

STABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS: PREVENTING EVICTIONS



A RESOURCE FOR BUILDING MANAGERS

Produced by Seniors Services Society
www.seniorsservicessociety.ca

Contents

Introduction	i
1. Non-payment of Rent	1
2. Not Following Building Rules	3
3. Noise Complaints	5
4. Hoarding or Collecting Behaviour	6
5. Refusing Assistance	8
6. Accidentally Setting Fires and Other Dangerous Behaviours	11
7. Conflict with Other Tenants	14
8. Alcohol and Drug Problems	16
9. Bedbugs	17
Community Response Networks	19
Issuing a Notice to Vacate	20
Conclusion	22
Resource Directory	23

Introduction

This booklet is a resource for building managers who house older adults. Being a building manager is a demanding job; with aging tenants it becomes even more complex. As people age, they experience many changes. These changes may affect their health, income or social support network. Loss of friends and lack of mobility may make it harder to get out and meet new people. All of these changes are important for a building manager to be aware of, as the manager may be the only contact a senior has with the outside world.

Seniors Services Society (SSS) provides information on housing and related services to seniors. We receive calls from seniors who are facing eviction, and we have found that in some cases if extra supports or resources were in place, an eviction could have been avoided. Forced moves are often very hard on an older tenant's health and well being. Moving means being uprooted from a familiar community and the support it provides. In many cases, the person may have lived in a building a long time. Not all evictions can be avoided however, and in the case where all options

have been exhausted, this booklet contains resources that can assist both you and the tenant with their move. If appropriate, you may wish to provide tenants with these resources so they may manage some of their issues on their own.

This booklet was developed after surveying building managers to see what the most common reasons for evictions of senior tenants were. Nine issues were at the top of the list; this booklet will provide suggestions and resources to assist you in handling each of these.

1. Non-payment of rent
2. Not following building rules
3. Noise complaints
4. Hoarding or collecting
5. Refusing assistance
6. Accidentally setting fires
7. Conflict with other tenants
8. Alcohol and drug issues
9. Bedbugs

The purpose of this booklet is to encourage building managers to deal with issues that may lead to eviction in a proactive way so that eviction may be avoided.

1. Non-payment of Rent

- Do you have a tenant who says they cannot afford to pay their rent?
- Do you have a tenant who feels they may no longer be able to afford to pay their rent?
- Do you have a tenant who has missed a rent payment?
- Do you have a tenant who is forgetting whether they have paid the rent?

Rent may go unpaid for a variety of reasons. The tenant may have experienced changes in their financial situation such as recently retiring or becoming widowed and can no longer afford the rent. Sometimes the reason is as simple as lost cheques, lack of transportation to the bank, or even just forgetting that rent is due.

Tips and Suggestions

- Always collect the rent on the same day every month and always issue a receipt.
- Encourage tenants to keep receipts together in an easy to remember spot.

- Let tenants know they can provide you with post-dated cheques if they wish.
- Provide the option of pre-authorized payment.
- If the building is subsidized and the tenants pay a percentage of their income, pay attention to income amounts. If you notice that their income is lower than average, they may not be receiving all the benefits they are entitled to. You may want to suggest they call the Pension Information number listed below; alternatively, you could have the tenant call SSS for assistance in this area.
- If the tenants are receiving Income Assistance, they can arrange to have their rent paid directly. Tenants can do this by calling the Ministry of Housing and Social Development see Community Resources below.
- If the tenant has someone else managing their money, ensure that you have up-to-date contact information for that person.
- If the tenant cannot remember to pay rent on time but does have adequate income, the tenant may wish to have someone manage their money for them. See Community Resources below for options.
- If the building is not subsidized, tenants may be eligible for SAFER to help them pay the rent. See below.

Community Resources

Ministry of Housing and Social Development

Offers financial assistance to those who are not yet 65 or are not eligible for OAS/GIS. The tenant can apply at their local Employment Assistance Program Office. **To find the local office, call Service Canada at 604-660-2421 or visit www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/bcea.htm.**

Pension Information

Seniors are eligible for Old Age Security (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) when they turn 65 and have lived in Canada for 40 years. Seniors who have lived in Canada for at least 10 years are eligible for partial OAS/GIS. In addition, the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) provides a monthly taxable benefit to retired contributors.

