



Canadian
Federation of
Apartment
Associations

Fédération
canadienne des
associations
de propriétaires
immobiliers



August 2011

National Outlook

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Rental housing providers gain insights from CFAA Conference

In this growing age of information, there is significant value in sharing our knowledge, achievements and experience with those around us and in learning from them. As Canada's national apartment association, CFAA seeks to create connections between rental housing providers across Canada – not only to establish a united political front, but also to provide a network that owners and managers can draw upon for their information needs.

Through its Canadian Rental Housing Conference, CFAA offers industry professionals, both large and small, the opportunity to hear from top executives, investors, property managers and rental housing experts.

On June 16 and 17, CFAA welcomed more than 260 attendees to the Westin Prince Toronto for two days of panel discussions relating to Facilities Management, Investment and Tenant Relations. On each day, delegates had the opportunity to choose between two streams of

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CFAA Employee Compensation and Benefits Survey—available this fall

By Krista Johnston, CFAA staff writer

With the support of its 17 member associations, CFAA and our consultant have gathered the data for the second Canada-wide Employee Compensation and Benefits Survey of the rental housing industry. The goal of the survey is to help human resource professionals and property managers to balance staff costs with employee satisfaction and retention.

The survey will allow rental housing providers to compare their wages and benefit packages with key competitors' wages and benefits. The full survey provides comprehensive information on benefit programs, pension plans, turnover rates, and other HR practices, as well as compensation at various levels (median, P25, P75, etc).

A wide range of positions are covered in the 2011 survey including building superintendents, maintenance technicians, property managers, leasing agents, cleaners and

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Le programme écoÉNERGIE peut aider à améliorer les immeubles à logements

Alors que la saison estivale de la construction bat son plein, la Fédération conseille vivement aux locateurs de profiter du programme fédéral récemment renouvelé qui prévoit des subventions pour accroître l'efficacité énergétique de petits immeubles.

En vigueur possiblement jusqu'au 31 mars 2012, le programme écoÉNERGIE Rénovation – Maisons propose de subventionner les travaux qui accroîtront l'efficacité énergétique d'un immeuble comme l'amélioration de l'isolation, le remplacement de systèmes de chauffage et de chaudières, et la conservation de l'eau.

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CFAA Allied Members:

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Onestop Media Group

Places4Students.com

Rent Check Corp

Rental housing providers gain from CFAA Conference, cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

sessions – one geared toward rental housing investors and executives, and the other for property managers and hands-on owners.

“I thought the growth of the conference this year was phenomenal,” said Marg Gordon, CEO of the British Columbia Apartment Owners and Managers Association. “I really enjoyed the diversity of attendees and thought the social aspect helped us all to build real connections in the industry. I enjoyed networking and talking with the different associations and the array of businesses there.”

The Facilities Management Conference on June 16 highlighted the expertise of numerous industry suppliers, engineers, service providers, and landlords, who discussed everything from the latest approaches to bed bug extermination to new accessibility standards and strategies to increase revenue through building envelope retrofits.

Delegates heard from Bill Zigomanis, Vice President of Investments for Boardwalk; Ivan Murgic, Vice President of Operations for the Green Group of Companies; and Paul Belanger of Belanger Engineering about the ramifications of deferred maintenance. Delegates also learned about waste diversion and organic recycling in high-rises from Doug Brunson, Vice President of Operations for Minto, and others. Along with Al Bolduc, and Dan McCabe of Magical Pest Control, Steve Peltier of Steve’s Pest Management addressed bed bug control through economical proactive measures.

Kristin Ley, of Cohen Highley LLP, addressed human rights and accessibility rules. Daniel Lublin, of Whitten & Lublin LLP, addressed employer workforce obligations, while Steve Osiel, of PAL Benefits Inc., addressed CFAA’s employee compensation survey. (See the article starting on page 1.)

In addition, June 16 offered topical discussions on the value of mechanical retrofits and building retrofits, as well as cost containment through new technology. “The panellists gave great examples along with real solutions,” said one conference delegate. “They provided a good level of detail. I found the conference to be very informative.”

When it comes to running a successful rental housing business, one of the most important things any landlord can do is to avoid undue vacancies. During the Investment and Tenant Relations conference on June 17, delegates learned about attracting quality tenants by marketing their buildings online.

According to Social Media panellists Scott Ullrich, President and CEO of Gateway Property Management, and Steve Ballantyne of Neighbourhood Buzz, Facebook has become “the new word of mouth” and can be used as an affordable and effective marketing tool.

