursday, December 3rd at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. As many of our events have been impacted by COVID-19, we are continuing to monitor the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. The health and safety of our staff and members continue to be our utmost priority. Thank you for your patience.






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# COVID-19 RELIEF FOR RENTAL-HOUSING PROVIDERS

What you need to know as the economy reopens

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



Certain COVID-19 emergency relief programs may be available to many rental-housing providers. The two most likely sources of assistance are the Temporary Wage Subsidy and the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA). Businesses qualify for those programs without experiencing a revenue reduction. Another possible source of support does require a revenue reduction, at least on a cash basis, but landlords who experienced a significant rent shortfall up to April 11 may well qualify for that support.

## TEMPORARY WAGE SUBSIDY (TWS)

The Temporary Wage Subsidy (TWS) program does not require a revenue loss. It is meant to help small employers meet their payroll, on the assumption that COVID-19 will have had some impact on all businesses.

To qualify, a business must be operated as a sole proprietorship, a partnership or a Canadian-controlled private corporation. The business must have taxable capital of less than \$15M. The business must also have had a business number for payroll remittances on March 18, 2020.

The subsidy available is 10% of certain wages and taxable benefits paid up to a maximum of \$1,375 times the number of employees, and \$25,000 for the business in total. As this is written, the time period that will be covered is March 18 and June 19, but that

may be extended. That means a superintendent who is paid \$1,800 per month plus free rent worth \$1,200 per month, will entitle the employer to a subsidy of \$900 (\$3,000 times 10% times 3 months).

A landlord with five superintendents paid those amounts, two office staff paid \$36,000 per year, and a property manager paid \$60,000 would be entitled to \$7,800. (\$900 for each super, \$900 for each of the office staff and \$1,500 for the manager.)

The subsidy is claimed by reducing income tax remittances for the employees until the appropriate amount has been held back. A record needs to be kept of the pay and calculations each month, for a report which is to be provided to CRA some time in the future.

The subsidy will be deemed to be income to the employer (but naturally the payments are



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deductible expenses). On the employee T4s, the income tax remittances will be shown as having been deducted. Employers are not to hold back EI or CPP remittances. For more information, Google search "canada 'temporary wage subsidy'".

The next program also does not include a revenue loss test.

**ALTHOUGH SOME TENANTS** may now be transitioning back to work, or to receiving pay from their employers, many tenants have received CERB. Landlords may want to make sure that their tenants know they need to reapply for CERB every four weeks.

Originally a person had to have lost all their income to qualify for the CERB, but that was changed so that a substantial income loss qualifies. Many tenants may not realize that either, and could well benefit from receiving that information.



## CANADA EMERGENCY BUSINESS ACCOUNT (CEBA)

Through Canada's financial institutions, the federal government is offering interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 for eligible small businesses, whether incorporated or not. That should include many landlords. If the loan is paid back by the end of 2022, \$10,000 of the loan will be forgiven, and treated as income to the business.

Originally CEBA was available only to corporations, not to sole proprietorships or partnerships. However, that limitation has been removed. The main requirements that are still in place are that the business:

- Had a business bank account as of March 1, 2020;
- Had a CRA business number to make payroll remittances.

Until recently, to qualify, a business had to have a payroll of between \$20,000 and \$1.5M in 2019, including taxable benefits such as a rent subsidy or free rent for a superintendent. However, on May 19,

**FOR TWS AND CEBA**, it is not necessary to prove a shortfall in revenue due to COVID-19, although clearly the programs are meant to help those with revenue shortfalls. On the other hand, like most other Canadian residents, all landlords are likely to be called on to pay higher taxes to pay for the emergency benefits. As well, there may well be increased rental vacancies and lower rents during the next year, and there may well not be any relief available to help with those issues at that time. Therefore, taking advantage of the loan and its forgivable portion would seem to be reasonable and prudent for those who qualify, even though they may not have a revenue shortfall now.

Prime Minister Trudeau announced expanded eligibility for CEBA. Under the expanded eligibility, applicants with a payroll lower than \$20,000 are eligible, but they will also need:

- to have filed a 2018 or 2019 tax return (which could include many non-profit corporations);
- eligible non-deferrable expenses between \$40,000 and \$1.5 million. Eligible non-

deferrable expenses can include property taxes, utilities and insurance.

It seems that there will be two eligibility tests for the CEBA: one for businesses with payroll of \$20,000 to \$1.5 million, and one for businesses with payroll of less than \$20,000 (with no minimum payroll requirement). In addition, the requirement for a business account and the past filing of a tax return are being reviewed.

More details, including the launch date for applications under the new criteria, should be available when you read this or soon thereafter. Once the expansion launches, many small to mid-sized landlords should be eligible for CEBA. For more information, [visit https://ceba-cuec.ca/](https://ceba-cuec.ca/).

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## CANADA EMERGENCY WAGE SUBSIDY (CEWS)

A significant number of landlords may well qualify for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), to help them pay their payroll costs from March 15 to June 6. Taxable corporations can qualify, as well as individuals, trusts, non-profits, charities and partnerships of qualified employers. This subsidy was designed to encourage businesses to keep workers employed even as they suffer from large revenue losses such that they would not normally be able to afford to keep all their workers on their payroll.

A landlord will qualify for CEWS if they experienced a revenue shortfall of at least 15% in the period between March 15 and April 11. Landlords (and other businesses) can compare their revenue for that period with the same period in 2019, or with the average of calendar January and February 2020. Landlords and other businesses can use the accrual method, or they can elect to use the cash method of accounting for this calculation.

Most landlords will have received their January and February rents between January 1, 2020 and February 29, 2020, but many landlords experienced a rent payment shortfall up to April 11, because

**LANDLORDS SHOULD CHECK** with their accountants to make or verify the calculations, and determine whether the landlord qualifies for the CEWS funding.

**The requirements for all the relief programs change often, but usually the changes enable more people or businesses to qualify, rather than fewer. Just because you don't qualify when this article was written does not necessarily mean you don't qualify when you read it.**

As of now, the federal government is very willing to subsidize wages (and taxable benefits), but not willing to subsidize tenants' rents, by a rent subsidy program paid either to the tenant or to the landlord.

so many layoffs took place in mid-March, and the CERB money was mostly not available until after April 11.

If a business qualifies in the period from March 15 to April 11, the business is deemed to qualify for the next period (from April 12 to May 9). Then having qualified in that second period, the business may be deemed to qualify in the third period (May 10 to June 6).

There is a complicated calculation to determine the subsidy amount, but that amount is usually a little more or less than 75% of the business's payroll. For a landlord paying 8 employees as described above, the subsidy would likely be about \$57,500 (if the third period is included). However, under CEWS, all employers are deemed to have taken the TWS, which will leave the CEWS subsidy at about \$49,700.

The subsidy amount is not tied to lost rents except that lost or deferred rent of 15% in early April is the trigger for the subsidy. Lost or deferred rent in May or June could trigger an entitlement for May or June, but the shortfall would have to be 30% rather than 15%, and that would likely be rare for landlords with a payroll large enough to qualify.

The CEWS subsidy is to continue until August 29, but there is no guarantee that the deeming provision will apply beyond May or June. The subsidy paid will be considered to be income to the employer. For more information, see <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy.html>.



## REGIONAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND (RRRF)

The Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) is providing \$962 million to give financial support to small and medium-sized businesses that are unable to access other COVID-19 business supports, through Canada's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The funding aims to mitigate financial pressures experienced by businesses and organizations to allow them to continue their operations, including paying their employees.

For businesses in Ontario the funding is being made available through Ontario's Regional Development Agencies, namely:

- FedDevOntario 1-866-593-5505
- FedNor (for Northern Ontario) 1-877-333-6673

As this is written, the eligibility criteria are not clear. For more information, visit [http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/icgc.nsf/eng/h\\_07682.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/icgc.nsf/eng/h_07682.html).



*FRPO is a founding member of the Canadian Federation of Apartment Associations, which has represented Canada's rental housing providers at the federal level since 1995.*

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# REOPENING THE WORKPLACE

Getting your business back up and running

BY ■ LORENZO LISI, PARTNER, AIRD & BERLIS LLP



COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed the Canadian workplace. It has forced employers to close, lay-off and re-think how business can be conducted. One of the most notable changes has been the migration of employees from working at the office to working out of their homes. Based on a survey conducted during the week of March 22, Statscan reported that 4.7 million Canadians who do not normally work from home started to in response to the pandemic. When adding workers who normally work from home to the equation, statistics show that numbers rose to 6.8 million people, or nearly 40 per cent of Canada's workforce.