For more information on these programs call 1-800-277-9914 or visit www.servicecanada.gc.ca and click on "Seniors".

The Salvation Army Community and Family Services has a free Cheque Administration Program. The program is for people who are no longer able to manage their money. These programs receive the pension cheque directly from the source, pay the rent and other bills and give the client a cheque for the remainder of their pension. **This service is available in some but not all communities across the lower mainland. For more information call 604-299-3908.**

St James Community Services Society also has a Cheque Administration Program that charges a fee and an Adult Guardianship Program. The program is for people who are no longer able to manage their money whether it is temporary, due to illness, or permanent. These programs receive the pension cheque directly from the source, pay the rent and other bills and give the client a cheque for the remainder of their pension. **For more information call 604-606-0300 or visit**

www.sjcss.com/services/adult-guardianship.

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters

(SAFER) is a BC Housing program that provides eligible renters with financial assistance. **For more information call 604-433-2218 or visit**

www.bchousing.org/programs/SAFER.

2. Not Following Building Rules

- Do you have a tenant who does not follow the rules of the building?
- Do you have a tenant who appears to not understand the rules of the building?

If a tenant is repeatedly breaking or ignoring a rule consider the reason for this. They may be unaware of the rules, do not understand them, or unaware of the serious consequences of breaking the building rules (such as eviction).

Tips and Suggestions

- Be clear when signing the tenancy agreement about consequences of breaking building rules.
- Print rules in an easy to read format.
- Put rules in a location that is accessible to all tenants.
- Print rules in a variety of languages.
- Remind tenants to read their tenancy agreements and keep it in a safe place.
- Write the tenancy agreement in plain language.
- Suggest tenants give a copy of the tenancy agreement to a family member or friend they trust.
- Some tenants may not know how to read and write. Find out about

literacy volunteers available in the community.

- Rules must be reasonable and in compliance with the Residential Tenancy Act. If you are unsure check with the Residential Tenancy Branch.
- Mediation may help to find common ground and resolve the issue; sometimes there is a cost for this.
- Try to have empathy and be understanding of the life history of the tenants. Some may have a long history of abuse/mistreatment, and a fear or mistrust of authority. Treat seniors with dignity and they will be more apt to show respect for the rules.

Community Resources

The Residential Tenancy Branch deals with landlord/tenant disputes and provides a variety of forms such as rental increase forms and tenancy agreements. They can help in explaining the law to landlords and tenants and can hold arbitration in cases where disputes cannot be resolved. **For more information call 604-660-1020 or visit www.rto.gov.bc.ca.**

BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) can provide templates for Tenancy Agreements and other resource materials and training for member building owners and managers. **For more information call 604-291-2600 or visit www.bcnpa.bc.ca.**

Tenants Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC) provides information about residential tenancy law in BC. Gives tenants information about their rights and responsibilities on issues such as evictions and arbitration hearings. TRAC has a number of publications such as the *Tenant Survival Guide* and the *Landlord Guide*; they also have fact sheets on a variety of topics related to landlord-tenant issues. Publications are available online or in print and are available in multiple languages. **For more information call 604-255-0546 or visit www.tenants.bc.ca.**

BC Arbitration and Mediation Institute can provide referrals to professional mediators and arbitrators. There is a fee for their service. **For more information call 1-877-332-2264 or visit www.amibc.org.**

BC Apartment Owners and Managers Association provides services to its members such as education and resources to help managers write practical and legal building rules and regulations. **For more information call 604-733-9440 or visit www.bcapartmentowners.com.**

Seniors Services Society can assist seniors and building managers with outreach services to help seniors at risk of eviction. **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit www.seniorsservicesociety.ca.**

3. Noise Complaints

- Do you have a tenant who plays their music or television too loudly?
- Do you have a tenant who leaves the television or radio on late at night or even when they are out?

