



Registry *Insites*



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message from the chair

Bill Richardson, Affordable Housing Societies

Welcome to the second issue of The Housing Registry's newsletter, Registry Insites. The goal of the newsletter is to keep members informed about the progress of the registry and the people involved. We value your feedback and we want to hear from you about whether it is a useful tool. Tell us what you like about it as well as what needs improving and suggestions for articles that you would find useful.

The Housing Registry will be holding its AGM November 20, from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. at the BCNPHA annual conference. The new council members will be introduced at that time. This is one opportunity for the council to meet with members from various areas to discuss how membership in The Housing Registry can benefit everyone and what you, the members, would like to see improved upon or changed. I look forward to seeing you there.

All the best.

Bill
brichardson@affordablehsg.com

Online rent calculation

There is a new benefit to membership in The Housing Registry: online rent calculation! Testing of this Housing Connections module has been completed with Conference Housing Society and Fraser Valley Kinsmen Housing Society. Here's what they have to say about the module.

One of the benefits of the rent calculation module is that the system always pulls up the current approved economic rents and heat allowances, eliminating the need to look them up. The other big benefit is having rent calculation changes reflected right away, no more waiting for BC Housing to process Application for Rent Subsidy forms.

Carissa Lohm, Conference Housing Society

It's awesome. I can run a Summary of Tenants on demand and identify discrepancies between our records and BC Housing and then I can make adjustments as required.

Gerald Rougeau, Fraser Valley Kinsmen Housing Society

With testing completed the online rent calculation module is being opened up for **Housing Registry members**. As changes to rent calculations have an impact on the flow of subsidy to a housing provider, those who wish to become an online rent calculation user must participate in mandatory training. Training can be provided at your location or, if there are a number of providers in one area, larger training sessions may be arranged in a central location.

Depending on interest, the first training sessions will be held in early December with more sessions scheduled for the new year.

To have your name added to the list of Housing Registry members interested in becoming rent calculation users, please e-mail thehousingregistry@bchousing.org.

Or if you are interested in learning more about the online rent calculation module, you may wish to attend the Rent Calculation workshop being offered at the BCNPHA Conference on Wednesday, November 22.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of The Housing Registry is happening on Monday, November 20 at the BC Non-Profit Housing Association Conference. If you are attending the conference or if you are located in the Lower Mainland, come join us at 5:15 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver.

Member profile: Shuswap Independent Living Association

The Housing Registry's newest member – and its first member from the Interior – is the Shuswap Independent Living Association (SILA). Located in Salmon Arm, the association manages 68 units in two sites: Clover Court and The Terrace on Broadview. Both sites provide homes to families, people with disabilities, and seniors.

“I'd wanted us to join for years,” said Property Administrator Rob Wescott, “but it took a long time to convince our Board of Directors. There was a lot of apprehension about losing control over who we house and giving any of that power to BC Housing. But once they understood that we would still select our tenants based on our own criteria, the Board realized that it made sense for us to join.”

SILA became a member on May 1 and Rob estimates that the association has been able to allocate .75 of a position to other tasks. “We're saving about four to five hours a day that used to be spent talking to applicants,” he said. “It's been a very positive move for us.”

SILA had previously followed the BC Housing model for its application process, which means that the association did not have to make changes to its internal processes in order to match those of Housing Connections. Prior to joining The Housing Registry, SILA contacted all the applicants waiting for housing and asked them to complete a new Housing Registry application and send it directly to BC Housing for entering into The Housing Registry system.

“Another advantage of being part of the registry is that all the confidential applicant information we used to keep is now housed on BC Housing's servers,” remarked Rob. “It's safer there and also we don't have to deal with any liability issues if our computer system is somehow compromised. It's given us a great sense of freedom.”

The changing face of who we serve

Ken MacDonald, Executive Director, Wings Housing Society

There are many challenges finding homes for people on the applicant list. Over the years, these difficulties appear to be growing. It's easy to point a finger at The Housing Registry as a source of some of these problems. But that is a simplistic answer to a very complex situation. Housing providers everywhere are finding that more and more tenants require services that we have not always been prepared to offer. Tenants and applicants have changed and need more from us. This is not a problem unique to housing providers that use The Housing Registry.

Wings Housing Society acts as both a housing provider and a community agency. Our guiding principle is “Everyone living with HIV/AIDS must have adequate housing.” We are the largest HIV/AIDS housing provider in Canada with one 31-unit building in downtown Vancouver and many portable subsidies. There are many other providers who support people with AIDS (PWAs) and their families as the AIDS pandemic crosses all sections of society.

Several years ago, we turned to The Housing Registry for help in fulfilling our mandate. My participation on the council has positively affected service to PWAs and other applicants with disabilities. The Housing Registry’s single application allows information to be standardized and provide an accurate picture to housing providers of potential tenants to ensure that they are a good match. As a result, more people have found suitable accommodation.

The Housing Registry is a tool to help us cope with change and Wings has found it to be a supportive and effective way to implement good service to all parties involved in the application process.