Provincial governments have introduced their framework for the gradual reopening of their economies. In Ontario for example, this initiative (called "Protect, Restart, Recover") sets out three stages, which will see the province move from the opening of select businesses with continued restrictions on social gatherings, to an eventual full restoration with specific protections for vulnerable populations. For employers, this means a possible full or partial repatriation of the workforce to their "normal" workplace, which brings with it all of the challenges and concerns related to asking

employees to return to work where there is likely a real fear of continued risk. Work refusals, mandatory testing, social distancing and employee preferences with respect to continuing to work from home are just a few of the issues employers will have to address. And while this article is not intended to provide an exhaustive review, it will set out some of the issues and suggested responses for all those getting their businesses back up and running.

## GETTING READY

Employers should assess provincial government

“

**THIS IS UNCHARTERED TERRITORY, FOR EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES ALIKE. ANXIETY IS HIGH AND THE POSSIBILITY FOR MISCOMMUNICATION AND DISPUTE IS EVER PRESENT.”**



communications and guidelines as to when they can legally reopen their workplaces and what restrictions will be in place. Employers will be required to exercise due diligence to ensure the workplace is safe from hazards. The goal should be an ongoing assessment of the risk of operating relative to COVID-19. That includes: the identification of hazards and the implementation of policies and procedures to address those hazards; understanding the ways in which the virus may be transmitted in the workplace; ensuring procedures for appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, face shields etc.) are implemented, along with cleaning and disinfecting of the facility. Employers should have a plan for limiting who can enter into what areas and client and visitor interaction. They should also review and consider measures to ensure appropriate physical distancing (e.g., installing barriers; holding team meetings outdoors; staggering shift times; managing traffic flow with ground markings and barriers; six-foot distancing visual cues; limiting the size of meetings, etc.). They'll need to update and train on safety steps and procedures and conduct necessary training for workers and contractors. Importantly, they'll need to follow up with reminders and check for compliance. A return to work protocol addressing the measures put in place should be circulated and posted so all employees can review, consider and confirm. Posters setting out processes and guidelines should be part of the process, as should open communications with employees to address ways to improve employee involvement and participation. Be practical. Sweat the small stuff.

### WHO DO YOU NEED?

As we move through the next phase of reopening, the next step for employers is to determine the volume of available work and the timing for the recall of employees. For those workplaces that have continued to operate, it may entail making a decision as to whether work from home remains an option for some or all employees. Consider a gradual recall rather than all at once. And be sensitive to requests to phase in a return to a physical office. Employers who have been closed down may have to restart operations entirely. In terms of who to recall, for non-union employers it is not improper to take into consideration work habits, attendance and attitude and while there is no formal process for recall, there should be an internal selection protocol which is free from favouritism and possible discriminatory considerations. As for the process, advise the employee in writing of the recall. Ensure it is sent to the proper (last known) address, although it makes good sense to follow it up with an email, text or call advising it has been sent. Provide a reasonable period of time to respond and if they don't, follow up and advise that it may constitute an abandonment of employment.

### BUMPS IN THE ROAD

Child and eldercare obligations may be raised by employees who either have to be at home to take care of their children, or are concerned about a risk of transmitting the virus to vulnerable individuals, such as older members of their family they may live with. In Ontario, employees who raise such issues may be entitled to an unpaid leave of absence, but the employer is also required to treat the request for accommodation as with any other accommodation request and assess it appropriately. Consider staggering shifts (to avoid commuting in high traffic

periods) or continued work at home for a period of time. All requests should be treated carefully and with respect and documented appropriately. Be reasonable. Take time to consider options and be respectful. If an employee refuses to attend work due to a fear of COVID-19 it may become a work refusal if they have reasonable grounds to believe that the work is dangerous. The first response should be to address all of the safety precautions with the employee to try and demonstrate that the safety concerns while legitimately held by the employee have been addressed. If the employee continues to refuse, an investigation with a health and safety committee representative and as with any other work refusal, address it in a disciplined way. Investigate, document and determine if there is any action required and if so, implement as soon as possible. If the employee continues to refuse, advise the employee they are expected to work. At this point, prior to any discipline (or calling in a Ministry inspector) consider providing the employee with an unpaid leave if the concerns persist. Failing any resolution, discipline may be appropriate but this should only be considered with the assistance of Human Resources and/or legal counsel.

### FINAL WORDS

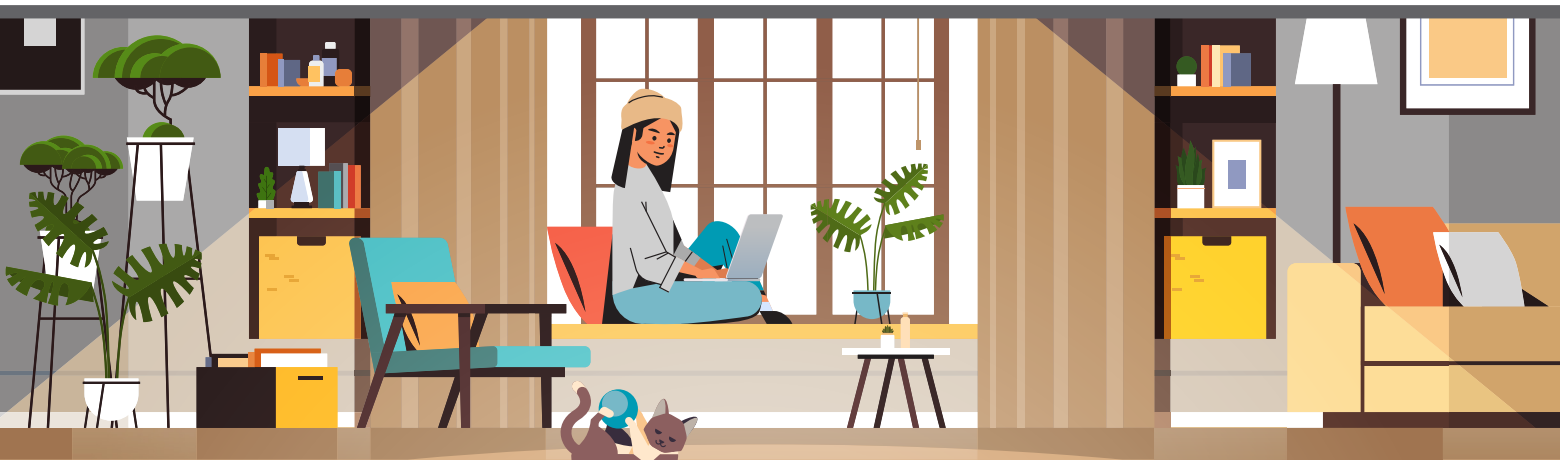
This is uncharted territory, for employers and employees alike. Anxiety is high and the possibility for miscommunication and dispute is ever present. Acknowledging this fact and adopting a policy of open and clear communication while remaining responsive to employee issues will assist in making the transition a smooth one. There will be problems. The key will be working through them in an attempt to get back to "normal", whatever that may be. ■



# FOSTERING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, The Selby remains a community

BY ■ JESSICA MOHNS, MANAGER, MARKETING, TRICON HOUSE



Fostering meaningful connections is at the core of every aspect of The Selby — from its design, to the amenity spaces and the resident experience. The Selby residents are more than neighbours, they are a community. This became evident when lease up began and has strengthened with each new resident. As pillars of this community, the front-line building team is committed to the well-being of each resident. We are both proud and appreciative of the collective efforts of The Selby residents and our team to overcome the unique challenges of maintaining physical distancing in a high-rise apartment building.

Together, we have devised creative ways to celebrate and continue to strengthen our community from a distance. Our residents have embraced virtual events from yoga and bootcamp classes, to cocktails and cooking challenges.

Throughout the pandemic we have provided timely and relevant information to our residents without being lost in the overwhelming, at times confusing volume of messages from many different media outlets. Our focus has been to provide reassuring and helpful messages about the steps we are taking to protect our community and help mitigate the potential for the spread of the virus while continuing to provide as much uninterrupted service as possible.