Tips and Suggestions

- Identify what is causing the noise. Is the tenant making the noise hard of hearing or just noisy?
- Put louder people in one area of the building, and designate another area for quieter people.
- Set a quiet time after 11pm and try to ensure that people understand this rule.
- Suggest to tenants that they use headphones for the television or radio.
- Remind tenants to be energy efficient/power conscious and to turn televisions, radios, etc. off when not using them.
- If possible, take the noisy tenant next door to see how the sound is carrying.
- Explain to tenants that this is a building issue: the way the building is designed does not allow for loud noises.
- Post notices clearly and prolifically (including on the inside of elevators), reminding people of the quiet after 11pm rule. Make it a known policy.

- Document and send letters to tenants if their behaviour is in violation of the noise rules.

Community Resources

Audiology Clinics can be useful if you have a tenant who seems to be losing their hearing. A family doctor can refer a tenant to an audiology clinic.

4. Hoarding or Collecting Behaviour

- Do you have a tenant who has more stuff than they do space?
- Do you have a tenant who struggles to keep their apartment safe and sanitary?
- Do you have a tenant whose apartment is a potential fire hazard?

Hoarding is the excessive collecting and retention of objects to the point of interfering with day to day functioning. Severe hoarding creates health and safety hazards. For instance, the excessive collection of papers and clothes may create a fire hazard, and food items can attract pests, flies and cockroaches or other vermin.

Tenants may hoard because the items are perceived as valuable or provide a source of security. Some tenants may have a compulsive need to keep things. Fear of losing or forgetting items and difficulty organizing and managing daily chores are other reasons why a tenant may hoard. Depression, poor health and limited mobility may also be contributing factors.

Tips and Suggestions

- Provide tenants with housekeeping tips via newsletters and other publications.
- Suite inspections should be done every year. If you see a problem with hoarding give the tenant reasonable time to make changes and then re-inspect. Provide the tenant with information on cleaning tips after the first inspection.
- Assess whether this is simply an issue of lack of space. Could there be more storage made available or does the tenant need to find another storage space?
- Is the issue not being able to keep the suite clean due to the frailty of the tenant and lack of home support? Does the tenant need to find a way to get someone to clean his or her suite? Home support may be an option.
- Tenants could pool their money as a tenants association and have a cleaning service do many suites at once for a discount.
- If you notice a change in behaviour in the tenant, keep track of what is happening and when the changes occurred. Did the change in behaviour start after a particular event in their life? This may be a mental health issue or response to a particular crisis. See the community resource section below for more information on who to contact.
- Make recycling collection programs available, and provide information on the use of them.

- Have a regular pick up day with a local thrift store for all tenants.
- Have a building clean-up day and get other community groups involved.
- It may be worth the cost of renting a dumpster for a few days every year. Free junk removal may provide tenants with the incentive to clean.
- Give Tenants Association talks on reducing clutter.
- Appeal to the tenant's sense of pride by explaining that you need their help to keep the building clean.
- Let the tenant know that the building is not suited for collecting and that it may be harmful to people's health.
- If possible, install garbage chutes. Do not allow tenants to bring shopping carts inside the building.

Community Resources

Seniors Centres have a variety of programs for seniors. These programs can be useful to maintain good mental health. Peer counseling may be available for individuals who would like to talk to someone in their age group, and Friendly Visiting programs may be available for seniors who would like someone to visit them in their home. Outings and other social opportunities give seniors the opportunity to get out of the house and interact with others. **Call Inform Vancouver at 604-875-6381 for a Seniors Centre in your area.**

Mental Health Services can provide assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and specialized services to older adults who have a serious mental illness. Some offices have Geriatric Mental Health services. The **Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division**, can provide you with information and resources in this area. **For more information call 604-688-3234 or visit www.cmha.bc.ca.**

Seniors Services Society's No Mess Program assists seniors who require minor assistance with things such as household repairs. **This service is not available in all communities.** **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit www.seniorsservicesociety.ca.**

5. Refusing Assistance

- Do you have a tenant who falls frequently?
- Do you have tenant who is in the hospital often and calls the ambulance frequently?
- Do you have an aging tenant who appears to be physically deteriorating (e.g. losing weight)?
- Do you have a tenant who you are worried may not be able to manage on their own?
- Do you have a tenant who refuses home support?

