

Important Contacts

**Call 911 if you need Ambulance, Fire Department or Police**

**Grey County Housing 519-376-5744**

*During office hours (8:30 to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday)*

*AND to report emergency repairs anytime
(24 hours a day, seven days a week)*

**\*Emergency: Fire, Leak, Flood, No Water, Electrical**

**Tenant Services Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Community Relations Worker ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Tenant Services Manager \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Director of Community Services \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Other Contacts**

**Local Information Hotline 2-1-1**

Grey Bruce Community Legal Clinic 519-370-2200

Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal 1-888-332-3234

# Introduction

Welcome to your new home! This Tenant Handbook gives you important information and helps answer some of your questions as you settle into your new home and/or community. Inside this Handbook, you can find helpful answers to some frequently asked questions, as well as information about what is expected and required of you as a tenant living in our housing community. We hope you will find this Handbook helpful and encourage you to contact us if you have any questions.

## About Grey County Housing

Grey County Housing is responsible for the direct management of 997 units in Grey County. They are located at 35 sites located in 10 communities in Grey County;

**Owen Sound**

**Chatsworth**

**Hanover**

**Meaford
Thornbury
Dundalk
Holstein
West Grey**

**Flesherton**

**Markdale**

Units include low and high-rise apartment buildings, townhouses, semi-detached and single family homes. Units range in size from bachelor apartments to 5-bedroom homes, with some units being barrier free.

## How to Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the staff at

Grey County Housing by calling **519-376-5744**.

**Our administration office location is:**

595 9th Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3

[www.grey.ca](http://www.grey.ca)

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, except for holidays.

Table of Contents

[Introduction 1](#_Toc376436375)

[About Grey County Housing 1](#_Toc376436376)

[How to Contact Us 1](#_Toc376436377)

[Moving In 4](#_Toc376436378)

[Move-in Inspections 4](#_Toc376436379)

[Keys/Fob 4](#_Toc376436380)

[Parking 4](#_Toc376436381)

[Your Rent 5](#_Toc376436382)

[About Your Rent 5](#_Toc376436383)

[Paying Your Rent 5](#_Toc376436384)

[Changes to Income and the Number of People Living with You 5](#_Toc376436385)

[You and Your New Home 7](#_Toc376436386)

[Laundry 7](#_Toc376436387)

[Garbage 7](#_Toc376436388)

[For Apartment Buildings… 7](#_Toc376436389)

[For Townhouse & Single/Semi-Detached Units… 7](#_Toc376436390)

[Hazardous Waste 8](#_Toc376436391)

[Recycling 8](#_Toc376436392)

[Pets 8](#_Toc376436393)

[Insurance 8](#_Toc376436394)

[Common Areas 9](#_Toc376436395)

[Recreation Rooms 9](#_Toc376436396)

[Elevators/Lifts 9](#_Toc376436397)

[Pest Control 10](#_Toc376436398)

[Unit Exteriors 10](#_Toc376436399)

[If You Have A Balcony: 10](#_Toc376436400)

[Lawns and Walkways 11](#_Toc376436401)

[For Buildings of Grey County Housing 11](#_Toc376436402)

[For Single/Semi-Detached Homes And Townhouse Tenants 11](#_Toc376436403)

[Your Rights and Responsibilities 12](#_Toc376436404)

[Transferring to a Different Unit 12](#_Toc376436405)

[Internal Transfer 12](#_Toc376436406)

[Guest Policy 12](#_Toc376436407)

[Smoke-Free Policy 13](#_Toc376436408)

[Eviction 13](#_Toc376436409)

[You May be Evicted if You: 13](#_Toc376436410)

[You May be Evicted if You or Your Guests: 14](#_Toc376436411)

[You May be Evicted if You Keep a Pet that: 14](#_Toc376436412)

[Safety and Security 15](#_Toc376436413)

[Building Attendant 15](#_Toc376436414)

[Smoke Detectors/Alarms 15](#_Toc376436415)

[Building Safety and Security 15](#_Toc376436416)

[Fire Safety 16](#_Toc376436417)

[If You Discover a Fire: 16](#_Toc376436418)