Early in the pandemic, Tricon made the difficult decision to temporarily restrict access to shared amenity spaces. We also implemented other changes to ensure the safety of the community including:

- **Encouraging residents to communicate** with The Selby team via Selby App, email or by phone rather than face-to-face
- **Suspending all non-emergency** in-suite maintenance work for everyone's protection
- **Asking residents who submit emergency** maintenance orders to provide information about their travel history and health conditions associated with COVID-19



- **Providing PPE** to our maintenance associates and concierge team
- **Ensuring that on-site Selby team members** have not travelled out of the country or been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or other flu symptoms
- **Supplementing our usual,** rigorous cleaning schedule with additional cleaning of all high touch areas multiple times a day by our trusted, industry-leading partners
- **Promoting guided virtual tours** and practicing physical distancing when showing suites for lease



We continuously strive to find innovative ways to improve our residents' lives. As we look forward to the loosening of protective guidelines, we are mindful of our ongoing responsibility to minimize the spread of COVID-19 while creating opportunities for residents to enjoy The Selby's many features with physical distancing measures in place.

The valuable lessons being learned during these unprecedented times will help shape the way we operate in a post-pandemic world. As we look forward to that time, we are inspired by the compassionate actions, tenacity and positivity of The Selby community. 🏡



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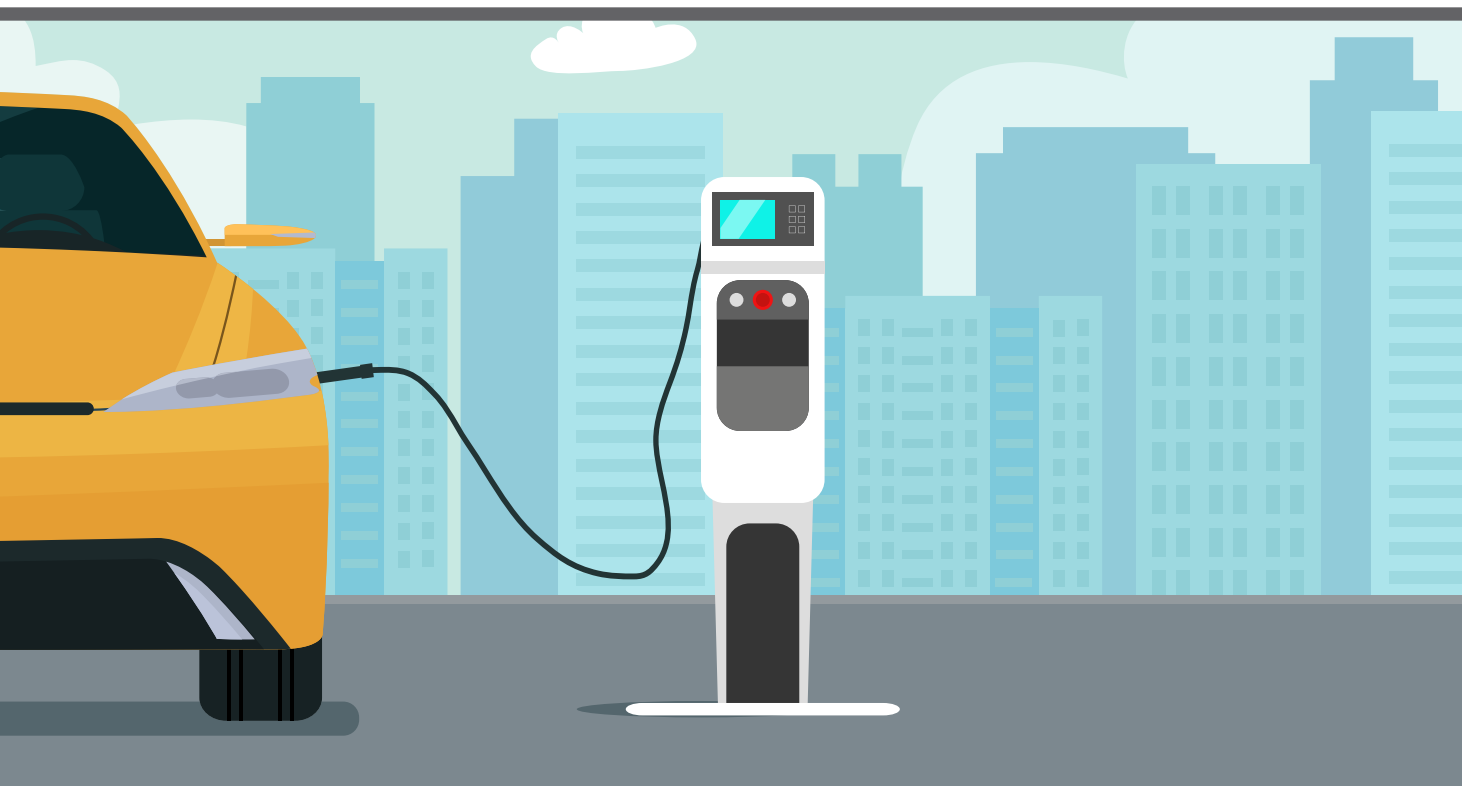
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# INVEST IN YOUR BUILDING'S FUTURE

Submetering for Electric Vehicle Charging in MURBs

BY ■ PETER MILLS, CO-CEO, WYSE METERS SOLUTIONS INC.



In Canada, the transportation sector is the second largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, accounting for a quarter of total national emissions, according to the Government of Canada. That makes Electric Vehicles (EVs) essential to reducing our overall emissions; every kilometre driven in an EV is one kilometre closer to our carbon reduction targets. Canadians have already driven the popularity of EVs to new heights, with more than 100,000 plug-in EVs now on the road in Canada. Naturally, this rise in EV usage is accompanied by an increased demand for landlords to provide the right charging experience.

“

## BEYOND BYLAWS, ENSURING YOUR BUILDING IS EV-READY IS ESSENTIAL TO MEETING THE FUTURE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS.”



The Canadian government has set ambitious federal targets for zero-emission vehicles reaching 100% of light-duty vehicles by 2040. Increasingly, metro jurisdictions are setting strict guidelines for infrastructure to accommodate these vehicles. Major Canadian cities like Toronto, Ontario are on their way toward meeting our nation's green emission goals, requiring new developments to outfit 20 per cent of parking spaces with EV supply equipment, while designing the remaining spaces for future EV station installation.

Beyond bylaws, ensuring your building is EV-ready is essential to meeting the future needs of residents. Your residents want a plug-and-charge solution as seamless as it is efficient. Working with a submetering provider can simplify the process for both landlord and residents to provide the right plug-and-charge solution for your building. Submetering offers metering and direct billing for designated EV parking areas, and convenient solutions for visitor parking areas as well.

From a set-up and operational standpoint, working with a professional

submetering provider offers advantages like clean, straightforward installation that seamlessly fits into your design and available power supply. Your provider will offer reliable and robust industry leading technology, as well as proactive ongoing monitoring and maintenance. Submetering can also offer advanced energy management to reduce capital costs. As available electricity supply may become a concern as more EV charging services are required over time, the technology incorporated into the stations can be used to reduce further installation



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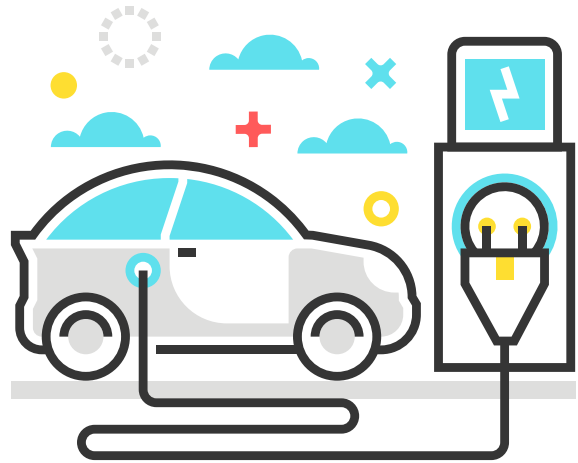
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costs, power requirements, and to future-proof sites for additional deployments without heavily increasing underlying infrastructure

The ideal solution for most multi-res buildings is the Level 2 EV charger supported by a cloud network because of its power-sharing and power-limiting capabilities. These Level 2 chargers – available in wall-mount, single pedestal and double pedestal – provide your residents with convenient, reliable service while not overtaxing your building's electrical infrastructure. This makes it possible for organizations to meet driver demand and charge more EVs without making major electrical investments. Most cloud-network enabled Level 2 chargers will allow for a variety of ways to control and monetize these amenities, including the ability to track energy and utilization, control access to select drivers, and scale-up charging station operations as demand for these services increases.

