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2011 Rent Increase Guideline

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You are here > [Home](#) > [About the Ministry](#) > [UPDATE — E-Newsletter](#) > [Articles](#) > [UPDATE - July 2010](#) > Minister's Message

Your Ministry

Local Government

Land Use Planning

Housing

Building Regulation

OnRAMP

The Learning Centre

Explore Government

Contacts

ServiceOntario Centres

Have a question, comment or feedback?

Telephone Directory

Contact the Minister

MPPs

Ministry Regional Offices

Virtual Reading Room

Features

Ministry E-Newsletter

Municipal Gazette

Subscribe to RSS Feeds

Share This Page

Other Resources



Minister's Message

[Email this page](#)



Welcome to UPDATE, the e-newsletter of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

My first summer as Minister is shaping up to be a busy one, and I am pleased to welcome to the ministry a seasoned public servant, William Forward, who was appointed Deputy Minister last month. Bill and I are already working together closely on the ministry's priorities.

In this report, I'd like to take this opportunity to review some of the major housing initiatives underway in the ministry.

To date, the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program has funded more than 15,000 housing units and provided some 3,700 housing allowances.

The Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program is providing rent supplements for more than 6,800 units, including supportive housing for victims of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, and long-term care client groups.

We have also provided Ontario's Service Managers with a \$100 million investment to help repair social housing. To date, some 62,000 units have been repaired or are in the process of being repaired to improve health, safety and energy efficiency.

In June, I enjoyed joining with Mainstream and Gateway community services to attend the opening of a nine-unit affordable housing apartment complex in my home town, St. Catharines.

We also recently celebrated the opening of 12 affordable units in St. Thomas, 40 affordable units in Niagara Falls, 50 affordable units in Newmarket, and 55 affordable units in Fergus.

Also in June, we broke ground on projects to create 39 affordable units in King City and 52 affordable units in London.

Meanwhile, despite the difficult economy, our government has provided record levels of new funding to create even more affordable housing.

Last year, our government signed a new Affordable Housing Agreement with the federal government to deliver a range of new housing to the people of Ontario.

In total, the provincial government is investing \$622 million, which is being matched by the same amount in federal funding, creating \$1.2 billion in new funding for affordable housing.

We are investing more than \$700 million to fund the repair and energy-efficiency retrofitting of close to 150,000 social housing units. We are improving the health and safety of residents living in social housing communities, and working to provide enhanced accessibility for seniors and persons with disabilities.

As well, the new agreement allows us to invest \$540 million to build more than 4,500 new affordable

housing units. Some \$307 million is dedicated to the creation of affordable rental housing for low-income seniors, and more than \$57 million is dedicated to the creation of affordable rental units for persons with disabilities.

At the same time, our government is working in partnership with other orders of government to help the provincial economy transition to a greener, more sustainable future.

The ministry is completing a Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy for Ontario.

A year ago, we began a series of province-wide consultations and, this summer, we are continuing to develop the strategy as we work towards announcing it later this year.

There is no question that affordable housing plays a crucial role in addressing poverty and in providing families in Ontario with a decent standard of living.

I will continue to work to improve access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing in Ontario.

Jim Bradley
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

[Back to UPDATE - July 2010](#)

You are here > [Home](#) > [About the Ministry](#) > [UPDATE — E-Newsletter](#) > [Articles](#) > [UPDATE - July 2010](#) > New Sprinkler Requirements for Large Residential Buildings

Your Ministry ▾

- ▶ Local Government
- ▶ Land Use Planning
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Building Regulation
- ▶ OnRAMP
- ▶ The Learning Centre

Explore Government >

Contacts ▾

- ▶ ServiceOntario Centres
- ▶ Have a question, comment or feedback?
- ▶ Telephone Directory
- ▶ Contact the Minister
- ▶ MPPs
- ▶ Ministry Regional Offices
- ▶ Virtual Reading Room

Features ▾

-  Ministry E-Newsletter
-  Municipal Gazette
-  Subscribe to RSS Feeds
-  Share This Page

Other Resources >



New Sprinkler Requirements for Large Residential Buildings

[Email this page](#)

New fire sprinkler requirements have come into force in the Building Code, 2006. Effective April 1, 2010, fire sprinklers are required in new multi-residential buildings higher than three storeys.

The Building Code was amended in 2008 to add this requirement. The building industry was given two years to prepare for the amendment coming into force.

Mixed-Use Buildings Included

Sprinkler requirements within new residential buildings would apply to residential suites, service areas, and common areas such as corridors. The new requirements also cover the residential portions of mixed-use buildings higher than three storeys.



Residential apartment building

The changes enhance the fire safety of Ontarians living in residential buildings higher than three storeys. Fire protection, and public health and safety are primary purposes of the Building Code, along with other purposes, such as energy and water conservation and environmental integrity.

Since 1997, the Code has generally required fire sprinklers in other non-residential occupancies in high buildings. The Code does not require sprinklers in smaller residential buildings, including houses, nor does it require that existing buildings be retrofitted with sprinklers

Building Safety Month

Building safety and the importance of building and designing safe, sustainable and green structures are recognized as a primary consideration by Ontario and other jurisdictions. For example, the International Code Commission has designated May as Building Safety Month.