[When the Fire Alarm Sounds: 16](#_Toc376436419)

[For Apartment Buildings: 16](#_Toc376436420)

[For Townhouse Communities & Single/Semi-Detached Homes: 17](#_Toc376436421)

[Maintenance and Repairs 18](#_Toc376436422)

[Unit Inspections Every Year 18](#_Toc376436423)

[Maintenance Emergencies 18](#_Toc376436424)

[Non-emergency Repairs 18](#_Toc376436425)

[Basic Maintenance Instructions for your Home 19](#_Toc376436426)

[No Heat? **Check this list first before you call us.** 19](#_Toc376436427)

[Appliances 19](#_Toc376436428)

[Air Conditioners 19](#_Toc376436429)

[Electric Baseboard Heaters 19](#_Toc376436430)

[Water Shutoff – Step-by-Step Instructions: 19](#_Toc376436431)

[Water Shutoff – Tips and Techniques 20](#_Toc376436432)

[Toilets – Water Conservation 20](#_Toc376436433)

[Moving Out 21](#_Toc376436434)

[Tenant Handbook Agreement 22](#_Toc376436435)

# Moving In

Welcome to your new home! We hope you enjoy it.

## Move-in Inspections

Your unit was inspected before you moved in. Damage to the unit was written down and work orders for needed repairs were given. It is possible that we may have overlooked something. We ask that you complete and return the Move-In Inspection Report to your Tenant Services Coordinator **within 10 days** of moving in. If you do not return the Move-In Inspection Report that will be your way of saying to us that the unit is in good condition and that no repairs are needed.

Please inspect everything as soon as you move in, such as doors, ceilings, walls, windows, screens, etc. Check to make sure that the light fixtures, plumbing fixtures, appliances, and all electrical plugs are working.

## Keys/Fob

The keys and fob that you were given when you moved in will get you into your unit, the front door of your building (if you live in an apartment building) and your mailbox. Keys to these locks are only available through our office. They cannot be duplicated in a store. We want to make sure our tenants are safe, locks are always changed when a former tenant does not give back all the keys that s/he was given.

If you lose or forget your keys during our business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator or other office staff for help. If you live in an apartment building you may buzz your properties building attendant after 4:30pm. If you live in a family unit, you may call the office. 519-376-5744. Replacement charges for a key or fob are $10, replacement of a damaged lock is $25.00.

## Parking

There is not a lot of tenant and visitor parking at Grey County Housing sites, so we ask that you only park in your assigned parking space. If you need a parking space, please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator.

Only properly licensed and roadworthy passenger vehicle and furnished with valid current license plates are permitted. No repairs on any vehicle are allowed at any Residential Complexes/Town Houses.

# Your Rent

**Your rent is due on or before the 1st of every month.**

We ask that you read this section on rent very carefully, and that you contact your Tenant Services Coordinator if you have any questions. Please do not risk your tenancy by not paying your rent or paying your rent late.

## About Your Rent

**Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance** is the financial subsidy given to a household to lower the amount the household must otherwise pay to live in a unit with Grey County Housing. RGI rent, plus or minus a utility allowance, is based on approximately 30% of the household’s gross monthly income. If you are receiving Social Assistance (Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program) your rent is based on a set scale. Please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator if you need more information on this.

## Paying Your Rent

To make sure that your rent is always paid on time, we recommend you set up either a pre-authorized or direct payment plan if you have a fixed income (e.g. pensions, steady employment, or Social Assistance). For more information about the pre-authorized payment plan, please speak to your Tenant Services Coordinator.

We also accept debit, cheques, and post-dated cheques and cash payments if you choose to pay your rent that way.

**If You Can’t Pay the Rent**

We want you to keep your home! If you are having trouble paying your rent, contact your Tenant Services Coordinator right away. If you are in crisis, we can arrange a payment plan that will work for you. We can also link you with services that can help manage your finances.

## Changes to Income and the Number of People Living with You

Because your rent is based on your household’s total monthly income, the amount of rent you pay may change if your household income changes – increase or decrease in your income, new job, Employment Insurance, WSIB, Support Payments are some examples. You must tell your Tenant Services Coordinator about any changes to your household right away- a new baby, student returning from school, long term guest or anyone else joins or leaves your household (where it comes from) **within** **30 days of the change**.