By having EV charging solutions in place in visitor parking areas, you will offer EV drivers reliability, convenience and ease when visiting your building. In visitor parking areas, the common practice is to offer bill-by-the-hour service via a driver app. It is quick and convenient and well suited to a communal-use environment. In designated resident parking areas, residents of submetered buildings are increasingly seeking an alternative billing solution for EV charging, by-the-kWh. This allows for a single source bill for all electrical use and saves them money – a full charge will cost the same no matter how long it takes. By implementing submetering solutions for EV charging in your building, you will offer an elevated user experience through simplified billing, timely and accurate service, and available insights into every kWh used.

From a business advantage standpoint, outfitting your building with EV charging equipment will provide a desirable sustainable living feature, enhancing your building's marketability. Submetering your EVSE (Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment) offers advanced analytics that provide total insight into utility consumption and give ranks to buildings as well as residents. Submetering can also simplify your billing process, offering a single source bill for all electricity usage, including EV charging, which is monitored and administered by your provider.

With so many options and incentives available, deploying EV charging stations is a wise and proactive choice that will attract residents, meet your jurisdiction's building legislations, and contribute to Canada's goals around decarbonizing transportation. ■■

*This article was written by Peter Mills, Co-CEO, Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. is Canada's leading provider of submetering and utility expense management services. For more information, contact [pmills@wysemeter.com](mailto:pmills@wysemeter.com)*



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# FRPO'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## A review of association activities

**O**n May 13th, FRPO held its Annual General Meeting in webinar format this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 80 members took part in this online event and reports were provided by our Chair; Margaret Herd, President & CEO; Tony Irwin as well as from the Treasurer; Paul Chisholm. A review of activities from the previous year was provided and financial health of the association noted as positive following FRPO's annual audit.

The election and appointment of Directors was also approved and the following individuals were re-appointed for an additional three-year term:

Ugo Bizzarri (Timbercreek Asset Management)  
Kris Boyce (Greenwin Corp)  
Allan Drewlo (Drewlo Holdings)  
Ruth Grabel (Morguard)  
Gary Lee (BentallGreenOak (Canada) Limited Partnership)  
Brent Merrill (Metcap Living Management Inc.)

The Nomination and Governance Committee also proposed the addition of Alfred Hendry of Homestead and Mike McGahan of InterRent REIT to join the board for 3 year terms which was also passed. We are pleased to welcome our new and returning board members. Thank to those who participated in our first digital Annual General Meeting.

### FRPO WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS OF THIS EVENT.

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The full board listing for the 2020-2021 term is as follows:

#### CHAIR

**Margaret Herd**, Park Property Management Inc.

#### VICE-CHAIR

**Allan Drewlo**, Drewco Development Corp.

#### DIRECTORS

**Jason Ashdown**, Skyline Group of Companies

**Ugo Bizzari**, Timbercreek Asset Management

**Kris Boyce**, Greenwin Corp

**Paul Chisholm**, Berkley Property Management Inc.

**Allan Drewlo**, Drewco Development Corp.

**Jonathan Fleisher**, CAPREIT

**Ruth Grabel**, Morguard Corporation

**Alf Hendry**, Homestead Land Holdings Ltd

**David Horwood**, Effort Trust Company

**Ken Kirsh**, Sterling Silver Development Company

**Adriana Keresztes**, Northview Apartment REIT

**Gary Lee**, Bentall GreenOak

**Colin Martin**, Realstar Management

**Mike McGahan**, InterRent REIT

**Patti-Jo McLellan Shaw**, Hapfield Developments.

**Brent Merrill**, Metcap Living Management Inc.

**Todd Spencer**, GWL Realty Advisors Residential

**George Van Noten**, Minto Properties Inc.

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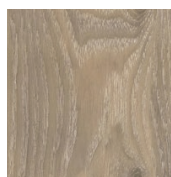
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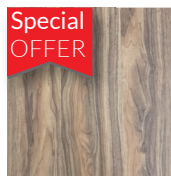
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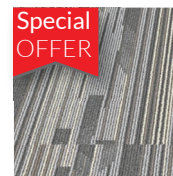
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# KEEPING GARBAGE AREAS HEALTHY AND SAFE

Increased waste gives rise to rodent infestations and odour control issues

BY ■ BRIAN DE CARLI AND LESLIE DE CARLI, METRO JET WASH



Cleaning garbage areas is a maintenance concern for all apartment owners, but the current pandemic has made this to-do item even more relevant given the fact there is now more waste to contend with and health and safety issues to worry about.

As residents stay home or self-isolate in their units, the more odour-causing waste they produce. Meanwhile, the closure of restaurants and cafes to in-house dining is creating less urban trash — driving dumpster-loving rodents to find new food sources in nearby multi-residential buildings where garbage levels are escalating. Combine this with the need to follow stricter cleaning protocols and waste management is now more challenging.

With summer fast-approaching these issues are only going to accelerate as rodents become more active during warmer seasons and garbage odours intensify with the heat. In addition, the coronavirus is taking building sanitization to a whole new level.

Here are some health and safety items to consider when maintaining waste areas and equipment:

## KEEPING GARBAGE ROOMS CLEAN AND UNCLUTTERED

Now that rodents are cut off from the ongoing supply of food from restaurant waste, apartments are the place to be. They provide shelter, food, warmth and water — four key factors that help pests thrive. They can find their way into buildings through very small entrances and once they do, health and safety issues become a big problem. Not only do rats and mice harbour pathogens known to spread more than 35 diseases, including lymphocytic chorio-meningitis (LCM), Hantavirus and salmonellosis (food poisoning), they also chew electrical wires and cause other structural damage to a building.

Rodents, including other pests like cockroaches, love clutter — it provides hiding places and tucked-away areas for breeding.

Waste areas are often used to store broken stoves, refrigerators, tools and other items that can create passageways for rodents to travel through and nest.

Cleaning and organizing garbage rooms should remain a priority as the COVID-19 crisis unfolds, and correct health and safety measures should be followed to also protect residents and staff from what we know is a highly transmissible disease. Use the proper disinfectants to clean thoroughly and frequently, including all the high-touch points like door knobs and railings. Anticipate that these areas could possibly contain COVID-19 due to residents' garbage spilling out or used items entering the area through the waste chute.

As building staff use the room regularly, this may increase the potential to transmit the virus to other parts of the building. For this reason, floors — a primary area for pathogenic microorganisms in a building — should be kept cleaner than they already are.

The garbage room floor serves as a highway for bacteria that gets transported on the soles of shoes or building equipment.

Clean floors daily and splatter areas with a pressure washer (or water hose), using a degreaser disinfectant. Prior to the wash, scrubbing the floors and walls with a deck scrub brush will help agitate and provide a more thorough cleaning.

Restoring a dark and cluttered garbage room into a well-lit, organized space will also help to create a safe and inviting environment that residents will want to use, deterring careless behaviour from dropping garbage off in random places to stuffing larger items down a chute.

### THOROUGHLY CLEAN AND SANITIZE WASTE EQUIPMENT

Going forward, it should be common practice to wipe the handles on all high-touch points like waste chute doors using the proper disinfectant.

Odours in waste chutes arise from the spatter of garbage. A proper method for maintaining this area is washing down the chute with disinfectant cleaner degreasers.

Thoroughly cleaning the inside of garbage compactors, waste chutes and bins can be tricky for building staff. A professional service provider would be advised about one to three

times per year. In between these cleanings, regular use of disinfectants in the chute wash down is recommended.

### HIRING THE RIGHT SERVICE PROVIDER IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

Building service providers, including those that manage waste equipment cleaning, should have incorporated mandatory health and safety measures into their day-to-day operations. These should be based on the advice and directives from Canadian health authorities, and include any evolving guidelines over the course of the pandemic.

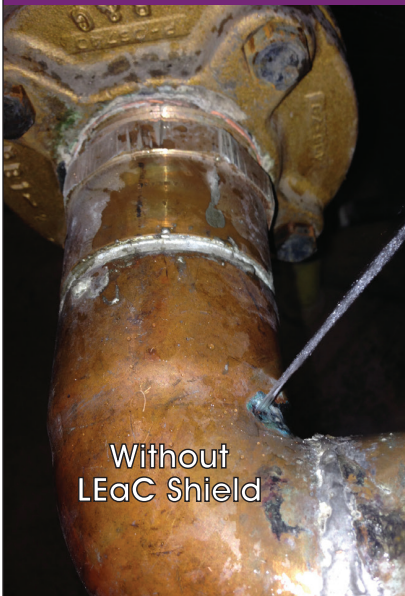
All workers arriving to a building should not only be wearing the proper personal equipment, but reputable companies will deploy contractors in separate trucks—two at a time to adhere to social distancing rules. Make sure to ask questions regarding what training staff have and what updated health and safety standards are being followed before anyone enters the building to work. A reputable business will go beyond the standards and require that training is a yearly priority.