Only 6% of people over the age of 65 live in a care facility. Seniors can be healthy and active no matter what their age and even people who are not healthy may still live independently in their own homes with some community support.

Tenants may be reluctant to access home support services for a variety of reasons, including the fact that they may not trust strangers coming into their home. Some seniors may feel it is the first step towards being put into a care facility. Other seniors may feel that they do not really need the services, and that someone else needs them more. It is a huge step to relinquish control in areas where they have been independent for

most of their lives, and it's frustrating to give up independence and have to coordinate life around home support providers. Even though it may seem like an obvious necessity to those around them, ultimately it is up to the tenant to decide if they want to accept these services.

Tips and Suggestions

- Find out what kinds of support services are available in the community for tenants in the building.
- Get a good understanding of the health of the tenant when they move in so that you will notice if they are deteriorating in mental or physical health.
- Explain to the tenant that if their health deteriorates to such a point that they are no longer able to live independently with the community home support, it may become necessary for them to move.
- Approach the tenant respectfully, informing them that you have noticed they are having some difficulties, are wondering how they are doing and if they would like some extra assistance around the house or with meals.
- Have contact information for the family and for the physician. Be aware that when you contact an agency or a physician that you are a conveyor of information and there may not be much information given to you. Phone more than once if you feel you need to.

- Talk to the tenant; ask about their health and ask when they last saw the doctor and their family.
- If you notice the health of the tenant deteriorating, document what you see:
 - * Are they less social than usual?
 - * Do they appear to be losing weight?
 - * Do they appear confused?
- Let the tenant know that you are concerned and would like to contact the family but will do so only with their permission.
- If the tenant does not want you to contact the family, contact the local Home Health branch. When you have explained the situation they will determine if an assessment is needed. As a result of the assessment, services such as home support, occupational therapy, or a nutritionist may be provided. It may also be determined that the tenant is eligible for either an assisted living or residential care facility.
- If a move to more supportive housing is necessary, the family or tenant may wish to contact SSS.

Community Resources

HealthLinkBC provides live non-emergency health information and services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **Call 8-1-1 or visit www.healthlinkbc.ca.**

Emergency Response Programs, such as Lifeline or LifeCall, could help to provide monitoring and access to emergency support in case of an

accident. For more information on **Lifeline call 1-800-387-8120 or visit www.lifelinesys.ca. For LifeCall call 1-800-661-5433 or visit www.lifecall.ca.**

A similar option without a monthly fee is **Guardian Alert 911**, a mobile device that connects clients directly to 9-1-1. **For more information call 1-800-519-2419 or visit www.logicmark.com.**

Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence (HASI) provides a forgivable loan to either low income seniors or landlords with senior tenants to perform minor adaptations to the home which could include grab bars etc. **For more information call 1-800-668-2642 or visit www.schl.ca/en/co/prfinas.**

Home Health

A wide range of community based, supportive health care services are available to persons with health problems and disabilities who need support and assistance to maintain their independence. For more information contact your local Health Authority and ask for your local Home Health Office.

For Vancouver Coastal Health call 604-736-2033 or visit www.vch.ca.

For Fraser Health call 604-587-4600 or visit www.fraserhealth.ca.

Seniors Centres have a variety of programs for seniors. These programs can be useful to maintain

good mental health. Peer counseling may be available for individuals who would like to talk to someone in their age group, and Friendly Visiting programs may be available for seniors who would like someone to visit them in their home. Outings and other social opportunities are provided for seniors who would like to get out of the house and interact with others.

Call Inform Vancouver at 604-875-6381 for a seniors centre in your area.

Seniors Services Society can provide information on alternative housing options and assist with information on the application process. **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit www.seniorsservicessociety.ca.**

Meals on Wheels programs are provided in many areas. This is a service that may be provided through a seniors centre or through a for profit business. There is a cost for this service. For more information and a list of meals on wheels programs in your area **contact your local seniors centre.**

Home Support or help with housekeeping can be accessed through private for profit agencies. There is a cost for this service. Lists of such agencies can be found in the Yellow Pages under Home Support Agencies.