Residential Tenancy Act changes

Changes were made to B.C.'s Residential Tenancy Act effective October 1, 2006. The act spells out the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants, including the terms of tenancy agreements, rent increases, ending tenancy agreements, and the arbitration process for resolving disputes. The Residential Tenancy Office has issued a one-page summary of changes to the act which you can download from its website at <http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca/>.

statistics

Statistic 1: 30 versus 70

With more housing providers joining the registry we have seen a steady increase in the total number of applicants on The Housing Registry database. On average when a housing provider joins the registry and transfers their applicant list to the registry we find 30 per cent duplication in applicant names. This means that 70 per cent of the applicants had never applied to The Housing Registry and therefore were not counted in previous statistics regarding the number of households in British Columbia looking for housing.

Statistic 2: number of applicants

The table below shows trends in the number of applicants on The Housing Registry database since The Housing Registry began the input of applicant data from housing providers joining the registry in 2000.

Date	Families	Seniors (age 55+)	People with Disabilities (under 55)	Others*	Total Applicants
Sep 2000	5,882	1,849	1,552	298	9,581
Sep 2002	7,057	2,113	1,849	453	11,472
Sep 2004	7,637	2,486	2,134	737	12,994
Sep 2006	8,458	2,979	2,561	572	14,570

*1 Other includes, market applicants, lower income urban singles and rent supplement applicants.

Statistic 3: applicant numbers in your region

Ever wonder how many applicants in your community are looking for housing? The table below shows by regional district the number of applicants based on their current address.

Region	Total # of Applicants	Family	People with Disabilities	Seniors	Wheelchair Modified	Singles	Rent Supplements	Transfers
Alberni-Clayoquot	91	81	2	5	0	2	0	1
Bulkley-Nechako	53	46	2	2	0	1	0	2
Capital	2020	1128	405	391	15	23	4	54
Cariboo	20	5	5	6	2	0	2	0
Central Coast	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Central Kootenay	26	19	4	3	0	0	0	0
Central Okanagan	56	32	10	8	0	1	1	4
Columbia-Shuswap	60	31	16	7	1	3	0	2
Comox-Strathcona	115	92	10	8	0	2	1	2
Cowichan Valley	61	38	6	14	2	0	1	0
East Kootenay	46	41	1	3	0	0	0	1
Fraser Valley	309	211	44	42	0	4	0	8
Fraser-Fort George	274	174	58	32	1	3	3	3
Greater Vancouver	11068	5976	1900	2261	50	407	5	469
Kitimat-Stikine	26	7	6	12	0	0	0	1
Kootenay Boundary	12	3	3	4	0	0	0	2
Mount Waddington	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nanaimo	227	160	29	31	1	3	2	1
North Okanagan	55	32	12	5	1	3	1	1
Northern Rockies	33	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
Okanagan-Similkameen	166	23	39	84	3	10	2	5
Peace River	148	123	5	15	0	3	0	2
Powell River	7	4	1	1	0	0	0	1
Skeena-Queen Charlotte	85	61	10	8	0	1	0	5
Squamish-Lillooet	10	6	1	2	0	0	0	1
Sunshine Coast	17	8	4	5	0	0	0	0
Thompson-Nicola	72	16	15	37	1	2	1	0
Total	15070	8363	2588	2986	77	468	23	565

Unexpected Error

While we hope this never happens, sometimes technology is uncooperative and we receive error messages. It is important that all errors are reported to us, as this assists in trouble shooting and ensuring that fixes are put in place and/or data is cleansed to minimize the chances of errors for all users.

If you receive an “Unexpected Error” message (pictured below), please report the error using the following steps.

1. Click on the option to [e-mail](#) the housing registry.
2. In the e-mail include a brief description of what steps were performed that resulted in the error. For example, “Received this error message when entering completing the Make Offer action for unit #3 at Bedside Manor. Unit is being offered to applicant number 876543.”

It is important that an explanation is provided as simply sending the error message will not provide Housing Registry staff with enough information required to investigate and resolve the issue. Someone from The Housing Registry will contact you once the issue has been resolved and will provide instructions for completing the task.



I found an applicant in The Housing Registry database but the status is “Deleted.” What do I do?

Once an applicant file is “deleted,” the applicant must complete and submit a new Application for Accommodation. Once you have a completed application from the household, you can click on the [Reactivate Application](#) action link found at the bottom of the applicant file. The file will be changed to pending and, once The Housing Registry receives the completed application form, the application can be activated.

Can we get a hard copy of the application form filled out by an applicant?

In the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island, all applications and supporting documents have been scanned into the system and are available in the “Attachment Tab” in the applicant file. To view attachments:

- Locate the applicant file;
- Select the “Attachment” tab (hint: select “More Tabs” to view additional tabs);
- Select a document by clicking on it. This will open a PDF of the file which can be viewed on-line or printed.

Please remember, any documents printed contain confidential personal information and appropriate steps must be taken to secure or destroy printed copies of documents as per the *Personal Privacy and Protection Act*.