



Seniors & Housing Co-ops: A Statement of Principle

Senior members should be able to live in dignity in their housing co-ops and to participate meaningfully in their communities. In support of these aims, housing co-ops will:

- *Look into and make use of available government and community programs to help seniors make their co-op homes safe and accessible;*
- *Gather information on community support and referral services for seniors that need them, and help older members take advantage of these services;*
- *Help seniors to volunteer in the co-op in positions that are appropriate to their interest and capabilities;*
- *Where possible, add new units for seniors in our co-ops or retrofit existing units;*
- *Offer reasonable assistance to seniors who move internally to a unit more suited to their housing needs;*
- *Not adopt voluntary policies about occupancy standards that would force seniors to move out of their co-ops; and*
- *Make sure that seniors whose co-op home no longer meets their needs can move with dignity.*

Adopted by Co-operative Housing Federation Canada Members at the 2002 AGM

The Cooperatives Act of Alberta - An Update

New Co-op Act Contains “Housing Cooperatives” Division

Housing co-op issues are addressed a new Housing Division of the new Co-op Act. Housing co-ops were not even mentioned in the old Act and many of the ways that we already run our co-ops are now included.

Co-op members will find this Division of the Act interesting. It contains direction on the name, the non-profit status and the purpose of the co-op. It also allows co-ops to have non-member units but, dictates that members must occupy the majority of units in the co-op and that all members must live in the co-op. There is a long section on termination and appeals. The Act can be reviewed on the government of Alberta website, Government Services: www.gov.ab.ca/gs/

Co-ops Ahead of the Game!

Congratulations to Alberta 75, Hunter Estates, West Heritage Manor, West Scenic Acres and Whippetree West Housing Co-ops. The Province of Alberta has approved their Documents of Continuance. They are now incorporated under the new Co-op Act of Alberta. The deadline for compliance is the end of March 2005.

These co-ops went through a lengthy process of rewriting their By-laws and other related documents. They accomplished this through a process that involved the input and then the approval of their members. **A job well done!**

SACHA

Staff

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SACHA Member Co-ops

Alberta 75, Bridge, Canadian Hispanic Village, Clearview, Deerfoot Estates, Hi-Wood Meadows, Hunter Estates, Jubilee, Moccasin Flats, Ramsay Heights, Sarcee Meadows, Sikome Rise, Skotoko, Springhill Ranch, Sunnyhill, West Heritage Manor, West Scenic Acres, Whippletree West.

SACHA Shares is a newsletter, published twice a year for member housing co-operatives, that provides information and commentary on issues important to co-operative housing members. It is delivered *free* to every member household. Layout by Michele Decottignies.

Comments and contributions can be addressed to:

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If you would like more information about how to get involved in any of the activities discussed in this newsletter, please call SACHA's office at 233-0969.

Thanks to Betty Jean Coates, who copy-edits every issue for us... and many thanks to the volunteers and staff of housing co-ops for delivering the newsletter to the member households.

Volunteers' Lives Made Easier

Participants from the ten co-ops who attended the Fall Education event reported they discovered more ways to help them run their co-ops. The most popular workshops were:

- (1) the Privacy and Personal Information Act and
- (2) Member Rights and Responsibilities as laid out in the new Cooperatives Act.

SACHA can also come to your co-op to provide you with education or other services. We offer quite a

variety of workshops on topics such as board orientations, chairing and recording, committee orientations, and more.

We also have trained personnel who can provide services like meeting facilitation, democratic process help, conflict resolution, and other services your co-op might need.

For more information, call Joanne or Audrey at 233-0969.

Smoke Detectors Save Lives!

Smoke detectors provide the best early warning system in the event of a fire. A smoke detector combines smoke detection and alarm sounding in one unit. Early detection of fires saves lives and reduces damage to house and contents. Statistics show that fewer deaths or serious injuries occur in households where smoke detectors are installed and maintained.

Smoke detectors are provided with test features to allow regular testing of the unit. Check your detectors monthly and replace the batteries yearly or when the detector indicates the battery is low.

Keep your smoke alarm clean as dust may affect its operation. Use the soft bristle attachment on your vacuum cleaner to remove dust.

The outside of the alarm can be cleaned with a damp cloth. Be sure to test the detector after cleaning.

The useful life expectancy of a smoke detector is 10 years. You should replace it after 10 years and discard it with the household garbage. After 10 years, a smoke detector will have monitored the air 3.5 million times.

Always follow the manufacturer's or your co-op's instructions for complete maintenance, cleaning, and testing of your detector. You can find more information on the types, recommended location, building codes of detectors on the City of Calgary web site at www.calgary.ca.

This article is from their web site.

General Meeting - Members Input Invaluable - Turnout High

Members' questions helped clarify SACHA's 2004 budget for all those attending our GM on December 1st. This discussion led to budget and dues approval. Dues for 2004 are \$3.09 per unit per month, up \$.09 from 2003. Twenty-seven participants, representing ten co-ops, plus SACHA committees/staff attended.

The Board welcomes Daryl Sedor, Sarcee Meadows. Daryl was elected to the Board to fill a remaining term. The term will expire in the spring of 2005.