Once a year, we do a review to make sure that your household still qualifies for ‘rent-geared-to-income’ Housing. We check your household income, but we also check to make sure that your household still meets the basic eligibility requirements. This includes checking your residency status and the number of people living in your household. If your rent will change (go up or down), you will be told about it in a rent change decision letter that we will send you by mail.

**Do not wait for your annual review to tell us about changes! Failing to tell us about changes may mean that you will have to pay money to us or that you will lose your rent subsidy. Do not risk your tenancy. Remember to contact us.**

# You and Your New Home

This section of the Handbook answers some of the questions that you will naturally have when moving into your new community, and gives you some of the dos and don’ts that you need to know about. If you ever have any questions, please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator.

## Laundry

All Grey County Housing apartment complexes have laundry machines that tenants can use. Please take out your laundry from the washer and dryer as soon as it is done so that other tenants can also do their laundry. We ask that you **do not** wash pet blankets as the fur clogs up the machines. If you have problems with the laundry machines, inform the custodian using a “maintenance request form” or call the housing office.

If you live in an apartment in a building, you are not allowed to install a washer and dryer in your unit, because they could cause flooding and/or other plumbing problems.

Installing a washer and dryer is allowed if you live in a townhouse or a single/semi-detached home. You will find the hook-ups for these in your basement.

## Garbage

### For Apartment Buildings…

* Ask your Tenant Services Coordinator when your weekly garbage day is.
* Try to schedule emptying your unit garbage prior to your scheduled garbage day.
* Do not put glass, items under pressure (e.g. aerosol cans), or pizza boxes down the chute. These types of items must be taken directly to the garbage room.
* Double bag garbage that has kitty litter or diapers.
* Do not leave garbage bags in hallways, garbage chute rooms or on your balcony.
* Make sure you push the bag down the chute and that the chute door is closed all the way.
* Large household items, like mattresses, sofas and appliances, are not allowed in the garbage bins. You will need to dispose of these large items yourself.

### For Townhouse & Single/Semi-Detached Units…

\*\*\*Please contact your local municipality for garbage sticker payment and garbage pick-up. This is the tenant’s responsibility.

* Make sure that garbage is put in garbage bins (where provided). If the garbage bin is full, store your garbage as described below until the bin is emptied.
* In communities where there is curb-side pickup, put all garbage in securely tied plastic bags and put the bags out by the curb by 7am on the day of pick up.
* After pickup, put away garbage bins and recycling boxes (blue boxes) as soon as you can.

### Hazardous Waste

If you need to get rid of hazardous waste, like needles, paint, paint thinner and batteries, it is your responsibility to make arrangements.

Remember that needles must be disposed of properly for safety reasons. Please contact your doctor, pharmacist or Public Health Grey Bruce (519-376-9420) for safe disposal instructions.

### Recycling

We encourage you to take part in the blue box recycling program in your community. If you live in an apartment complex, your Tenant Services Coordinator will tell you where to find the blue bins/boxes. If you live in a townhouse or single/semi-detached home, and you do not know where to find the bins/boxes, please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator.

## Pets

In many households, pets are important members of the family. If you have a pet, please remember that you are responsible for your pet’s behaviour and its effect on the building and other tenants.

Dogs/Cats must always be on a leash when outside. Grey County Housing enforces provincial and municipal by-laws concerning pets, including a **“stoop and scoop”** policy in all of our communities. We ask that you be mindful of local bylaws.

## Insurance

Our buildings are insured, but this insurance does not cover your personal property. Your lease states:

It is very important to have Tenant Insurance so that you are covered for damages in case there is a flood (water or sewer) or fire in your unit. Also, you will be held responsible for damages that are found to be caused by you or your guests. If you already receive Social Assistance, Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program can cover the costs of your premiums up to your maximum shelter allowance. Talk to your Community Relations Worker to learn more.