During the first session on Attracting Good Tenants, attendees also learned about the use of video on websites from Richard Brown of My Ideal Home/ECOM Media Group, and Darren Henry of Gottarent.

During the second session, attendees heard about the importance of appropriately branding their buildings from Trish MacPherson of CAP-REIT, and about getting more value from their websites from

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More than 250 professionals of the rental housing industry gathered at the Westin Prince Toronto for the CFAA 2011 Canadian Rental Housing Conference.



Delegates listen attentively to Mark Kessler, Director of Physical Operations for Greenwin, during the Value in Mechanical Retrofits session on June 16.



Laura Holland of Vertica Resident Services visits with Virginia Tolfo and Gord Alderdice of Coinamatic, a CFAA gold conference partner.



Darren Henry, Director of Digital Real Estate for Gottarent.com, and Richard Brown, CEO of My Ideal Home Rental Network, give conference attendees advice on attracting quality tenants through internet marketing.

Thanks to the CFAA 2011 Canadian Rental Housing Conference Partners for their support

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Vancouver to Host CFAA 2012 Canadian Rental Housing Conference

By Krista Johnston, CFAA staff writer

Planning is now underway for the CFAA 2012 Canadian Rental Housing Conference to be held from June 13 to 15. Organizers are delighted to announce the return of the Conference to the Coast Plaza Hotel and Suites in downtown Vancouver.

Building on the successes of the last two years, the conference will bring together leading professionals and landlords from across the rental housing industry to share their knowledge, advice and expertise on topics relating to Rental Housing Investments and Facilities Management.

As it did in 2011, the conference will begin with a Building Innovations Bus Tour (on June 13). On June 14 and 15, the Conference will offer delegates two days of information sessions that are focused on the needs of rental housing investors and executives, as well as property managers and hands-on owners.

Whether you manage a national organization or run an independent operation, the CFAA 2012 Canadian Rental Housing Conference promises to present rewarding

networking opportunities with key industry players, while at the same time offering practical information that can be applied to any rental housing business, regardless of its size.

In 2012, the BC Apartment Owners and Managers Society will combine its annual Dinner Boat Cruise with the CFAA Conference to provide an enhanced networking experience, while cruising on the Vancouver waterfront.

With the added support of the Rental Owners and Managers Society of BC and Manufactured Home Park Owners' Alliance of BC, CFAA is confident the Canadian Rental Housing Conference will continue to gain momentum, earning a reputation as the premier event for Canada's rental housing industry.

Please mark June 13 to 15 on your calendars. The 2012 CFAA Conference should not be missed! For more details, please visit www.cfaa-fcapi.org. To be placed on CFAA's e-mail list for conference updates, please email admin@cfaa-fcapi.org.

For 2012 partnership opportunities, please contact events@cfaa-fcapi.org or 613-235-0101 x227.

CFAA Compensation and Benefits Survey, cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

other rental housing employees. Where data permits, salaries will also be available for positions such as regional managers, maintenance managers, assistant property managers, legal administrators, property accountants, doorman/concierge and security guards.

Conducted by Steven Osiel of Pal Benefits Inc., the survey will report data from 13 major centres across Canada and may be purchased nationally or separately for one or more major cities. The cities surveyed include Halifax, Quebec



Steven Osiel, Vice President of Total Rewards at Pal Benefits Inc., is conducting this year's CFAA Employee Compensation and Benefits Survey. At the CFAA 2011 Canadian Rental Housing Conference, Steven discussed the advantages of industry-specific compensation and benefits data to reduce employee turnover.

City, Montreal, Ottawa, Greater Toronto Area, Hamilton/Burlington, Waterloo Region, London (and Windsor), Saskatoon & Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria.

The Employee Benefits and Compensation Survey will cover close to 5,000 employees of 50 major and national landlords across Canada.

CFAA extends its thanks to all the owners and managers who participated in the survey. That includes many small and medium-sized landlords across Canada, as well as national and major landlords such as Boardwalk, Realstar, CAPREIT, Gateway, Minto, Homestead, Killam, Medallion, Morguard, Osgoode, Oxford, Park Properties, Realstar, Regional Group, Vertica, Urbanlife, Remail Group, Skyline, Timbercreek and Transglobe.

To inquire about the survey or purchase it, please contact Krista Johnston at 613-235-0101 or at admin@cfaa-fcapi.org. The survey should be available in late September, and can be ordered now for the earliest possible delivery.