Calgary Vacancy Rates Up

High vacancy rates make it harder to keep your co-op full. But each member can help. Tell people, especially anyone looking for a place, about Housing Co-ops. Also tell them that we offer decent housing at below market "rents". Tell them to visit SACHA's website where they can find out about co-op housing - current housing charges, availability, locations etc., for all of SACHA's members. This will help your co-op and others. Thanks

Upcoming Events

March 20: Board Workshop
Information has been sent to your Co-op

April 17: SACHA AGM

June 9 to 12: CHF Canada AGM

About Participation...

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

Painting?

SAVE 20% TO 50% ON PAINTS, STAINS & SUPPLIES AT GENERAL PAINT

To receive this discount, identify yourself as a member of your housing cooperative to get SACHA's members' pricing.



Discounts available at all General Paint locations listed in phone book or on SACHA's web site.

A little insurance could be a big relief.

Living in a CHF Canada member co-op means you get great insurance at low group rates.

MemberGuard

- Designed specifically for co-op members
- Protects the contents of your home
- Low monthly premiums



AutoGuard*

- Eligible for discounts of up to 40%
- OneStep™ 24/7 claims service

For your fast, no-obligation quote call

1-800-387-1963

MemberGuard

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AutoGuard

Cooperators Housing Federation of Canada

*Eligible keyhole product and eligible. Auto insurance is not available in NB, NS, BC. OneStep™, AutoGuard™ and MemberGuard™ are trademarks owned by Cooperators General Insurance Company, used under license. Administered by CHF Group Insurance Management, a member of co-opsco home and auto insurance since 1979, and underwritten by CIBC/CO Insurance Company.

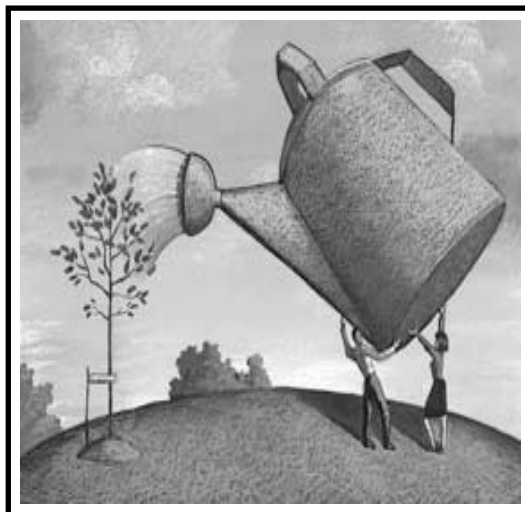
Have you got a co-operative attitude?

When I first moved into my co-op 14 years ago, I didn't know a lot about co-op living but I knew one thing for sure. I knew without a doubt that everyone agreed on everything all the time, and there were no unpleasant disagreements – ever. And how did I know this was true? Well, because we all lived in a co-op, therefore we all felt the same about things that mattered. Wake up, Sherry!

Okay, so now I know that we don't always agree. In fact, I know that just like in the rest of the world, sometimes we disagree vehemently. **So here's my list of things to remember when it seems we just can't agree:**

Disagreement is good. In fact, in a democracy, it's healthy. We get better decisions when we consider the problem or issue from many different sides. Oh yes, sometimes I get frustrated at the amount of discussion, or what I consider the unenlightened views of others, but listening with respect, especially when I don't agree, is essential. And sometimes I even change my mind once I've considered some of the excellent points brought up. Go figure.

We live in a co-op because we all care deeply about how we live, but we may not agree on what is the best way to do that. Because we don't agree doesn't mean either one of us is less committed to co-op living – we just have a different view of what the “ideal” looks like. So we may not agree, but we'll discuss the problem. And because we live in a co-op, we'll try harder to find alternative mutual solutions that are win-win. And you know what, the more we discuss our ideal, or what we're aiming for, the more likely we are to discover we have a common goal. Then we can work out how to get there.



You can't pick your neighbors. Just like your family, sometimes you get neighbors that would not be your first (or second) choice. But we still all need to get along. So, although I loved them, I took down the wind chimes that my neighbor described as “Chinese Water Torture”. He also used chemicals on his lawn, and (gasp!) voted Progressive Conservative. But, he also shoveled my driveway when I hurt my back, and watched my place when I was away. He was a great neighbor for fourteen years, and although we disagreed on many things, I really miss him and his wife. Compromise, new solutions, and keep talking about the problem. It works.

It's not personal. It's hard when we live together in a community to separate the issues from the personalities, but I can disagree with someone about how to deal with the basketball hoop and still like them and respect them for the person they are. I might not play basketball with them. Or maybe that's exactly what we both need to do – play a game together, have a beer, do something after the meeting to reconnect as people outside the issue.

We all have a right to our opinion. “I may not agree with your opinion, but I'll defend to the death your right to have it.” We also have a right to express our opinion. For me it's related to the co-op principle about inclusion – I need to encourage everyone to participate, even those I don't agree with.

So we don't always agree. There are no easy or perfect solutions to debating those issues we care about. Is it challenging? Oh yeah. Is it worth spending the time to include the richness of differing viewpoints? **You bet it is.**

*Sherry Kozak
Sunnyhill Housing Cooperative*