## Common Areas

### Recreation Rooms

Common Rooms and Recreation Rooms are for tenant enjoyment. Most of the buildings have a recreation room that tenants can use. If you would like to book this room for a private event (for example, a birthday party), contact the main housing line, extension 1211 to reserve. A form will be mailed to you for completion prior to your event. Cleanup after the event is your responsibility.

**Please note, Alcohol is not permitted in the Common Areas of the building**

### Elevators/Lifts

Elevators are a safe and important part of apartment living. Unfortunately, elevators sometimes stop working. Here are a few ways that you can help to reduce elevator problems:

* Do not hold doors open for long periods of time.
* If using a scooter please enter/exit the elevator using caution not to damage the doors.
* Do not kick the doors or block the doors with any objects to ‘hold’ the elevator. If you would like to place the elevator on service, please contact the Building Attendant or your Tenant Services Coordinator.
* If the elevator door is not closing, check for anything that could be blocking it, like debris on the tracks.
* If the elevator is damaged or not working, please call us immediately at 519-376-5744, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
* If the elevator stops between floors, there is a telephone/intercom system in the elevator that lets you call for help. Press the intercom button. Stay calm. Do not try to get out of the elevator before it comes back to thefloor level. Once the button has been pushed, wait for someone on the other end of the line to talk to you.
* If you find that someone is stuck in an elevator, try to keep them calm by talking to them and let them know that help is on the way. **If you think medical attention is required, call 911.**

## Pest Control

Unfortunately, pests can become a problem in any household. To control this problem, staff and tenants need to work together. Please make sure that food is kept in airtight containers, and that garbage is kept in bins with lids on and put out on regular garbage days. We ask that you contact us at 519-376-5744 to tell us about pest infestation as soon as it is noticed, so that pest control services can be contacted immediately. Do not throw out infested furniture or mattresses. This will only spread the problem. Instead, ask your Tenant Services Coordinator how to dispose of the infested item safely. We also ask that you do not feed birds, squirrels or stray animals, because this may attract unwanted pests to your building.

## Unit Exteriors

Grey County Housing does not allow for antennae, satellite dishes, clotheslines, basketball nets, etc. to be attached to the exterior of units. If you have any questions about this, please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator.

Installing a satellite dish may be allowed if you live in a single, semi-detached or row housing unit.

### If You Have A Balcony:

Balconies can be great for enjoying those warm summer days and evenings, and we encourage you to put out patio chairs and table planters. Please help keep our communities safe for everyone:

* Balconies should not be used as a storage area. Materials may blow off the balcony, or children may climb on objects and fall off the balcony.
* Carpet is not allowed on the balcony because it makes the concrete deteriorate quickly.
* Planters are not allowed to hang over the balcony railing.
* Barbeques are not permitted on your balcony for fire safety reasons under local municipal bylaws. Also, propane tanks cannot be kept on the balcony.

Grey County Housing encourages the use of balconies however Please be mindful of local Municipality noise by-laws.

## Lawns and Walkways

### For Buildings of Grey County Housing

* Grey County Housing will be responsible for all garden and lawn/snow maintenance.

### For Single/Semi-Detached Homes And Townhouse Tenants

* If you live in a single/semi-detached home or a townhouse community, you are responsible for keeping your area neat and orderly. Please rake the leaves, mow and water the lawn, and weed your yard and garden area.
* During the winter months, Grey County Housing takes responsible for clearing snow and salting all common walkways, parking lots and roadways in some family housing. Townhouse communities are required to get rid of snow and ice from your own walkway, driveway and around your vehicle.

If someone is hurt because they have fallen on your walkway or driveway, you can be held responsible. Therefore, obtain your own tenant insurance to reduce your liability.

# Your Rights and Responsibilities

## Transferring to a Different Unit

Sometimes, tenants of Grey County Housing may want to transfer to a different unit, either in the building/community they currently live in or in another location. Some reasons for this can be because of health or family or because of a change in family size. Transferring to another Grey County Housing unit is known as an ‘internal transfer’.

You may be eligible for an internal transfer if you have:

* paid your rent on time for at least six months
* have a current unit in good repair
* you have lived at your current address for at least one year (this does not apply to over housed households); and
* You are over-housed or have a serious safety or health related issue.