Working in a garbage room can be a very dangerous task—pandemic or no pandemic. Contractors often work in this area where residents may ignore the chute closure. The use of safety devices such as chute plugs, lockout tags and techniques should be practiced to eliminate serious injury or loss of life. Companies should have proper protocol procedures, health and safety manuals and all contractors should have certified safety training, including WHMIS, Fall Arrest, Confined Spaces and Lockout/Tag out, a program that not only helps prevent the unintended start-up or motion of machinery and equipment, but helps avoid contact with a hazard while performing tasks that require removal, bypassing or deactivation of safe-guarding devices.

Cleaning has certainly moved to the forefront in condo corporations where people live in close quarters. Best practices for waste management not only deter rodents and odours, but also uphold cleaning protocols that keep the whole condo community safe. ■

*Brian De Carli is vice-president of Metro Jet Wash Corporation and Leslie De Carli is the CEO of Metro Jet Wash Corporation. The Canadian-based property maintenance company specializes in property maintenance solutions, including compactor cleaning and chute cleaning, underground and parking lot pressure washing and cleaning, drain cleaning and catch basin cleaning, parking lot striping and painting, as well as odour control systems, product sales and services. <https://metrojetwash.ca/>*

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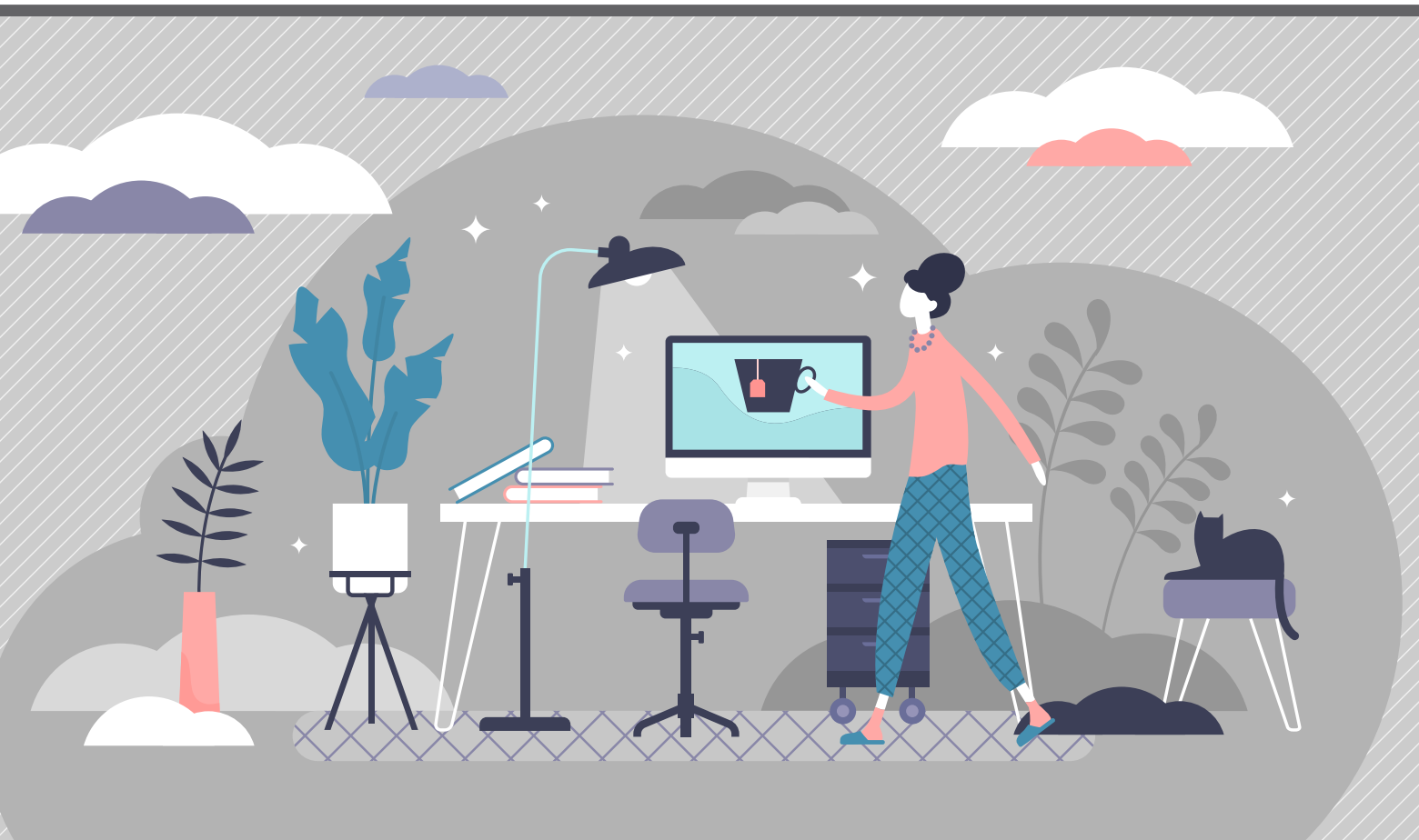




# WORKING FROM HOME: BY THE NUMBERS

Achieving productivity at home

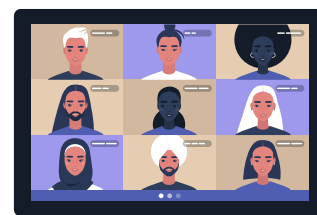
BY ■ LYNZI MICHAL, DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING



**W**orking remotely or remotely working? If I had a dime for every time I've heard that, I'd be rich. In a recent survey conducted by Stats Canada, they estimated that almost 5 million Canadians are now working from home as a result of the global pandemic.

“

**WHILE WORKING FROM HOME HAS BEEN ON THE RISE OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, THERE ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE A DEBATE AROUND THE IMPACT ON PRODUCTIVITY. ”**



When combined with those already working remotely, this equates to 6.7 million Canadians or 40% of the workforce. This experience will undoubtedly have profound changes on the traditional office environment and the way we work. It has highlighted the notion that it's no longer about where people work but how people work.

While this situation may not be the ideal arrangement with schools closed and others in the same household also working remotely, 65% of those surveyed wish to continue working from home in some form once the health crisis has passed. Several tech companies have already begun to offer their employees permanent work-from-home options. Others are looking to implement flexible or hybrid arrangements.

As someone who has worked remotely for six years, there are many pro's and con's and some individuals or positions may not be well suited to this environment. Others such as myself, have thrived and have found a better work life balance while increasing productivity and engagement. Everyone works differently and this must always be taken into account.

While working from home has been on the rise over the last several years, there always seems to be a debate around the impact on productivity. In 2017, an extensive study was undertaken by Stanford University, led by Professor Nicholas Bloom to investigate just this. Teaming up with Ctrip, China's largest travel company, they conducted a test with 1000 of their 16,000 employees. Let's take a deeper look at what they found.

The control group continued working at their corporate headquarters while the other half began working from home. After 9 months, they found that the remote team members saw a 13% increase in productivity which is equivalent to a full day's work. Their findings also saw less sick days, a 50% reduction in employee turnover and the company saved \$2000 per employee in office space costs. This meant their managers spent less time hiring and training new staff, their teams had increased performance and employees were happier with better work-life balance.

Following this pilot project, Ctrip saw the benefits of remote work and implemented this across the company. What's important is that they provided their employees the choice: work from home, work from the

## Tips for successfully working from home

- Create a dedicated work space
- Maintain a consistent routine
- A strong and reliable internet connection
- Access to technology tools such as video conferencing, company server, VOIP phone
- Break up your day — physical and mental breaks will optimize productivity
- Reduce distractions as much as possible
- Work strategically and make adjustments as necessary
- Use a variety of ways to communicate and connect with your team and customers

office or a combination of both. Some felt isolated working from home and others struggled to adapt so they returned to the office. After two years, productivity further increased to 24% demonstrating the impact that choice plays.

In the current environment of COVID-19 as previously mentioned, these are far from ideal work-from-home settings. Professor Bloom recently noted four factors having significant impact on those who were abruptly removed from offices including choice, privacy, children and space. When those can be controlled and employees are involved in the decisions about their work environment, this can be a mutually beneficial arrangement for employees and employers alike.