6. Accidentally Setting Fires and Other Dangerous Behaviours

- Do you have a tenant who forgets to turn off the stove?
- Do you have a tenant who smokes and accidentally starts fires?
- Do you have a tenant who forgets to turn off the taps?
- Do you have a tenant who is always losing their keys?
- Do you have a tenant who accuses others of being in their suites?

Memory loss is not part of normal aging. Only 8% of people over 65 and 35% of people over 80 have some form of dementia. However some memory loss is normal and may be reversible. Some possible causes may include depression, medication side effects, alcohol abuse, nutritional deficiencies, tumors or Endocrine disorders. Because it is difficult to ascertain whether memory loss is due to dementia or as a result of something else, it is important that individuals experiencing memory loss be assessed by a health professional.

It is useful to understand the difference between "Dementia" and "Delirium." Delirium is an acute

state of confusion characterized by a sudden onset and major behavioural changes. Delirium is treatable and should be treated as a medical emergency. Delirium presents as an acute or sudden onset cognitive impairment with fluctuating levels of alertness and rapid changes from drowsiness to agitation. If you see this type of behaviour use a slow gentle approach and contact 9-1-1.

Symptoms of dementia can include

- Personality changes
- Behaviour changes such as
 - Wandering
 - Agitation and anxiety
 - Hallucinations, delusions
 - Rummaging or hoarding
 - Inappropriate sexual behaviour
 - Mood swings
 - Repetitive behaviors

Tips and Suggestions

- Build a relationship with the tenant so that you can better identify when something seems to be changing in their personality. If you notice a change, show an interest. Ask about their health as sometimes a change in physical health can lead to a change in mental health. Ask if they have seen their doctor lately.
- Write out simple step-by-step instructions explaining how to use the appliances in the common areas and post them prominently.
- If a tenant informs you of items missing from their suite, suggest that they make a list of what is

missing. Have them show the list to their family members as they may have moved some items.

- Offer to change the locks for those tenants who feel someone has been in their suite. This is something that should only be done under extreme circumstances and preferably only done once.
- Have a policy that you only enter their suite when they are at home (or with another person) and with proper notice. Call the Residential Tenancy Office to check changes to suite access laws.
- Educate tenants about personal safety with notices, newsletters and tenant meetings.
- If fires are a problem, tell the tenant you will take legal measures to remove the stove. Talk with the physician or other health care professional first to determine if this would be an appropriate action to take.
- Have the tenant use a microwave if stove fires are a problem.
- Paint each floor of the building a different colour so that people can better orient themselves.
- If possible have a memory box or locked case outside each tenant's room so that they can display some personal item and find their suite.
- Have plenty of smoke alarms in the suites and in the hallways, and have regular fire drills.
- Put a clock and calendar identifying the correct date and time in the lobby.
- Clearly label doors and post a safety check list beside every exit (Did I remember to turn off the

stove? Did I remember to lock the doors?).

- If people continue to feel someone has been in their suite it may be necessary to involve the police, or if appropriate, mental health services.

Community Resources

Home Health

A wide range of community based, supportive health care services are available to persons with health problems and disabilities who need support and assistance to maintain their independence. For more information contact your local Health Authority and ask for your local Home Health Office.

For Vancouver Coastal Health call 604-736-2033 or visit www.vch.ca.

For Fraser Health call 604-587-4600 or visit www.fraserhealth.ca.

The Alzheimer Society of BC has materials on what Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia are, and information on when to talk to the doctor. **For more information call 1-800-936-6033 or visit www.alzheimerbc.org.**

Seniors Services Society (SSS) can provide information on housing and related services to seniors. Please call prior to issuing an eviction notice, and SSS can assist the tenant in their search for new housing. **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit**

www.seniorsservicessociety.ca.

Mental Health Services can provide assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and specialized services to older adults who have a serious mental illness. Some offices have Geriatric Mental Health services. The **Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division** can provide you with information and resources in this area. **For more information call 604-688-3234 or visit www.cmha.bc.ca.**

7. Conflict with Other Tenants

- Do you have a tenant whose behaviour is abusive?
- Do you have a tenant whose behaviour is disruptive?
- Do you have a tenant whose guests' behaviour is disturbing others?

Tenants of all ages have a right to feel safe and secure in their building.