Le programme écoÉNERGIE peut aider à améliorer les immeubles à logements, cont'd

(suite de la page 1)

De nombreux immeubles résidentiels sont admissibles au programme, y compris les duplexes, les triplexes et les petits immeubles à logements de moins de quatre étages et d'un maximum de 6 458 pieds carrés d'encombrement. Les maisons transportables posées sur une fondation permanente sont également admissibles au programme.

« En raison du nom du programme, de nombreux locateurs ignorent qu'ils peuvent obtenir du financement », souligne John Dickie, président de la Fédération. « Les locateurs doivent agir rapidement pour s'inscrire, coordonner une évaluation énergétique de leur immeuble et réaliser les travaux afin d'être admissibles aux subventions », a-t-il précisé en ajoutant que le financement du programme pourrait être épuisé avant son échéance le 31 mars prochain.

Depuis plusieurs années, la Fédération a pressé le gouvernement fédéral d'accorder aux locateurs le même accès au financement lors de la création de programmes comme celui de l'écoÉNERGIE à l'intention des propriétaires de maison.

La Fédération est heureuse de constater que le gouvernement Harper soutient l'efficacité énergétique des immeubles à logements en apportant des modifications au programme depuis son lancement initial. Certaines de ces améliorations incluent une nouvelle structure de subventions qui permet aux locateurs de demander un maximum de 5 000 \$ par logement plutôt que par immeuble. Les immeubles comptant jusqu'à trois étages et demi, y compris ceux dotés d'espaces commerciaux, peuvent également être admissibles selon les nouvelles modalités du programme.

La Fédération félicite Ressources naturelles Canada et l'Office de l'efficacité énergétique d'avoir rendu les évaluations énergétiques plus accessibles aux propriétaires d'immeubles à logements multiples depuis le lancement du programme initial.

Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements sur le programme écoÉNERGIE Rénovation – Maisons, veuillez consulter le site Web de l'Office de l'efficacité énergétique à l'adresse www.ecoaction.gc.ca/maisons.

BC HST Referendum Results Pending

By Krista Johnston, CFAA staff writer

Despite substantial opposition from their residents, both Ontario and British Columbia merged their sales tax with the GST on July 1, 2010.

While the former provincial sales taxes were applicable strictly to the purchase of goods, the new Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) is collected on both goods and services, including many items which were once exempt from PST.

Following the lead of people in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, which implemented the HST in 1996, Ontarians appears to have accepted the change. However, under the leadership of former Premier Bill Vander Zalm, BC residents launched a petition against the HST and collected enough signatures from registered voters to force a binding referendum on the HST under the BC referendum legislation, and prompt the resignation of BC Premier Gordon Campbell.

This spring, BC Finance Minister Kevin Falcon announced that the province, now under the direction of Liberal Premier Christy Clark, would drop the HST rate from 12% to 10% by 2014 if residents voted in favour of keeping the HST system.

On August 5, ballots of the mail-in referendum were received by the province. Results of the binding referendum expected by the end of the month. But as the voting process came to a close, many BC residents spoke out about the confusion surrounding the referendum question.

“The question itself is confusing,” explained Al Kemp, CEO of the Rental Owners and Managers Society of BC. “The question is, are you in favour of repealing the HST? As a result, if you want to keep the HST, you have to vote no.”

If the HST is repealed, the province will have to pay back the \$1.6 billion it received from Ottawa to implement the new tax. In addition to that one-time cost, the BC government suggests that the ongoing revenue shortfall due to repealing the HST would be between \$1.0 and 1.4 billion.

“There are a lot of hidden costs involved in going back to what we had before,” Kemp said. “It’s my speculation that if we go back to two separate taxes, we will have an election and the government will expand the tax to cover all of the same things that HST did.” If that happens, BC voters will have given up more than \$1.6 billion for next to nothing.

HST Causes Rental Housing Market to Suffer

Although the HST is good for some businesses, it has had a very negative impact on the rental housing market in BC. Landlords are not eligible for input tax credits, and as a result, they are paying extra for renovations, maintenance contractors, property management and water. (BC

exempted electricity and fuel from HST since they are already subject to a BC carbon tax.)

Both Kemp and Marg Gordon, CEO of the BC Apartment Owners and Managers Association, have urged the province for fairness on the HST issue, while presenting their case to both of the province’s recent finance ministers, as well as other senior government officials.

During recent telephone interviews, Kemp and Gordon stressed the government’s need to recognize that rental housing providers cannot recoup costs like other businesses because rent control impedes a landlord’s ability to cover increased expenses. (In BC, rent increases are limited to 2.3% for 2011. In Ontario, the 2011 guideline rent increase was 0.7%, but for 2012 the guideline is 3.1%, in part because of the HST.)