While many offices are rushing to re-open and get back to 'normal', let's not forget about the work-from-home pilot project of 2020. Employees rose to the challenge, organizations adapted and the sky did not fall. 📶

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# MANAGING PROPERTIES AND TENANT COMFORT

Keeping residents cool as temperatures rise

BY ■ TINA KALOGEROPOULOS, MARKETING MANAGER, B2B, RELIANCE HOME COMFORT



COVID-19 and the resulting local and global economic shutdown have ground countless businesses to a halt over the last three months, but property management hasn't been one of them.

Managers of multi-unit residential and commercial properties haven't only witnessed first-hand some of the most inconvenient and painful effects of the pandemic on the tenants and small businesses they look after — they've seen their work and responsibilities skyrocket.

From shuttered restaurants and retail to condo and apartment dwellers quarantined or socially distancing in their units, property managers have had their work cut out for them, reacting to client needs minute by minute and keeping up with continually evolving government health and workplace guidelines and best practices.

And now, with summer in full swing, PMs have one more challenge on the radar: ensuring that cooling in the properties they manage continues to work as it should for everyone who wants and deserves a little comfort in these trying times, if nothing else.

As property managers address all these concerns and expectations, it's the ideal time to ask whether their mechanical equipment solutions provider can effectively meet their needs safely and as cost-efficiently as possible.

## PROACTIVELY TACKLING REDUCED REVENUES AND INCREASED COSTS

The pandemic has undeniably put a strain on rental revenues while, at the same time, upped unforeseen costs like 24/7 sanitizing and security. That's not to mention, of course, the ever-present risks posed by aging HVAC equipment and other assets that may need to be replaced sooner or later.

A rental plan, some starting as low as 50 cents a day, can mitigate these cost concerns. Some rental plans offer energy-efficient technology from top manufacturers, full installation, lifetime repairs, replacement should equipment be unrepairable and predictable regular payments. Rental plans not only avoid costly repairs and replacements at inopportune times — like now — but they offer much needed peace of mind.

## ENSURING EVERYONE STAYS SAFE

Equipment breakdowns once posed the biggest concerns for PMs, but that has changed with COVID-19. The pandemic has now added an entirely new challenge to manage: are the licensed technicians and installers who visit on-site adhering to strict health and

safety codes and following public health best practices — including using personal protective equipment (PPE) when entering tenant units and servicing equipment?

It's a critical question PMs now need to ask of any home comfort solutions provider they work with during the pandemic.

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# NAVIGATING THE NEW LEGAL LANDSCAPE

“Reopening” best practices for landlords

BY ■ JOE HOFFER, COHEN HIGHLEY LLP



The advent of summer has coincided with the reopening of public and private amenities and it is clear from the experience to date that COVID-19 protocols are largely ignored by a substantial minority. There is pressure on multi-res landlords to re-open amenities and building services and there continues to be conscientious concern by a majority of tenants and landlords about the continuing spread of COVID-19 as the reopening process continues.

Most landlords and tenants recognize that there are people who will continue to selfishly flout COVID compliance for a variety of reasons and in doing so they put both landlords and tenants at risk in terms of health; however, for landlords, there is the added legal risk that arises by virtue of the legal and statutory duty of care owed to tenants generally. Lawsuits have been initiated in nursing homes, retirement and care homes, and it is just a matter of time, especially in a reopening context, before both commercial and residential landlords become targets for lawsuits by residents, workers, occupants, visitors and staff where it is alleged the landlord failed to meet its legal duty and standard of care, the result of which is devastating loss to the tenant or their household following contagion of the virus.

In contrast to commercial landlords and condominium corporations, residential landlords in Ontario can be heavily penalized for failing to provide “services and facilities” which, prior to COVID-19, were deemed to be “included in the lawful rent”. The

Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) provides for both temporary and permanent rent reductions where a service or facility is withdrawn, either temporarily or permanently. In the context of COVID-19, as swimming pools, concentrated gathering areas (ie: “party rooms”), fitness centres, parks and playgrounds were closed, most landlords followed suit and there was no risk of the imposition of rent reductions under the RTA. The RTA and regulations make it clear that if a withdrawal of a service or facility is temporary and the duration is “reasonable”, then there shall be no rent reduction. If, however, residential landlords keep their amenity/facility areas closed while similar amenities are open in public places or other residential complexes, then it is more likely the continued closures will be deemed “unreasonable”, both by the media and by the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB), in which case the landlord will be liable to an LTB imposed rent reduction.

Landlords are now also expected to resume on-site services, including the full

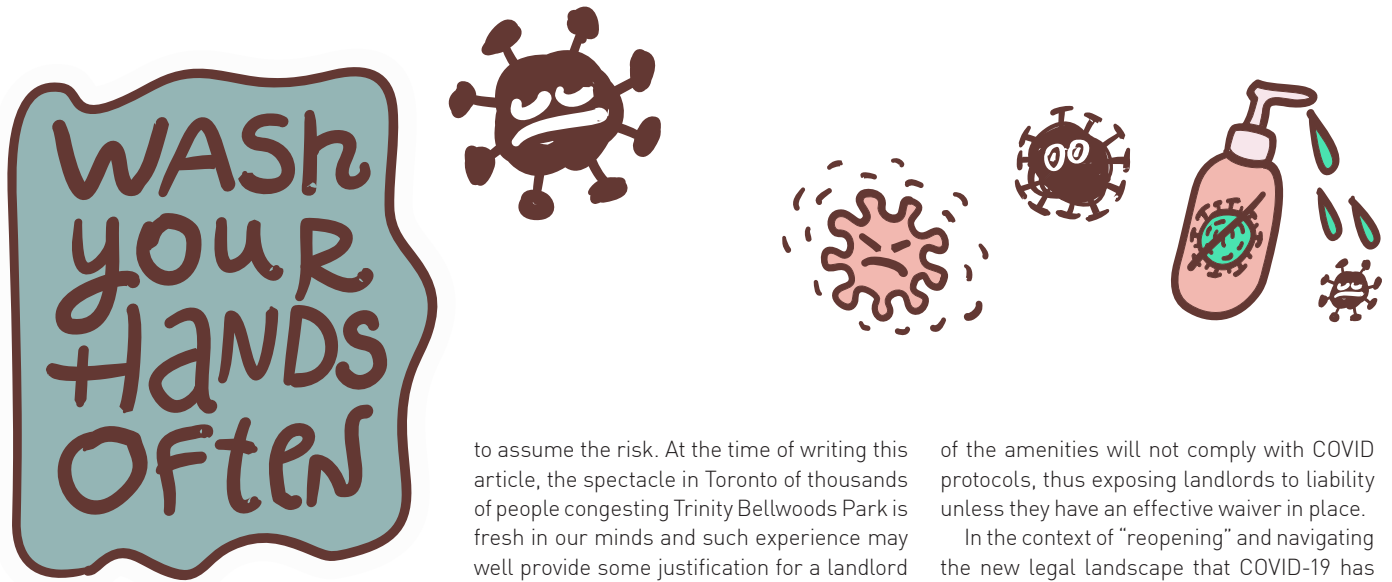
range of maintenance and repair services to which tenants are entitled under the terms of their lease agreements and the provisions of the RTA. A landlord who fails to comply with maintenance and repair obligations is liable to pay an abatement of rent. Landlord’s COVID-related concerns about risk to its workers or contractors in entering rental units for non-urgent maintenance will no longer carry much weight with the LTB if the concerns are not well-founded based on specific facts.

To address the health and safety risks associated with reopening of all multi-res building amenities and maintenance and repair operations, it is advisable for landlords to have in place liability waivers relative to tenants’/households’ assumption of risk of use of facilities and amenities. It is also advisable for landlords to incorporate language into Maintenance Request for Service Forms and Notice of Entry forms which address COVID-19 disclosure and compliance with health and safety issues. In addition, workers and contractors should be required to sign acknowledgements as to their COVID-free status and continuing compliance with recommended health and safety protocols.

Some of the language for use in waivers, forms and acknowledgments is available publicly through the National Apartment Association document referenced above and via the Province of Ontario at this link: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace>. All such sources recommend that legal counsel

“

**THE RTA AND REGULATIONS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT IF A WITHDRAWAL OF A SERVICE OR FACILITY IS TEMPORARY AND THE DURATION IS “REASONABLE”, THEN THERE SHALL BE NO RENT REDUCTION.”**



be used in developing specific language for risk mitigation documents and at Cohen Highley we have developed such language for use by residential and commercial landlords.