## Internal Transfer

If you are eligible for an internal transfer, you must complete the required transfer forms and return them to the office. You can call us at 519-376-5744 to get a copy of the transfer forms. After we have received your forms and reviewed them, you will then get a letter from us to let you know if your transfer request has been approved or denied. If your transfer request is approved, you will be placed in chronological order (first come, first served) on the Grey County Housing waiting list. If your transfer request is denied, and you do not agree with our decision, you may ask for an internal review.

## Guest Policy

You are welcome to have friends or family stay overnight or for short periods of time (for example, one week).

You cannot have any guest stay in your home for more than **14 days in a row** without getting permission first from Grey County Housing. If you would like for your guest to stay longer, you will need to ask us, in writing, and then wait for us to give you written permission. This must be done *before* your guest comes. If it does not, you may lose your rent subsidy assistance. Your home is meant to only house those people who are listed on your lease. Please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator if you have any questions.

It is your responsibility to make sure that your guests follow the rules and regulations for your Housing Community. If your family or your guests damage property, you will have to pay the cost to repair or replace it.

## Smoke-Free Policy

Starting January 1, 2014, a Smoke-Free Policy is in effect for tenants who live with Grey County Housing. New or transferred tenants who move into their unit after that date, their guests and visitors must follow this Policy and will not be allowed to smoke or hold lit tobacco or similar products inside their unit, on their balcony or patio. By law, existing tenants who have signed their lease before that date will be 'grandfathered' (exempt) from this Policy and can still choose to smoke inside their unit and on their balcony or patio for as long as they live in that unit unless, interfere with reasonable enjoyment of other tenants.

When smoking or holding lit tobacco or similar products outside the building, both new and existing tenants must be at least five metres away from any windows, entrances and exits.

As we gradually move toward a smoke-free building, your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Because smoking will still be allowed in “grandfathered” units, there is a risk of second-hand smoke travelling from one unit to another through doorways, windows, patios, etc. and, as a result, we will follow up on any complaints that we receive about second-hand smoke. Please be mindful of others.

For information or help on how to stop smoking, please call the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit at 519-376-9420. Or, call the Smoker’s Helpline at 1-877-513-5333.

## Eviction

**Eviction is always a last resort**. Your unit is your home and our goal is to help you keep your home. If you have a problem paying your rent on time, please tell us right away and we will try to work with you to find a solution.

The Residential Tenancies Act gives the following grounds for eviction:

### You May be Evicted if You:

* Do not pay your rent on time
* Frequently pay your rent late
* Have more people living in the unit than health, safety, or housing standards allow
* Give false information about your income, the income of other family members living in a rent-geared-to-income unit, or about the number of people living in your home

### You May be Evicted if You or Your Guests:

* + Cause serious damage to your unit, the building, or the residential complex
	+ Make noise or act in a way that seriously bothers any other tenant or the landlord
	+ Threaten the safety of another tenant or the landlord
	+ Break the law on Grey County Housing’s property

### You May be Evicted if You Keep a Pet that:

* Hurts someone
* Causes damage and you do not pay the cost of repair when asked to do so
* Makes an unreasonable amount of noise or is an unreasonable nuisance
* Disturbs the reasonable enjoyment of the other tenants or the landlord (e.g. not picking up after your pet)

**NOTE**: this section is not intended to be legal advice. For legal assistance, you can contact the Community Legal Clinic at 519-370-2200.

# Safety and Security

**For all medical and fire emergencies, call 911.**

For building and unit-related emergencies, you can contact Grey County Housing (GCH), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 519-376-5744.

## Building Attendant

The Building Attendant is a tenant who lives in the apartment building and is responsible for checking the building after hours if necessary, allowing contractors to enter units where permission is granted, and reporting emergencies to Grey County Housing. Not all buildings have Building Attendants. Building Attendant’s hold a master key and may be able to assist you after hours. For help after office hours, please call Grey County Housing at 519-376-5744 if your apartment complex has a Building Attendant and Grey County Housing feels they can help you, we will contact this person.

