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CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Here are some common sense tips you can use to stay safe.

When You Are At Home:

Use deadbolt locks on all exterior doors. Keep your door locked at all times, even when you are inside.

Protect windows and sliding glass doors with good locks or other security devices.

Never let strangers in your home without checking their identification.

Call their company if you are not sure. Install a

viewer in your door and use it.

Use only your first initial in phone books, directories, and apartment lobbies. If you live alone, don't advertise it.

Be sensible about keys. Don't put an address tag on your key ring, and don't hide an extra key under a doormat or flower pot.

Hang up immediately on harassing or obscene phone calls. If the caller persists, call law enforcement and the phone company.

Engrave your valuables

with a unique identification number recommended by the Crime Prevention Unit.

Keep bonds, stock certificates, seldom worn jewelry, and stamp and coin collections in a safe deposit box.

For an extra measure of protection, don't keep large amount of cash at home.

Use Direct Deposit for Social Security or pension cheques.

Keep emergency number for police and fire agencies handy.



**SPREAD LOVE, NOT GERMS,
WEAR YOUR MASK**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Crime Prevention Tips For Senior Citizens
- What's Open And Closed?
- Rent Freeze Will Have Negative Effect On Landlords And Tenants
- Clean Up Fallen Leaves
- Fire Safety Tips During Pandemic
- Electrical
- Fire Hazards And The Elderly
- Distancing And Isolating
- Cleaning Tips And Tricks
- Recipe Of The Month
- Joke Corner

WHAT'S OPEN AND CLOSED?

Some public health rules are being rolled back because of the second wave of the pandemic.

Ottawa public health officials are ordering anyone

with symptoms or who has been identified as a close contact of someone who's tested positive to immediately self-isolate or face a fine of up to

\$5,000 per day in court.

Private, unmonitored gatherings across Ontario are now limited to **10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.**

RENT FREEZE WILL HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

QUESTION

I just learned that the afford government is freezing rents in 2021. My rent goes up every October. A one or two per cent increase would have been doable for me, even though, as a provincial civil servant, my salary is only going up one per cent. Although not paying more rent is OK with me, why would the Ford government cancel my October 2021 rent increase? Does Premier Ford think the economy is going to get worse in 2021? Should I worry that he is going to cancel my salary increase due in January?

ANSWER

No one can tell what will happen to the economy over the next year, although the news that there may well be a vaccine effective against COVID-19 is a very promising sign. It appears highly likely that the government will not limit civil service salaries anymore that it already has. Nor is the government expected to impose other price controls.

The most obvious reason for a blanket cancellation of the 1.5 per cent guideline rent increase in 2021 is that the government thinks it will make tenants happy. Many tenants, and some members of the public, picture rents as going straight into

landlords' pockets as profit. The reality is far different.

The Canadian Federation of Apartment Associations recently published figures on where one dollar of rent goes. As a Canadian average, CFAA reported that 37 cents go to pay the mortgage, 12 cents go to major repairs and upgrades, 14 cents go to property taxes and 30 cents go to other operating costs, leaving seven cents as the average return on the owner's investment.

Cancelling the 1.5 per cent guideline rent increase will drive that return down to 5.5 cents, a decrease of 21 per cent.

The situation is actually worse, because landlords in Ottawa are also experiencing significantly higher costs. Other operating costs include employee wages, and property and liability insurance. A survey by the Eastern Ontario Landlord organization showed an average increase in employee wage costs of 15 per cent in the first half of 2020 as against the same period in 2019, driven largely by increased building cleaning to respond to COVID-19. For the same period, insurance costs went up 70 per cent.

In Ottawa, property taxes went up three per cent in 2020 over 2019. On

average, water costs went up five per cent.

The negative impact on landlords of freezing rents, when costs are going up sharply, is obvious when you realize where the rent goes.

For tenants, the negative effects will take a little longer to unfold. Landlords who planned to develop new rental homes will cancel those plans. Landlords who rent out single-family homes, condos or both units in a double or duplex, will sell their properties for owner occupation, or move into them. There are 43,000 of those rental units in Ottawa, more than one-third of the total private market rental supply. Tenants will end up paying for this decision for years to come.

And for the small number of tenants who really need help, the guideline is a small part of their problem. Rather than a provincial rent subsidy (which would have been a smart policy move), the only remedy for them is to seek a special social assistance payment for arrears of rent from the City of Ottawa.

**BY DICKIE & LYMAN LLP
WHO PRACTICE LANDLORD/
TENANT LAW AND OTHER
AREAS OF LAW**

CLEAN UP FALLEN LEAVES

Keep your driveway and walkway clear of falling leaves. Wet leaves can create a hazard for pedestrians

in the fall by making sidewalks slippery. Later in the season, snow may mix with leaves to increase the risk

of falling. Homeowners should mulch or rake up fallen leaves and dispose of them according to local bylaws.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS DURING PANDEMIC

Residents are reminded to think about fire safety during COVID-19 pandemic.