Related Links:

- [Building Code Amendments: Fire Sprinklers in Large Residential Buildings](#)
- [Building Safety Month](#)

[Back to UPDATE - July 2010](#)

You are here > [Home](#) > [About the Ministry](#) > [UPDATE — E-Newsletter](#) > [Articles](#) > [UPDATE - July 2010](#) > Encouraging Students To Vote!

Your Ministry

Local Government

Land Use Planning

Housing

Building Regulation

OnRAMP

The Learning Centre

Explore Government

Contacts

ServiceOntario Centres

Have a question, comment or feedback?

Telephone Directory

Contact the Minister

MPPs

Ministry Regional Offices

Virtual Reading Room

Features

UPDATE

Ministry E-Newsletter

Municipal Gazette

Municipal Gazette

Subscribe to RSS Feeds

Share This Page

Other Resources



Encouraging Students To Vote!

[Email this page](#)

This fall, Local Government Week (Oct 17-23) is partnering with [Student Vote](#) to run the first ever province-wide parallel municipal election for youth under the voting age.

The Student Vote program will be a focus for school activities during the third week of October, at the same time municipal officials are preparing for local elections on October 25.

As in previous years, Local Government Week provides the opportunity for students to learn about municipal government. A new partnership with Student Vote this fall will help engage students in their local election.

For information on how local schools can participate please visit [the Student Vote website](#).

Student Vote

Student Vote is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that works with educators to engage young Canadians in the democratic process.

During official election periods, Student Vote provides a real-life parallel election experience for youth under the voting age to help encourage the habit of voting that will last a life time. Since 2003, more than 2 million students across Canada have participated in Student Vote programs.

The Student Vote program combines in-class learning, family dialogue, media consumption and an authentic voting experience. Its purpose is to provide young people with an opportunity to experience the democratic process first hand and practice the habits of informed and engaged citizenship.

During Local Government Week, schools are encouraged to host their own Student Vote Day, where students would cast ballots for local election candidates. The results will be shared with media for broadcast and publication.

Third Year

Now in its third year, Local Government Week is a project of the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario. It is supported by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.



Student Vote and Local Government Week poster.

The Ontario Teachers Federation and other education experts worked closely on the development of the program.

Local Government Year-long Activities

Schools and municipalities are encouraged to participate in Local Government Week activities throughout the upcoming school year. More information can be found by visiting the [Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario](#).

Related Links:

- [Student Vote](#)
- [Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario](#)
- [Association of Municipalities of Ontario](#)

[Back to UPDATE - July 2010](#)

You are here > [Home](#) > [About the Ministry](#) > [UPDATE — E-Newsletter](#) > [Articles](#) > [UPDATE - July 2010](#) > Be Prepared

Your Ministry ▾

- ▶ Local Government
- ▶ Land Use Planning
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Building Regulation
- ▶ OnRAMP
- ▶ The Learning Centre

Explore Government >

Contacts ▾

- ▶ ServiceOntario Centres
- ▶ Have a question, comment or feedback?
- ▶ Telephone Directory
- ▶ Contact the Minister
- ▶ MPPs
- ▶ Ministry Regional Offices
- ▶ Virtual Reading Room

Features ▾

-  Ministry E-Newsletter
-  Municipal Gazette
-  Subscribe to RSS Feeds
-  Share This Page

Other Resources >



Be Prepared

[Email this page](#)

Emergencies can happen at anytime and occur anywhere - sometimes without much warning, as residents of Leamington and Midland discovered recently.

An emergency can force you to evacuate your neighbourhood or can confine you to your home or workplace. It can leave you without basic services such as water, gas, electricity, or a working telephone.

Are you prepared?

Emergency Preparedness Week 2010

May 2-8, 2010, marked the 15th annual Emergency Preparedness Week - a Canada-wide initiative to increase awareness about individual and family preparedness, and how the public can reduce the risks and consequences of an emergency.

To celebrate Emergency Preparedness Week, communities across the province organized events and activities to help raise awareness on the importance of being prepared in an emergency at all levels — personal, community, provincial / territorial, and federal.

Highlights Across Ontario

Girl Guides of Canada, [Emergency Management Ontario](#), and the Canadian Red Cross celebrated the 100th anniversary of Girl Guides of Canada through Rally Day events in Toronto, Ottawa, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay. Activities helped to support Girl Guide Emergency Preparedness. Girl Guides Canada, Ontario Council and Emergency Management Ontario are working in partnership to launch an [Emergency Preparedness Challenge](#) for guiders this fall to complete emergency preparedness and personal safety activities.

Emergency Preparedness Challenge

More than 6,000 adults and youth across Ontario participated in the 2010 Emergency Preparedness Challenge, organized in partnership with Emergency Management Ontario and Insurance Bureau of Canada.

Participants completed a short quiz about emergency preparedness for a chance to win prizes. Communities that took part in the challenge include: Ajax, Barrie, Bracebridge, Callander, Cambridge, Ear Falls, and Essex.



In Ottawa, quick-thinking children were honoured for their safe and calm actions during times of crisis this past year, at the 911 Children's Achievement Awards at City Hall on May 7, reports the June 3rd issue of the Ottawa West EMC newspaper.

Related Links:

- [Emergency Management Ontario](#)
- [Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities/Special Needs](#)
- [Prepare an Emergency Survival Kit](#)
- [Prepare Your Pets](#)

[Back to UPDATE - July 2010](#)