## Smoke Detectors/Alarms

For your safety, your unit has one or more smoke alarms. Your smoke alarm will be tested **twice** and cleaned **twice** a year. If you think that your smoke alarm is not working properly, please contact Grey County Housing at 519-376-5744.

**Never disconnect your smoke alarm. It is a Provincial offence to tamper with a smoke alarm****.**

## Building Safety and Security

The security of your building and community depends a lot on the steps you take to ensure your own safety and the safety of your fellow tenants.

**Below are some steps you can take to make sure your building/community is safe:**

* Always keep hallways clear of items, like scooters, wheelchairs, walkers, boot trays and doormats. This will help emergency workers and cleaning staff.
* Always close and lock your apartment/unit and building doors.
* When you use the intercom system, ask the caller to identify him or herself so that “uninvited” persons cannot get into the building or your unit.
* Do not let salespersons or canvassers (exemptions are Stats Canada Canvassers or Election Canvassers) into your building. Grey County Housing does not allow soliciting in apartment buildings.
* If someone you do not know is trying to get into the building, do not let them in. Ask them to use the intercom to contact the person they want to visit.
* If you plan to be away from your home for a long period of time, tell GCH office, post office, newspaper office and all other routine delivery people. Remember to close and lock all of your doors and windows before you leave. You may want to use window locking devices for additional security.
* Do not take out window screens, because this makes unwanted entry easier.

## Fire Safety

**An important note to tenants who live in apartment buildings:**

You should NEVER disconnect your apartment door closer. The door closer is a critical fire safety device, and we ask that you tell us about any problems with your door closer. Tenants who disconnect or tamper with their door closer may risk their tenancy as it is an offence under the Ontario Fire Code.

### If You Discover a Fire:

* Leave fire area immediately
* Do not use elevators; take the stairs
* Close door in fire area but do NOT lock it
* Pull the nearest fire alarm station
* Confirm the alarm/emergency by phoning 911 from a safe location

### *When the Fire Alarm Sounds*:

* Stop what you are doing
* Feel your apartment door for heat
* To check corridor for smoke, stand behind door and open very slowly
* If corridor is clear, close apartment door, and exit using the stairway - do **NOT** try to use elevators
* If there is smoke in the stairway, use a different stairway

### For Apartment Buildings:

If smoke is heavy in the hallway outside your apartment door, it may be safer to stay in your apartment. If so:

* Stay calm
* Keep your apartment door closed but not locked
* Put a wet towel at the bottom of door
* Call 911
* Wait on your balcony or by large living room window
* Wave to emergency workers to let them know where you are

### For Townhouse Communities & Single/Semi-Detached Homes:

* Plan an escape route with your family in advance and decide on a meeting place outside your home
* Stay calm
* Get out of your home as quickly as possible
* Meet family in predetermined area
* Call 911

Help Save your life and the life of others. Plan ahead with an emergency plan and never disconnect fire safety equipment, such as smoke alarms and door closures. Tampering with Life Safety devices is an offence under the Ontario Fire Code.

# Maintenance and Repairs

## Unit Inspections Every Year

Grey County Housing Staff will inspect your unit. This is usually done once a year. We check on the condition of your unit and make sure your appliances, heating, plumbing and safety devices are working.

Instead of waiting for your unit inspection, we ask that you tell us about any maintenance problems as soon as possible. Your help in early detection of maintenance problems is greatly appreciated.

## Maintenance Emergencies

The following are examples of maintenance emergencies:

* There is a FIRE – Call 911
* There is no heat, electricity, or water in your unit
* There is a water leak or flood in your unit
* Your toilet is plugged
* Your basement sewer drain is flooding

**If you have a maintenance emergency, call us anytime at 519-376-5744 and say what type of emergency you are having.**

Please remember that if you have maintenance emergencythat can potentially cause a lot of damage to the building or unit[s], staff do not have to give notice before coming into your home.

## Non-emergency Repairs

Maintenance Request forms are located in all buildings, please complete the form and put it in the maintenance request box for the custodian to view. Please tell us if you are giving us permission to enter into your home to do the repairs when you are not at home, or if you want to have someone at home when we are there. If you need assistance completing the maintenance request form you may call us at 519-376-5744 to report the issue Also, we ask that you tell us about any pet(s) that may greet us when we come into your home.