Tips and suggestions

- Understand the difference between behaviour that is annoying and that which is actually “criminal harassment”. Contact the local community policing office for information on criminal harassment.
- If a tenant is abusive, let them know immediately that their behaviour is not acceptable and that it must stop. Provide a written warning clearly documenting the incident and keep a copy for your records.
- If the tenant is receiving home support report the behaviour to the case manager. There may have been changes in their physical health that would explain a change in behaviour.
- If the tenant is connected with mental health services it is

important to report the situation to them.

- Mediation between tenants may be useful. There may be a cost for this. See the Community Resources in this booklet under **2. Not Following Building Rules.**
- Arrange to have a community police officer come to talk to the tenants about personal safety in their apartment and neighbourhood.

Community Resources

Your **Local Community Policing Office** can provide you with information on what criminal harassment is and steps to deal with it; they can also provide information about the Crime Free Multi Housing Program.

Mental Health Services can provide assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and specialized services to older adults who have a serious mental illness. Some offices have Geriatric Mental Health services. The **Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division**, can provide you with information and resources in this area. **For more information call 604-688-3234 or visit www.cmha.bc.ca.**

BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support (BCCEAS) has developed a number of resources for building managers and seniors including *Tips for Building Managers* and *A Roof Over My Head: A Guide for Senior Renters*. They also provide a Legal

Information and Advocacy program for seniors. Their services include summary advice, advocacy, information and referrals to community resources. **For more information call 604-437-1940 or 1-866-437-1940 or visit www.bcceas.ca.**

BC Arbitration and Mediation Institute can provide referrals to professional mediators and arbitrators. There is a fee for their service. **For more information call 1-877-332-2264 or visit www.bcami.org.**

Seniors Services Society (SSS) can provide information on housing and related services to seniors. Please call prior to issuing an eviction notice, and SSS can assist the tenant in their search for new housing. **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit www.seniorsservicessociety.ca.**

8. Alcohol and Drug Problems

- Do you have a tenant that you suspect has an alcohol or drug problem?
- Is the problem threatening their tenancy?

Tips and Suggestions

- If the senior is intoxicated, wait until they are sober to talk to them.
- Be specific about what you have noticed. What is it about their behaviour that is a problem?
- Try not to blame or be accusatory, as the tenant may become defensive and is less likely to want to discuss the problem with you.

Community Resources

HealthLinkBC provides live non-emergency health information and services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call 8-1-1 or visit

www.healthlinkbc.ca.

Seniors Services Society (SSS) can provide information on housing and related services to seniors. Please call prior to issuing an eviction notice, and SSS can assist the tenant in their search for new housing. **For more information call 604-520-6621 or visit**

www.seniorsservicesociety.ca.

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) –
Metro Vancouver
24 hrs: 604-434-3933
www.vancouveraa.ca**

**Al-Anon
604-688-1716
www.bcyukon-al-anon.org**

9. Bedbugs

- Have you had complaints of suspected bedbugs from other tenants?
- Do you have a senior tenant who is not cooperating with bedbug inspections/treatment?

Bedbugs are a serious problem in the Lower Mainland. So serious, there is no telling where a tenant may acquire bedbugs – they travel easily and the problem is in buildings of all types, from SROs to high end hotels. Bedbugs are tenacious and challenging, but treatable with the right information and an aggressive, thorough approach.

Tips and Suggestions

- Bedbugs can be difficult to spot, and sometimes an infestation is not apparent to the untrained eye. See resources below for where to go for information on how to inspect for bedbugs.
- Take tenants' complaints of bedbugs or suspected bedbugs seriously. Many people do not react to bedbug bites, so you may have an infestation in multiple suites even though only one tenant has complained.
- Do an inspection as soon as possible (call a professional if you are unable to spot bedbugs or their leavings but still suspect an infestation). It is far easier to deal

- with a small bedbug problem than a full-blown infestation.
- There is a lot of shame surrounding bedbugs. Many people wrongly assume poor hygiene or uncleanliness are the source of bedbug infestations; this is simply untrue.
- Make it clear to tenants that you are easily approachable if they suspect bedbugs. Distribute information about what to look for and what to do if a tenant suspects bedbugs.
- **Do not try to treat a bedbug problem yourself.** Always call a professional, licensed pest control company, preferably one that specializes in bedbug control. Attempts to eradicate bedbugs on your own are very unlikely to be successful.
- Do not remove furniture from an infested suite; this can cause the problem to spread throughout the building. Leave infested furniture in the suite to be treated.
- The pest control company will provide you with information on what you and the tenant need to do to prepare for treatment.