“HST is costing our industry between 1.5 to 3% in extra costs, depending on the nature of the business,” Gordon explained. “Food and shelter are necessities of life and should be treated the same way. Grocery stores do not pay HST, hence consumers do not pay HST on food, as food is zero-rated. Rents should be treated the same way.”

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Places4Students.com

Onestop Media Group

Rent Check Credit Bureau

EcoEnergy Program can Benefit Low-Rise Rental Units

With the summer construction season now in full swing, CFAA is urging landlords to act now to take advantage of a recently extended federal government program that will subsidize energy-efficient upgrades in low-rise buildings.

Potentially available until March 31, 2012, the eco-Energy Retrofit Incentive Program for Homes will provide rebates for work that will increase a building's energy efficiency, such as improved insulation, new furnaces and boilers and water-saving measures.

Many multi-unit residential buildings are eligible for rebates under the program, including duplexes, triplexes and low-rise apartments provided they are under four storeys tall and have a footprint of less than 6,458 square feet. Mobile homes situated on a permanent foundation are also eligible for the program.

"Because of the program's name, many landlords are not aware that the funding is available to them," said CFAA President John Dickie. "Rental owners need to act quickly to register their buildings, arrange the energy evaluation and perform the work in order to qualify for the incentives," he said, adding that funding may run out before the program's March 31 deadline.

For a number of years, CFAA has urged the federal government to provide landlords with the same access to funding when opportunities like the eco-Energy Program are provided to homeowners.

CFAA is pleased to see the Harper government is supporting energy efficiency in rental housing by making improvements to the program that were not included when it was first launched. Some of these improvements include the new rebate structure which will allow landlords to claim a maximum incentive of \$5,000 per unit rather than \$5,000 per building. Buildings of up to three and a half stories which include commercial space may also be eligible under the new program guidelines.

CFAA also commends the work of Natural Resources Canada and the Office of Energy Efficiency in making energy evaluations more available to multi-unit buildings than when the program was initiated.

To learn more about the eco-Energy Retrofit Incentive Program for Homes, please visit the CFAA website at cfaa-fcapi.org. On the left of the homepage, choose the "Energy Retrofit Subsidies" tab. You can also obtain more information at the website of the Office of Energy Efficiency at www.ecoaction.gc.ca/homes.



Rental housing providers gain from CFAA Conference, cont'd

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Nick Kenyeres, of Landlord Web Solutions, and Jeff Quipp, founder of Search Engine People. “The session gave me new ideas that can be implemented right away,” said one conference delegate. “It gave a very detailed look at something people take for granted. There was lots of awesome information.”

Delegates also heard about ways to improve tenant satisfaction and retention through tenant surveys from Bonnie Hoy of Bonnie Hoy & Associates, Adrian Chung of J.D.Power & Associates, Steven Gross of Bentall Kennedy, and Kevin Green of Greenwin.

Delegates also heard an economic update from Benjamin Tal, Senior Economist at CIBC World Markets, as well as sessions on recent innovations from Peter Altobelli of Yardi, Bob Doumani of Aird & Berlis LLP, Ron Penner of Globe General Agencies of Winnipeg and Al Kemp of the Rental Owners and Managers Society of BC.

Risks to industry profitability were addressed by Ugo Bizzarri of Timbercreek, Mark Kenney of CAPREIT, Dale Noseworthy of Killam and Bill Zigomanis of Boardwalk.

Fifteen CFAA leaders provided Cross Canada Reports, which focused on issues affecting the rental housing market in specific provinces and cities, and at the federal level. Delegates also heard from Doug Bibby, the President of the National Multi-Housing Council, on the key issues affecting rental housing in the United States

“I’d like to thank John Dickie, President of CFAA, and his team, for organizing such a successful event,” said BJ Santavy, President of the London Property Management Association. “Our industry has a wealth of knowledge and experience, and we can all benefit from the sharing of this information.”

One of the most memorable experiences for conference delegates this year was the Building Innovations Bus Tour, which gave an in-depth look at the latest building developments in Toronto, and provided a great social introduction to delegates from across the country.

The bus tour included stops at Hyde Park in Leaside, an award-winning garden home complex; the Roehampton by Minto, the first GOLD LEED residential rental building in Canada; *vivere* by Vertica, a new 10-storey building at Yonge and Eglinton; and the Gates of Bayview by Sterling-Karamar, an older luxury rental community.

“The building innovation bus tour was truly enjoyable,” said Larry Smith, of Haney Property Management of Waterloo, Ontario. “I found it to be one of the most informative and fun experiences at the conference this year.”