## Basic Maintenance Instructions for your Home

### No Heat? **Check this list first before you call us.**

* Turn your thermostat down all the way, wait a minute, and then turn it up to a temperature that is warmer than the room temperature.
* Make sure that your warm air registers and cold air returns are free of any items that could restrict air circulation.
* If your heating system fails to work, call us at 519-376-5744, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Safety Hint**: Always make sure that there is a 3 foot clearance around furnaces and water heaters.

### Appliances

If an appliance does not work, check first to be sure that it is plugged in. Also, check the circuit breaker and fuses that serve the appliance’s circuit to make sure that it hasn’t tripped or blown. If you own the appliance that is not working, you are responsible for repairing it. If the appliance is owned by Grey County Housing, please call us 519-376-5744 to report the problem.

### Air Conditioners

Talk to Building Staff before installing an air conditioner. Staff needs to check that the wiring is safe and that the unit is securely mounted so it doesn’t fall out. To save energy, look for the Energy Star rating before you buy; you will find it on a sticker on the air conditioning unit. Seal any air leaks around the unit. In the winter, take the unit out of the window.

### Electric Baseboard Heaters

Putting things in front of or on top of baseboard heaters and vents can be a fire hazard and can also stop the heating system from working properly. We therefore ask that you keep all flammable materials away from heating sources. For example:

* Do not hang clothes to dry on or near your heater or heating vents.
* Do not put furniture and blankets close to heaters.

### Water Shutoff – Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Individual shut off valves are found on some sinks and most toilets. They are generally located under the sink at the supply tubes feeding the taps. Turn the valve clockwise to stop water flow, then open a faucet or flush the toilet to let out water standing in the lines. Do not flush the toilet if your toilet is already overflowing.
2. If you live in a townhouse of single/semi-detached home, the main shutoff valve is usually found in the basement near the water meter, and it can be closed to shut off all water in your home. Open faucets at the highest and lowest points in your home to drain water lines.

### Water Shutoff – Tips and Techniques

When you are turning off the water at sink, tub, toilet, or at the main shutoff, please be careful not to turn the handles too hard. You can break the valve stem inside the shutoff valve.

Before you turn off the water, or if you get a notice telling you that the water will be off for maintenance work, try to plan ahead. If the water will be off for several hours, you may want to fill a sink, bathtub or a few buckets so you will have water available.

### Toilets – Water Conservation

* Sometimes the water in a toilet will start to run all the time. This can be because of a float arm that does not raise high enough, a float ball that has become waterlogged, a tank stopper (flapper) that does not sit in the outlet valve properly, or an inlet valve that does not shut off.
* Sometimes, by just reaching into the bottom area of the tank and resetting the tank flapper valve (the water in the tank is clean tap water), the running water will stop. You can also try to adjust the float arm or tighten the plastic screw found on top of the inlet valve.
* If you try these tips, but the toilet or any other tap in your home is still running water constantly, please call us at 519-376-5744 to report the problem.

**­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­**

# Moving Out

The Province’s Residential Tenancy Act says that if you want to move out of your unit, you must give **at least 60 days written** **notice.** The last day of the notice must be the last day of the month. For example, if you want to move out on August 31st, you must give your written notice no later than June 30th. We ask that you send your notice, in writing, to the attention of your Tenant Services Coordinator, or complete a “notice to vacate” form at one of our office locations.

Remember to contact all utility companies (where applicable) to let them know about your move-out date, so they can prepare the final bills.

Thank you for reading this information guide! We want your stay in your new home to be a positive experience, and we encourage you to contact us if you have any questions.

We also welcome your suggestions as we work to continuously improve this Tenant Handbook. Please contact your Community Relations Worker at the Housing office at 519-376-5744 with your comments.

**Thank you!**

# Tenant Handbook Agreement

Please sign that you have read and understand the Tenant Handbook that goes along with your tenancy with Grey County Housing. If you have any questions please contact your Tenant Services Coordinator or Community Relations Worker for clarification.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Occupant Signature of Housing Staff

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Occupant

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date