Community Resources

Vancouver Coastal Health provides a Guide to Bedbug Control. Visit www.vch.ca and do a search for "bed bugs".

A comprehensive guide to bedbugs is also available on the web. Visit www.thebedbugresource.com.

To find licensed pest control companies that will treat bedbugs, look in the yellow pages under "Pest Control" or **visit** www.pestcontrolcanada.com.

Community Response Networks

- Do you know a senior or a vulnerable adult who you suspect may be experiencing neglect or abuse?

Abuse can take many forms including mental, physical, emotional, sexual and financial. Some adults may not be able to seek help on their own because of a disability, illness, injury or fear of retribution or isolation from family members.

Many communities in British Columbia have Community Response Networks (CRN), which are diverse groups of concerned individuals and community agencies who come together specifically to create a coordinated community response to adult abuse and neglect. As well, in every region and community in BC, there are agencies designated under BC's Adult Guardianship Legislation to investigate and respond to this issue. These Designated Agencies are Health Authorities and the Ministry of Children and Family Development Community Living Services.

If you suspect that a senior or vulnerable adult in your community is being abused, contact the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC (see below).

Community Resources

Always call 9-1-1 if you feel someone is in immediate danger.

BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support (BCCEAS) has developed a number of resources for building managers and seniors including *Tips for Building Managers* and *A Roof Over My Head: A Guide for Senior Renters*. They also provide a Legal Information and Advocacy program for seniors. Their services include summary advice, advocacy, information and referrals to community resources. **For more information call 604-437-1940 or 1-866-437-1940 or visit www.bcceas.ca.**

Public Guardian and Trustee of BC is responsible for responding to situations involving abuse or neglect of seniors or vulnerable adults. **For more Information call 604-660-4444 or visit www.trustee.bc.ca**

Mental Health Services can provide assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and specialized services to older adults who have a serious mental illness. Some offices have Geriatric Mental Health services. The **Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division**, can provide you with information and resources in this area. **For more information call 604-688-3234 or visit www.cmha.bc.ca**

Issuing a Notice to Vacate

- ☐ You have tried everything -- consulted every possible community resource and tried to negotiate with the tenant. How do you issue a notice to vacate?

Tips and Suggestions

- Always keep track of every incident that may lead to an eviction.
- Ensure the rental agreement covers every issue and is a legal document. If you want to evict someone because of a breach of the rental agreement you must first be certain that the agreement is legal according to the residential tenancy act.
- Use the proper form to give a Notice to End a Residential Tenancy; these are available through the Residential Tenancy Office or on their website. There are rules on how to give someone a Notice to Vacate.
- Usual notice required is either one or two months.
- The landlord can apply to end tenancy without full notice only in extreme cases. The landlord must be able to demonstrate sufficient urgency of the situation to justify not giving the usual notice.
- The landlord can give ten days notice to end the tenancy for

failure to pay the rent any time after the date the rent was due.

- If the tenant pays all of the outstanding rent within five days the notice is void. If the tenant does not pay the rent due they must move out within 10 days of receiving the notice.
- Both a landlord and a tenant may apply to go to arbitration through the Residential Tenancy Office to dispute a notice to end residential tenancy.
- If a tenant refuses to leave, the landlord must go to Arbitration to get an order of possession.
- If an order of possession is granted, the tenant is then presented with a date on which they must legally and peacefully leave.
- If a tenant has still not left on that date, the landlord must go to Supreme Court to file a writ order of possession. When the landlord has this document, he may hire a bailiff to physically remove a tenant and his belongings.
- It may be useful to use a mediator or arbitrator rather than have a tenant evicted against their will.

