



Toronto Community Housing Corporation
931 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON
M4W 2H2

Briefing Note: For Information

To: Board of Directors

From: John Angkaw, Acting Chief Operating Officer

Date: July 15, 2021

Re: Public Action Item #9: Annual Pest Control and Annual Unit Inspection Reports

At its July 5, 2021 meeting, the Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”) directed Management to provide the Board with updated tables from the Annual Pest Control Report (TSC:2021-50(R)) and the Annual Unit Inspections Report (TSC:2021-51), that include year-over-year data and the data broken out by regions, including the Seniors Housing Unit.

Attached to this briefing note are the revised Annual Pest Control Report and the Annual Unit Inspections Report, with the updated tables as requested.



Annual Pest Control Report

Item 6D

July 5, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-50

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Acting Chief Operating Officer

Date: June 23, 2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an annual update on the provision of pest control services at Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that TSC receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

The provision of pest control services are governed by both municipal by-laws and federal regulations, and are a key responsibility of the landlord as set out in the *Residential Tenancies Act* (“RTA”). The provision of pest control services is an essential component of a broader clean buildings and maintenance strategy, which is intended to establish achievable service standards, sustainable service models, and enable consistent and cost effective delivery of service geared to enhancing tenant satisfaction.

PEST MANAGEMENT DATA & TRENDS

In 2020, TCHC staff fielded 50,654 work orders (“WO”) requests related to pest management issues (see Table 1). Of those issues, the top pest management treatments were for bed bugs and cockroaches.

In Q2 2020, the pest management program continued to be available, although there was a reduction in services. While staff were able to maintain service levels as it relates to preventative maintenance treatments of common spaces and building exteriors, there was a notable reduction of in-suite demand services. Where services have been required, staff worked with both the vendors and tenants to complete the services while maintaining social distancing and limiting the need for tenants to vacate their home for any periods of time.

In Q3 2020, the pest management program experienced a peak in service requests, which was primarily related to:

- The transition of 3,832 units from contract managed to direct managed;
- Seasonal fluctuation;
- Temporary easing of COVID-19 restrictions; and
- Commencement of the Annual Unit Inspection process.

Table 1: Pest Treatment (Demand & Preventative) by Categories										
Quarter		Bed Bugs	Bed Bugs	Cockroaches	Cockroaches	Mice	Mice	Other	Other	
			Total		Total		Total		Total	Grand Total
Q1 2020	East	1034	5,105	596	3,668	193	1,716	185	1,006	11,495
	Central	907		953		334		271		
	West	1571		1,095		1,034		392		
	Seniors	1593		1,024		155		158		
Q2 2020	East	766	3,837	347	2,424	133	1,561	124	794	8,616
	Central	714		620		327		129		
	West	1133		787		957		432		
	Seniors	1224		670		144		109		
Q3 2020	East	1372	7,924	933	5,467	219	2,107	325	1,798	17,296
	Central	1688		1,382		460		502		
	West	2424		1,719		1,222		705		
	Seniors	2440		1,433		206		266		
Q4 2020	East	985	5,472	1,012	4,673	250	1,944	245	1,134	13,223
	Central	1320		1,091		427		247		
	West	1616		1,206		1,058		510		
	Seniors	1551		1,364		209		132		

Table 2: Quarterly Average Number of Treatments in 2019 vs. 2020

Categories	2019 Average	2020 Average
Bed Bugs	5,859	5,585
Cockroaches	3,322	4,058
Mice	3,535	1,832
Other	1,799	1,183

In Q4 2020, the TCHC portfolio included 52,070 rent-geared-to-income (“RGI”) and 6,595 market units; RGI units accounted for the majority of pest treatments completed.