There is also the option of just not reopening and taking the position that the risk to the tenants of doing so outweighs the benefits for those tenants who are prepared

to assume the risk. At the time of writing this article, the spectacle in Toronto of thousands of people congesting Trinity Bellwoods Park is fresh in our minds and such experience may well provide some justification for a landlord who elects to keep a facility closed; however, it is our view that the argument will not sustain scrutiny by the Landlord and Tenant Board with the result that the risk of having substantial rent reductions imposed is high. What Trinity Bellwoods illustrates though is that there is a high risk that tenants/users

of the amenities will not comply with COVID protocols, thus exposing landlords to liability unless they have an effective waiver in place.

In the context of "reopening" and navigating the new legal landscape that COVID-19 has created, it is clear that there is a high risk for landlords and tenants. Exercise of due diligence by both landlords and tenants will mitigate their health and safety risks. Innovative risk mitigation strategies by landlords as they administer their operations will help fend off legal risk. ■■

*Joe Hoffer is a Partner with Cohen Highley LLP, a law firm representing "landlords only". Joe and his team provide legal services with respect to all aspects of multi-res and commercial leasing and operations.*



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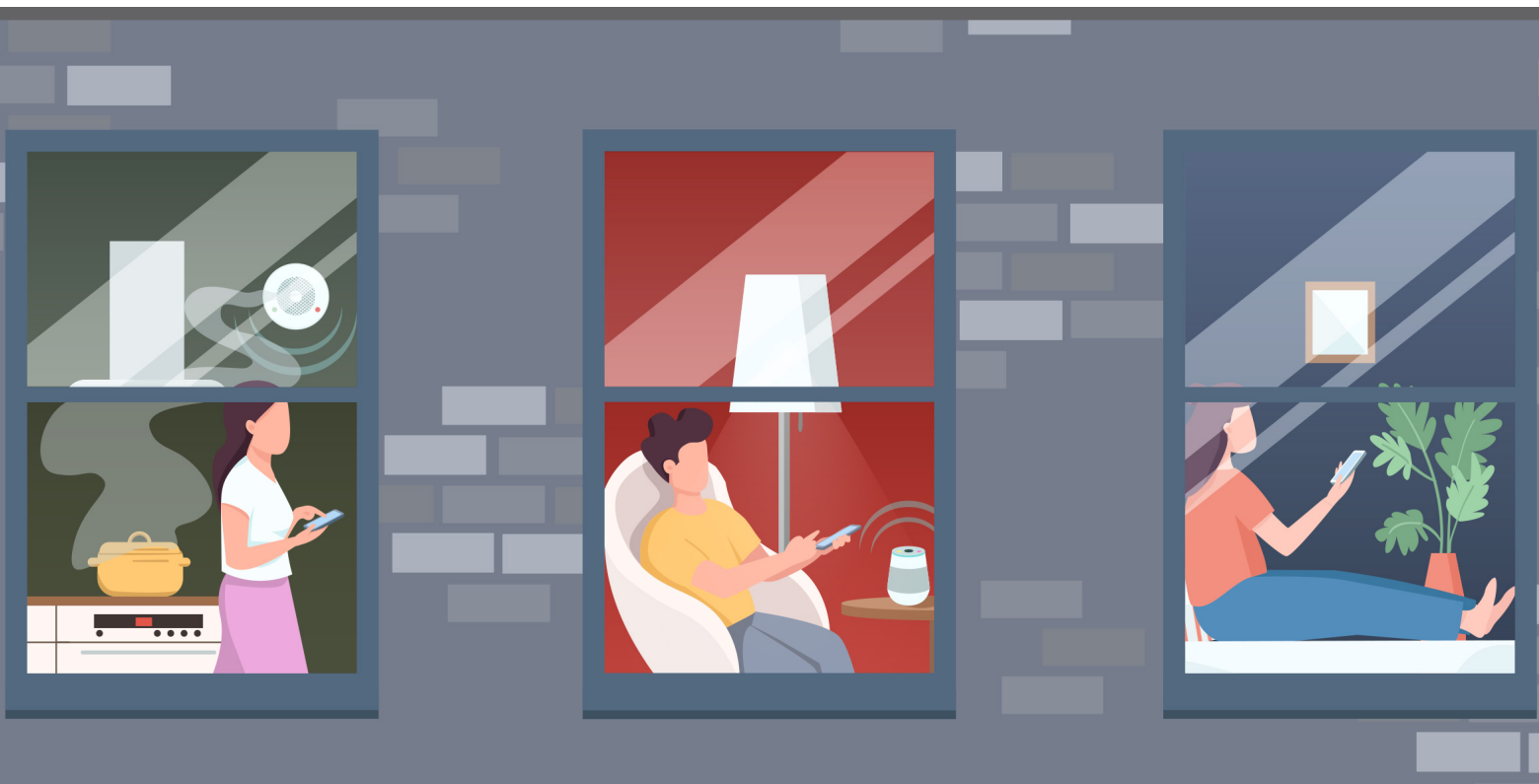
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# GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDING OPERATORS

Health & Safety protocols from Toronto Public Health



The following are recommendations to help reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in commercial buildings, including apartment buildings and other vertical living spaces. As the situation is rapidly changing, new information will be available on the Toronto Public Health website.



COVID-19 is circulating in communities in and around Toronto. It is recommended that all non-essential common areas, including gyms, libraries, party rooms, playgrounds, pools, hot tubs and spas, be closed at this time. Infection prevention and control advice to help further reduce the risk of infection is provided below.

### BUILDING OPERATORS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR STAFF MEMBERS TO...

- Stay home if sick. Employees or contracted workers who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to not come to work, and seek appropriate medical attention.
- Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible. For example, relax requirements for sick notes, and allow staff to stay home to care for sick family members. Staff should practice effective hand hygiene:
- Wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds — an alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching their faces, especially with unwashed hands.
- Cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve, not their hands.

### GENERAL DISINFECTION GUIDANCE

Building operators and staff should follow these guidelines when cleaning and disinfecting the building environment:

- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated. Ensure cleaning staff, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in common areas.
- In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected twice per day and when visibly dirty. Examples include doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, toilet handles, counters, hand rails, touch screen surfaces and keypads.
- It is currently recommended only to use disinfectants that have a Drug Identification

Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms it is approved for use in Canada. Check the expiry date of products you use and always follow manufacturer's instructions.

- In addition to routine cleaning, check with your organization for any specific protocols for cleaning COVID-19.
- Staff should use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as gloves, according to existing policies and procedures, as well as following label directions for all cleaning products.
- Encourage and support proper handwashing by keeping washroom facilities stocked with soap and paper towels at all times, and ensure custodian staff keep hand washing sinks in a state of good repair.
- Consider having alcohol-based hand sanitizer in common areas, including but not limited to bathrooms, laundry rooms, gyms and playrooms, and other high traffic areas at all times.
- No evidence suggests that building waste needs any additional disinfection. Public health will advise if any special cleaning processes are recommended.


### PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES TO PROTECT STAFF AND GUESTS/ TENANTS WHEN PROVIDING SERVICES:

- Physical distancing of two metres or six feet between individuals should be exercised among individuals within a building, including between staff and tenants/guests during service:
  - Property management should assess whether an impending service request is essential, and to postpone the service if it is not urgent.
  - Property management should provide advanced notification to tenant of impending work.
  - Staff carrying out essential work should do so in a separate room if the tenant is home, or keeping a physical distance between the staff and guests/tenant.
  - In house food services preparing food

for room service should use single-use containers and cutlery.

- Room service staff should not interact with hotel guests and should leave food orders at the door and be picked up by the guests.
- After each visit, staff should wash hands with soap and water for at least 15 to 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, if soap and water are not available.
- Provide education by posting visual information advising staff and tenants/guests of the importance of physical distancing.
- Ensure residents can receive deliveries of essential goods, like medications and groceries/meals, at their unit door so they can avoid non-essential trips outside. Some residents may be self-isolating, and as a result will be unable to leave their units. Moving to a New Place of Residence during a Pandemic
- Individuals should assess whether it is necessary to move from one place of residence to another at this time, and to consider delaying any impending move.
- If moving is necessary, precautionary measures such as maintaining physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be exercised at all times during the moving process.

### ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO CURRENT CASES OF COVID-19:

- Confirmed and suspect cases of COVID-19 are reported by health care providers and laboratories to public health.
- Public health performs a risk assessment for all exposures related to case reports.
- Unless advised by Toronto Public Health through the above assessment, there are no restrictions or special measures required for casual contacts of suspected cases of COVID-19 in the setting. There is no need to close the setting. 