Another opportunity for networking and fun was the Dinner Boat Cruise of the Toronto Waterfront.

For more details on the 2012 CFAA Canadian Rental Housing Conference, please visit www.cfaa-fcapi.org. To be placed on CFAA’s e-mail list for conference updates, please email admin@cfaa-fcapi.org. Suppliers interested in



Delegates at the Investment and Tenant Relations Conference on June 17.



CFAA Conference delegates on the Building Innovations Bus Tour on June 15 enter one of four buildings on the tour, Hyde Park in Leaside.



Many CFAA conference delegates took in the beautiful sights and scenes of the Toronto waterfront during the June 16 Dinner Boat Cruise.

Dealing with disturbing tenants

by John Dickie, CFAA President

Across Canada, landlords are required to provide quiet enjoyment to their tenants. However, in most cases it is disturbances from other tenants that cause the problems.

Different provinces have different laws about enforcing compliance and preventing disruptions by tenants, but there is at least one common element. Disturbances are often a manifestation of a social problem.

Some tenants just don't care about their fellow tenants or neighbours, and to deal with them, what landlords need to seek is quick, effective enforcement of the rules.

However, other tenants cause disruption due to mental illnesses or because they are caught up in domestic violence. For those tenants, landlords are well advised to use measures other than mere enforcement of the rules or eviction proceedings. Landlords should have a list of social service agencies to which they can refer such tenants, or from which landlords can seek advice.

A number of apartment associations keep up to date lists of helping agencies for landlord-members to use to make referrals. In Ottawa, the Eastern Ontario Landlord Organization recently organized three information sessions about various community mental health agencies, and how to deal with problem tenants. The speakers identified which agency is the most appropriate for each type of problem, for example, emergencies versus long term issues, etc.

Landlords are not social workers, and do not want to become social workers, but under Human Rights laws, landlords need to make allowances for mental illnesses. The most useful way to address a behaviour problem caused by a mental health issue is to make a suitable referral.

In doing that, landlords help the tenant with the mental health issue, help the other tenants and help themselves. If the mental health agency cannot resolve the behavioural problem, then the landlord may well be in a better position to evict the problem tenant in order to restore peace in the building.

Domestic Violence

Another common source of disturbances is domestic violence. Other tenants do not want to hear loud arguments or physical violence between tenants next door. Landlords can usually seek an eviction if that conduct is repeated, but that should not be the first and only reaction.

Megan Walker, executive director of the London Abused Women's Centre, says, "[Eviction] re-victimizes the victim." Instead, she recommends landlords refer abused

How to Prevent a Tenant Crisis from Escalating

- 1. Be empathetic**—Try not to be judgmental. The issue is quite real for the individual even though you may not perceive it that way.
 - 2. Clarify messages**—Listen to what is really being said: if possible, ask reflective questions, and use silence and restatements.
 - 3. Be aware of body position and personal space.** Standing eye to eye and toe to toe with an individual can send a challenging message. The individual is less likely to respond negatively if your body position is about one leg length away and at an angle.
 - 4. Permit verbal venting when possible**—Allow the individual to release as much energy as possible by verbally venting (appropriately). If this is not possible, state directives and reasonable limits during lulls in the venting process.
 - 5. Set and enforce reasonable limits**—If the individual becomes belligerent or disruptive, state limits and directives clearly and concisely.
 - 6. Keep non-verbal cues non-threatening.** Monitor your body language and movement and the tone and cadence of your voice. The more an individual loses control, the less they are apt to listen to your actual words, and the more they pay attention to your non-verbal cues.
 - 7. Avoid over reacting**—Remain calm, rational and professional. How you respond will directly affect the actions/reactions of the individual.
 - 8. Ignore challenging questions.** When an individual challenges your position, education or policy, etc, redirect the individual's attention to the issue at hand. Answering those questions can fuel a power struggle.
 - 9. Safety**—Always leave a clear exit for both yourself and the individual. If you feel the situation is escalating to a potential threatening situation, remove yourself from the situation immediately.
- Source: Canadian Mental Health Association

spouses to community counseling services, help lines, emergency shelters or her agency. Similar services are available in communities across Canada.

Various agencies can assist with training for superintendents and property managers in recognizing the signs of domestic abuse, and in how best to offer or provide referrals for abused spouses.

Mental health agencies also offer tips and training for dealing with people with mental health issues. Set out in the box are the tips which the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) provided to Ottawa landlords and superintendents. Apartment associations, or individual landlords, may want to reach out to their closest CMHA branch to access the information and support CMHA has available.