



Chapter 4

BEST PRACTICES

Best practices include strategies, practices and management tools that have worked well for organizations, and produce superior performance when adapted and implemented elsewhere.

The BC Non-Profit Housing Association has developed best practices information and resources to help housing providers:

- Manage housing portfolios effectively and efficiently.
- Compare performance to recognized standards.
- Measure success and identify challenges.
- Establish business priorities and a plan for improvement.
- Orient new Board and executive members.
- Prepare for the operational review with BC Housing. (When an organization demonstrates best practices, the result will be a positive operational review.)
- Be creative in solving problems.

Self-Assessment Tool / Best Practices Web Site

The BC Non-Profit Housing Association best practices resources are organized into the same categories as the operational review:

- Maintenance Management
- Financial Management
- Revenue Generation (This category is included under Financial Management for BC Housing's operational review.)
- Resident Management
- Information and Records Management
- Human Resources Management
- Governance (This is an additional category in the best practices materials, which is integrated into the other areas in the operational review.)



BCNPHAbest practices resources include:

- A *Self-Assessment Tool* containing best practices statements that describe good management practices for non-profit housing providers, and a checklist for assessing performance.
- A website with all the *Self-Assessment Tool* categories and links to information and resources housing providers can use to achieve the best practices in each category. (Available at www.bcnpha.bc.ca in late 2002. You'll also find a link to the *Self-Assessment Tool* in the *Resource Directory* on BC Housing's Web site at www.bchousing.org.)

The *Self-Assessment Tool* enables you to gauge your performance in key areas of housing management. For example, one of the best practice statements listed under Financial Management says:

The housing provider has the necessary financial policies and procedures in place to ensure appropriate processes and controls in the handling and recording of financial transactions.

And one of the best practice statements for Maintenance Management says:

The housing provider conducts regularly scheduled inspections to meet legal requirements and to ensure optimum operating efficiency, quality, security and safety on building and grounds systems such as:

- Elevator.
- HVAC systems (heat, ventilation and air conditioning).
- Furnace, boilers and pumps.
- Fire safety systems (sprinkler, alarm, etc.).
- Irrigation sprinkler system.
- Lobby entry systems.
- Automated parkade entry systems.
- Generators.
- Building security systems.

You can assess your performance for each statement by answering "Yes," "No," "Don't Know," or "Needs Work," and refer to the website for information on how to implement best practices.



Benefits of Best Practices

Following best practices in managing affordable housing developments will help your organization:

- Maintain or improve the quality of service to residents.
- Increase efficiency / achieve cost savings.
- Meet legislative requirements.
- Reduce risk.
- Generate revenue.
- Improve staff retention and morale.
- Enhance your reputation and goodwill in the community.

Contact the BC Non-Profit Housing Association at 604-291-2600 or 1-800-494-8859 for more information on the BCNPHA best practice resources.

Housing co-ops can contact the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC at 604-879-5111 or 1-866-879-5111, or visit the CHF BC Web site at www.chf.bc.ca, for information on CHF BC workshops, consultation services and resource materials on managing and governing effectively.
