

# Tenant News

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## Evergreen Sanctuary Garden

As you sit in the Evergreen Sanctuary Garden, you can't help but feel the peace and quiet in the heart of Victoria.

Small toys, rocks painted by children, and garden ornaments surround a colourful signpost and flowers in the community space at Evergreen Terrace, a housing complex in Victoria that includes families, individuals, and seniors.

Tenants at Evergreen Terrace requested a Tenant Activity Grant from BC Housing to create the Evergreen Sanctuary Garden – a garden that provides opportunities for neighbours to connect and understand each other better.

The Evergreen Terrace community collaborated to find ways to meet outside and encourage children to contribute to the project.

You can see the results of this community collaboration in a signpost of inclusion, garden pots and beds, and murals.

Claude Gamache, one of the tenants at Evergreen Terrace who worked on the project, says this is an “experience that opens the heart. It is impossible not to feel when you look at this space.” Together all generations at Evergreen Terrace are building, as the signpost says, a future of belonging, caring, joy, hope, harmony, happiness, peace, empowerment, respect, compassion, kindness and courage.

## Tenant Activity Grants

If you are a tenant of a directly managed BC Housing building, you can apply for funding for projects and activities at your housing site. These activities should help promote community building, leadership, self-development and wellness for the tenants in your building. Some examples include a shared art project, like the garden at Evergreen Terrace, an educational workshop, or a summer barbeque. **To find out how to apply for a Tenant Activity Grant, contact your Tenant Support Worker or Housing & Health Nurse or you can leave a message on our Tenant Support Line at 1-833-301-4707 and you will receive a call back.**

## On-Site Supports

Meet some of the BC Housing's support heroes available to you.

### Who: Tenant Support Workers (TSW)

Q: Where can you find me?

A: Directly Managed BC Housing buildings

What do I do? I work with individuals to provide emotional support, develop skills and access resources to increase tenants' capacity to be successful and satisfied in the living, working, learning and/or social environments of their choice. I encourage you to use available social, occupational, spiritual, financial, intellectual, residential, recreational and educational resources to meet your goals!

TSW Jessica says: “As a Tenant support worker we are an onsite resource for all problem-solving circumstances, whether it is looking for resources in the community, helping with forms or documents, or simply helping tenants navigate complicated circumstances in life. We are here to listen and understand concerns and find the best resource to support that individual or family.”



### Who: Housing and Health Nurses (HHN)

Q: Where can you find me?

A: Directly Managed BC Housing buildings

What do I do? I support tenants living independently with access to physical health, mental health, addiction services, tenancy resources and crisis support. I work closely with the team of Tenant Support Workers and other team members to help you thrive.

HHN Shar says: “As a housing health nurse, I ensure there is support for current tenancies, which means I am here to connect you with outside agencies/resources for help, discuss current housing situations and aid in requests /concerns.”



To access these services, please contact your Tenant Support Worker or Housing & Health Nurse or you can leave a message on our Tenant Support Line at 1-833-301-4707 and you will receive a call back.

## COVID-19 Update

Since we are still dealing with the pandemic, masks in common areas are still highly recommended but not mandatory.

Here are some recommendations for safety:

- > Wash your hands regularly
- > Clean frequently touched surfaces more often
- > Sneeze or cough into your elbow
- > Stay home if you're sick
- > When in doubt contact Health Link BC at 811
- > If you have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing), call 911.

Social time! Where applicable, common spaces, such as lounges, will be reopening, and programming will be resuming in the near future. Masking is still required in these common spaces.

**BC Housing gratefully acknowledges...**

that we live and work on the unceded traditional and ancestral homelands of hundreds of Indigenous Peoples and Nations across British Columbia, each with their own unique traditions, history and culture.



## Keeping your home cool during hot weather

It could be another hot summer. Here are some tips to keep your home cooler on the hottest days:

From 10:00am to 8:00pm, or when it's hottest outside:

- close windows
- use shutters / blinds / window films
- use air conditioners and misters, if available
- use a fan when showering and stove fan when cooking, to remove heat and humidity
- limit use of appliances like stoves, ovens, dryers, dishwashers
- turn off the heat in your unit
- wear wet clothing, cooling packs on your neck or take a cool shower

After 8:00pm:

- keep windows open with a fan nearby to bring in cool air
- make a cross breeze by opening windows and doors

If your home is too hot, see if your building has a cooling area or visit air-conditioned libraries, recreation centres and malls in your neighbourhood.

Don't forget about your pets! Give them shade, cool drinking water and baths. Never leave pets in cars or direct sunlight. Plan walks during cooler parts of day to avoid hot asphalt.



Plus, here are some additional tips to beat the heat:

- Cool your body
- Protect your pets
- Hydrate
- Avoid sun exposure
- Avoid/limit alcohol and caffeine
- Check on others
- Ask your doctor

Questions? Contact your Housing and Health Services staff or call the BC Housing Tenant Support Line at 1-833-301-4707.

## The livegreen Employee Council's Green Cleaning Tips!

Household cleaners can have harsh ingredients that are damaging for the environment. Many cleaning products also contain fragrances or other chemicals that trigger allergies and asthma. Here are some DIY tips on making your own safe cleaning products with common household ingredients.

### Ingredient #1: Baking soda

Cleans, deodorizes, softens water, cuts grease, polishes tarnished silver, and whitens.

### Ingredient #2: White vinegar

Cuts grease, removes mildew, and deodorizes.



The livegreen Employee Council is BC Housing's employee-driven "green team." We organize activities to raise awareness about sustainability and help BC Housing employees and tenants make more sustainable decisions at work, home, and in their communities.



### Cleaning Tip #1: Remove carpet stains and odours

To clean up a spill on your carpet, sprinkle it with baking soda. Let it sit for a few minutes, then vacuum it up. Next, use a cloth to blot the stain with 1 cup warm water mixed with 1 tbsp of vinegar. Blot until the stain is removed, then air dry.



### Cleaning Tip #2: Scub kitchen stovetops

Baking soda and water can be used to clean baked-on food residue off ceramic stovetops. Make a paste of warm water and baking soda, let it sit on the surface for several minutes, then scrub to remove.



### Cleaning Tip #3: Glass and mirror cleaner

Pour 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/2 cup water in a spray bottle. Spray on to the glass, and wipe with a newspaper in circles to avoid streaks.

## Name the Newsletter Contest – Vote now

In the last issue we asked you to submit your ideas for a new name for the newsletter. We received over 30 entries! Thank you to all of you who submitted your ideas.

We thought that instead of picking the name ourselves, we would put it to a tenant vote. Vote for your favourite:

- The Quarterly Connector    The Bulletin Board    Tenant Connections  
 Tenant Tips and Tidings    Tenants' Quarterly

Send your vote to [tenantnewsletter@bchousing.org](mailto:tenantnewsletter@bchousing.org) by August 15th. You can also call 1-604-694-2608 and leave a voicemail with your top choice for the newsletter team.

**VOTE NOW**

## 2021 Tenant Survey Results

Every two years BC Housing conducts a survey with directly managed tenants to understand what we are doing well and what we could improve. In 2021 almost 970 surveys were completed. Thanks to all of you who participated! Your feedback is what helps bring about the changes and improvements you want most. Please watch for the next tenant survey package in September 2023.

HOW YOU RATE OUR OVERALL PERFORMANCE

**76%**

very good / good

HOW YOU RATE US IN SPECIFIC AREAS (% rating very good / good)

**73%**

staff performance

**69%**

building maintenance

**66%**

safety & security

**69%**

COVID-19 measures



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