Community Resources

Residential Tenancy Offices can assist landlords with all the necessary forms to end a tenancy or to increase rent charges or any other legal information a landlord or manager might need. **For more information call the Residential Tenancy Branch at 604-660-1020 or visit www.rto.gov.bc.ca.**

Seniors Services Society (SSS)

can provide information on housing and related services to seniors. Please call prior to issuing an eviction notice, and SSS can assist the tenant in their search for new housing. For more information visit www.seniorsservicesociety.ca or call **604-520-6621**.

Conclusion...and some general tips and suggestions that may help to avoid some of the above issues

Building managers can only do so much and have many other responsibilities involved in running the building. As much as possible get the tenants to manage their own issues by giving them the information from this book. If that is not possible you may want to contact their families or listed contacts.

Seniors Services Society helps seniors find housing; if you have an issue with a tenant that you feel may be irresolvable contact us as soon as possible so that we can help you to access assistance or find new housing for the tenant if that is what is needed. **Call 604-520-6621 or visit www.seniorsservicesociety.ca.**

When talking to a tenant about these issues there are some general Dos and Don'ts to consider.

DO NOT delay: when you start to see a problem, ACT. Leaving any situation until a crisis happens will just make things worse.

DON'T press for information that makes the person uncomfortable.

DON'T talk about the older adult to others as if they are not present.

DO use a low-key, non-confrontational approach and treat the older adult with respect and dignity.

DO check for health and safety concerns and make the necessary referrals for medical and mental health evaluations.

DO involve the tenant in seeking solutions.

DO work with other agencies to maximize resources.

General Tips and Suggestions

Find out where the local seniors center or neighborhood house is. Get a copy of their calendar of events as well as the services they offer. Post this information in the lobby of the building and include bus routes and phone numbers, if possible. An active tenant is more likely to be a happy, healthy tenant.

Community Health Centres provide a wide range of community based, supportive health care services available to persons with health problems, disabilities, addiction, etc. Call your local health authority for a Community Health Centre near you.

Resource Directory

Al-Anon

604-688-1716

www.bcyukon-al-anon.org

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) – Metro Vancouver

604-434-3933 (24 hours)

www.vancouveraa.ca

Alzheimer Society of BC

1-800-936-6033

www.alzheimerbc.org

BC Apartment Owners and Managers Association

604-733-9440

www.bcapartmentowners.com

BC Arbitration and Mediation Institute

1-877-332-2264

www.amibc.org

BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support (BCCEAS)

1-866-437-1940

www.bcceas.ca

BC Non Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA)

604-291-2600

www.bcnpa.bc.ca

Bedbugs

www.vch.ca search: "bed bugs"

www.thebedbugresource.com

www.pestcontrolcanada.com

Emergency Response Programs

Lifeline: 1-800-387-8120

www.lifelinesys.ca

LifeCall: 1-800-661-5433 /

www.lifecall.ca

Guardian Alert 911: 1-800-519-2419

www.logicmark.com

HealthLinkBC

8-1-1 / www.healthlinkbc.ca

Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence (HASI)

1-800-668-2642

www.schl.ca/en/co/prfinas

Home Health - Vancouver Coastal Health

604-736-2033

www.vch.ca

Home Health - Fraser Health

604-587-4600

www.fraserhealth.ca

Income Assistance

604-660-2421

www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/bcea.htm

Mental Health Services *locate local services via* **Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division**

604-688-3234

www.cmha.bc.ca

Pension Information

1-800-277-9914

www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Public Guardian and Trustee of BC

604-660-4444

www.trustee.bc

Residential Tenancy Branch

604-660-1020

www.rto.gov.bc.ca

Salvation Army Community and Family Services

604-299-3908

Seniors Centres *locate via Inform Vancouver*

604-875-6381

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)

604-433-2218

www.bchousing.org/programs/SAFER

Seniors Services Society

604-520-6621

www.seniorsservicessociety.ca

St James Community Services Society

604-606-0300

www.sjcsc.com/services/adult-guardianship

Tenants Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC) 604-255-0546

www.tenants.bc.ca

Notes



Seniors Services Society
209 – 800 McBride Blvd
New Westminster, BC V3L 2B8
www.seniorsservicessociety.ca
604-520-6621