“We are most vulnerable to fire when we sleep, so ensuring your alarms are working and can be heard from sleeping areas in your home is important. Alarms need to be tested monthly.”

One of the most common causes of house fires is accidental cooking fires. Residents should never leave the stove or oven unattended, as fire can happen quickly.

It's important to keep your stove and oven clean and keep anything flammable away from the cooking surface. Always stand by your pan, and keep children away from a hot oven.

As well, if a fire starts when you're cooking with oil, do not put water on the flames. Instead, put a tight-fitting lid on the pan, turn off the element, and do not move the pan.

Additional fire prevention tips include:

⌘ If you're working from home, remember a laptop battery can cause a fire. If you use a laptop on a couch or a bed, make sure the battery is vented and your laptop does not overheat. Do not leave a laptop on a bed or soft surface unattended. Never use a damaged extension cord, and limit the number of electronics you plug into an outlet or power bar.

⌘ Do not pile yard waste or other

garbage up against fences or buildings. Waste is often flammable and fire can spread quickly outside before it is noticed. If you have bulky waste (like furniture) in your yard, call 311 to schedule a bulk waste pickup. Only put your garbage and yard waste out on your designated pickup day.

⌘ Discuss fire safety with your kids so they know how to stay safe in the event of a fire. Every home should have an escape plan that everyone in the family can follow. Plan how you will escape your home in a fire and where you will meet. Remind children that if a fire starts in your home, everyone should get out, stay out and call 911.

ELECTRICAL

⌘ When charging smartphones and other digital devices, only use the charging cord that came with the device.

⌘ Do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed or on a couch.

⌘ Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker,

toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.

⌘ Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, microwave ovens, etc) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.

⌘ Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use.

⌘ Use a light bulb with the right number of watts. There should be a sticker that indicates the right number of watts.

FIRE HAZARDS AND THE ELDERLY

The following are several of the most common causes of fires that affect older people.

⌘ **Kitchen fires** caused by cooking accidents, such as unattended or forgotten pots of food being cooked,

or fires caused by grease flare-ups.

⌘ Using alternatives heating methods such as kerosene or electric space heaters, wood stove or fireplaces.

⌘ Smoking

⌘ Electrical problems including overloaded outlets, old and worn appliances and faulty or old wiring.

By taking the above precautions, you can prevent fires in your kitchen.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

DINNER IN A DISH

Ingredients

2 lbs. ground beef
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cans (14 1/2 oz. each) diced tomatoes, undrained
3 cups frozen peas
2/3 cup ketchup
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
2 tbsp all-purpose flour
2 tsp beef bouillon granules
2 tsp dried marjoram
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
6 cups hot mashed potatoes (prepared with milk and butter)

2 eggs

Directions

In a large skillet, cook the beef and onion over medium heat until the beef is no longer pink; drain. Stir in the next nine ingredients. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes.

Pour into an ungreased shallow 3 quart baking dish. Combine potatoes and eggs. Drop by 1/2 cupfuls onto beef mixture.

Baked, uncovered, at 350°F for 35-40 minutes or until bubbly and potatoes are lightly browned.

JOKE CORNER

(Q) What do you get a hunter for his birthday?

(A) A birthday pheasant

(Q) How does a computer get drunk?

(A) It takes screenshots.

(Q) Why shouldn't you fall in love with a pastry chef?

(A) He'll dessert you.

(Q) How do dog catchers get paid?

(A) By the pound!

Why did it get so hot in the baseball stadium after the game? All of the fans left.

What do you call it when Batman skips church? Christian Bale.

DISTANCING AND ISOLATING

The novel coronavirus primarily spreads through droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, breathes or speaks onto someone or something.

People don't need to have symptoms to be contagious.

This means precautions such as working from home, keeping your hands and frequently-touched surfaces clean socializing outdoors as much as possible and keeping distance from anyone you don't live with or have in your **social circle**, including when you have a mask on.

Ottawa's medical officer of health and Quebec's top health official are pleading with residents to **reduce the number of people they're in close contact with** as new cases of COVID-19 continue to surge.

Masks are **mandatory in indoor public settings** in all of eastern Ontario **and Quebec**, including **transit services** and **taxis** in some areas.

Masks are also recommended outdoors when you can't stay the proper distance from others.

Anyone who has travelled recently outside Canada **must go straight home** and stay there for 14 days. Most people with a confirmed COVID-19 case in Quebec **can end their self-isolation after 10 days** if they have not had a fever for at least 48 hours and has had no other symptom for at least 24 hours.

Health Canada recommends older adults and people with underlying medical conditions and/or weakened immune systems stay home as much as possible.

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CLEANING TIPS AND TRICKS

Fill a dish wand with half vinegar and half dawn dish soap. Keep the wand in your shower. Before taking a shower, scrub the walls with the wand then rinse off.

To clean fan blades, toss a pillowcase over the blade then slowly pull off. All of the dust and dirt will stay contained inside the pillowcase.

Clean your burners without scrubbing. Place in a sealed ziploc bag with a 1/4 cup of ammonia. Leave overnight then wipe clean with a sponge.