*For more information, visit our website at [www.toronto.ca/COVID19](http://www.toronto.ca/COVID19) or call us at 416-338-7600*



## Understanding the challenges posed by COVID-19

BY ■ TED WHITEHEAD, DIRECTOR OF CERTIFICATION, FRPO



What a difference a year makes" — perhaps one of the most approbative statement of today's times. The COVID-19 virus descended upon us in mid-March, and it literally turned the world on its end as the battle to save lives and prevent the spread of disease became the paramount issue for everyone. Who could have comprehended that world economies would shut down, governments would go into massive debt, and the vast majority of people would move into a complete lock-down mode?



For the multi-res industry, we moved from a period of the best of times to one of most challenging times in a modern era. We were challenged on many fronts, as we continued to provide housing accommodations for hundreds of thousands of Ontario residents. There was no option on the table for the multi-res industry to walk away from its responsibility to provide livable and sustainable housing. In fact, we reacted quite to the contrary — immediately developing emergency measures that would support resident needs and keep apartment buildings as safe and sound as possible in a pandemic environment.

Operating in a crisis mode met closing head offices in order to limit both resident and staff interactions. It meant dealing only with emergency maintenance situations, shutting down the building amenities, and communicating with residents via phone, email, and other electronic means. At the same time, we took on extra measures to protect our residents and workers through increased cleaning and disinfecting; employing the usage of personal protective equipment (PPE); implementing new elevator occupancy guidelines, and directing our residents to social distance at all times. This was no easy challenge when you consider that apartment buildings are highly dense environments prone to the spread of viruses.

After a three-month period, daily COVID-19 cases appear to be finally flattening in Ontario. The province and municipalities are now planning to slowly re-open the economy in stages. However, it will be anything but “business as usual” as we knew it. Businesses will be required to ensure they are practicing a number of public health guidelines as a regular part of operations. We call them the new business operating non-negotiables!

#### Public Health — New Non-Negotiables

- Physical distancing
- Hand washing
- Use of protective masks
- Cleaning/disinfecting
- Protective shields
- New PPE requirements — gowns, face shields, masks, shoe covers, etc.
- COVID-19 Positive — identification/testing/isolation policy

The multi-res industry will be no different than other businesses as we plan to move from operating in a crisis mode to operating in what is termed “the New Normal”. As means to assist FRPO members, we launched “The Planning for the Future in the New Normal” project in late May. The objectives of this project were as follows:

- Understand the challenges of operating a multi-res property in the “new-normal” workplace as a phased-in re-start of the economy unfolds;
- Share with FRPO members a collection of progressive ideas, processes and policies that will need to be considered to operate in the new working environment;
- Provide government stakeholders with an understanding of the unique challenges faced by the multi-res industry as we respond to operating apartment communities in what is deemed to be the “new normal” in the post-COVID-19 era.

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**WHEN IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS, THEN HELPING TO ENSURE PEOPLE ARE ISOLATED FROM DROPLET SPREAD IS AN IMPORTANT RISK MITIGATION STRATEGY.”**

Four separate workshops were set-up pertaining to re-opening multi-res properties:

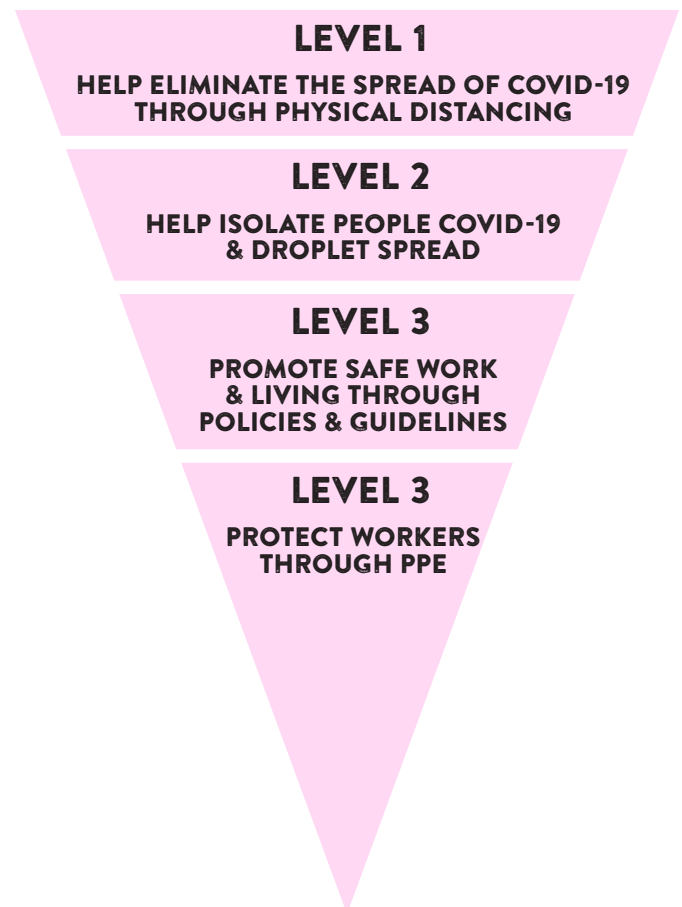


We then solicited the support of 17 leading property management companies to participate in these workshops and to assist us in identifying the challenges that lay ahead in resuming normal operations, and their thoughts and ideas about reopening using the aforementioned public health non-negotiables. At the same time, FRPO CRBP contracted the assistance of Ms. Deborah Cohen, from PSN (Performance Solutions Network), to assist in the development and facilitation of these workshops.

#### The Post-COVID-19 Crisis Risk Model

As the workshops began to take form, what emerged from our research and studies was the evolution of a simple COVID-19 Risk Assessment model that was modified from the National Institute of Occupational Health's (NIOH) Hierarchy of Hazards and WorkSafeBC documentation. This model can be utilized by the multi-res industry as a means to 'risk-test' their plans for re-opening business operations in the new normal, while reducing the potential of a second wave of infection:

#### Opening for Business - COVID 19 Risk Mitigation Model







### FIRST LEVEL PROTECTION — Eliminating the Spread through Physical Distancing:

The most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to implement policies that focus on keeping people at a safe distance apart. For example: limiting the number of people in your workplace at any one time and implementing protocols to keep workers and residents at least two metres from each other.

### SECOND LEVEL PROTECTION — Isolating People from the Hazard of Droplet Spread:

When it is not possible to maintain physical distancing requirements, then helping to ensure people are isolated from droplet spread is an important risk mitigation strategy. This can include installing barriers, such as plexiglass to separate people and prevent droplet spread. Other protection protocols include designs or modifications to buildings, equipment, ventilation systems, and processes that reduce the source of exposure to droplet spread.

### THIRD LEVEL PROTECTION — Promoting Safe Work & Living Environments through Policies and Guidelines:

A third means for limiting or preventing people's exposure to COVID-19 is by establishing COVID-19 rules and guidelines that change how people work. For example, this can mean establishing protections that reduce or alter the nature of work-related person to person interactions, that enhance protocols for cleaning and disinfecting of hard surface, high touch areas, that identify mandatory steps to be taken prior to entering a resident's unit, etc.

### FOURTH LEVEL PROTECTION — PPE Use:

If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to effectively

mitigate risk, then the use of non-medical masks and/or other PPE (gowns, face shields, shoe covers, etc.) is a fourth strategy that should be considered. To maximize the effectiveness of PPE as a risk mitigation strategy, it is important that employees are trained on how to use PPE correctly and in what situations, and for all to understand the benefits and limitations associated with PPE use.

If you take some time to examine the aforementioned COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Model, we think you will find it a useful tool to examine what new property management procedures you will need to put in place to ensure your employees feel safe returning to work, and dealing effectively with meeting the need of residents. At the same time, you can take some comfort in knowing that as your organization adapts to the resuming business operation at your buildings that you are also doing your part to limit the spread of COVID-19.

We intend to publish four workshop booklets by the end of June as reference materials for all FRPO members to use as they move to opening up their communities. We are grateful to the following companies for participating in our workshops, and for openly sharing their experiences, ideas and thoughts:

QuadReal Property Group; CAPREIT; Sifton Properties Limited; Osgoode Properties; Ferguslea Properties Limited; Greenwin Inc.; Hollyburn Properties; Effort Trust; Melchior Management; The Kelson Group; Steeves & Rozema Group; Morguard Residential; Park Property Management Inc.; Minto Apartments; M&R Holdings; Oxford Properties; and Timbercreek Communities. 🏡

For more information, please contact Ted Whitehead, FRPO's Director of Certification at [twhitehead@frpo.org](mailto:twhitehead@frpo.org).

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