Table 3: Pest Treatments by Unit Types

Quarter	RGI	Market	Vacant	Total
Q1 2020	9,965	923	610	11,495
Q2 2020	7,471	784	362	8,616
Q3 2020	15,838	1,021	437	17,296
Q4 2020	11,701	980	542	13,223

REQUIREMENT FOR MULTIPLE PEST TREATMENTS

Most pest incidents require more than one pest management treatment to be fully addressed per Health Canada Guidelines; the timing between each treatment being equally vital to achieving an optimal outcome. At TCHC, contracts with pest vendors highlight clear expectations for follow-up treatments, including the provision of a mandatory inspection as part of the warranty program in cases of bed bugs.

Primary factors contributing to multiple pest treatments are:

- Limitations to Health Canada approved product application methods;
- Adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols;
- Modifications to treatment plans to accommodate tenants in-place; and
- Onboarding and reset activities with former contract managed sites

Table 4A: 2020 Count of units requiring multiple treatments by pest type

2020	0	1	2	3	More Than 3	Grand Total	%
Pests-Bedbugs	495	342	1209	516	902	3464	26.04%
Pests-Cockroaches	289	261	885	476	356	2267	15.70%
Pests-Mice	149	140	316	164	135	904	14.93%
Grand Total	933	743	2410	1156	1393	6635	20.99%

Table 4B: 2019 Count of units requiring multiple treatments by pest type

2019	0	1	2	3	More Than 3	Grand Total	%
Pests-Bedbugs	508	343	1198	550	993	3592	27.64%
Pests-Cockroaches	380	309	980	536	399	2604	15.32%
Pests-Mice	141	120	282	140	121	804	15.05%
Grand Total	1029	772	2460	1226	1513	7000	21.61%

PEST MANAGEMENT DURING COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges in safely and effectively addressing pest control concerns. Where standard chemical application measures require tenants to vacate their units for a period of 4 to 6 hours, TCHC has worked with our vendors to establish interim measures to complete treatments while limiting the need for tenants to leave their units for extended periods of time. Enhanced use of mechanical treatments such as steaming, vacuuming, heat treatment, and limited use of pesticide has allowed for infestation level control. As well, achieving total resolution to pest incidents have been exceptionally difficult due to multiple return visits and increased costs per unit.

RESTRUCTURING

As part of restructuring in 2020, TCHC realigned internal resources to the local Regional teams to better support daily program delivery. This realignment allowed each regional team a dedicated team, comprised of one Supervisor and three Technicians, while the Tenancy Resolutions Office (“TRO”) provides administrative, strategic and contractual oversight

functions. This restructuring has allowed TCHC to realize the benefits of having resources aligned with the Regional teams to better support our tenants who are impacted by pest infestation.

SUPPORTING TENANTS

In 2020, 15% of all the units visited by the Environmental Health team demonstrated the need for additional supports, including access to resources for support, de-cluttering, and preparation assistance for treatment or extreme cleaning services. Our partnerships with agencies such as Toronto Public Health and Ontario Works through Toronto Employment and Social Services, have assisted tenants in accessing approximately \$305K of additional supportive funding and/or services. The TRO and the Regional teams continue to develop and implement resources, partnerships and tools in order to continue to provide support and monitoring of units.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An important lever to pest reduction is ensuring that staff and communities engage in dialogue with tenants and communities; it provides staff with a better understanding of our tenants and it provides tenants with the information and resources they require to support a proactive approach to pest management in their units and communities. Although in-person tenant education have been paused due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, TCHC staff continue to work with our communications team to update education and preparation materials, including the translation of information into 24 languages.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Pest problems within TCHC buildings can significantly disrupt the comfort of our residents and limit the enjoyment of their homes. Without a strong and sustainable pest management program, the organization potentially faces orders and/or costs related to any perceived mismanagement, including potential awards of rent abatement at the Landlord and Tenant board, MLS orders for failure to maintain the premises “pest free”, and Health Protection orders from Toronto Public Health.

SIGNATURE:

“John P. Angkaw”

John P. Angkaw
Acting Chief Operating Officer

STAFF CONTACT

Richard Grotsch, Tenancy Resolutions Officer
416-981-4054
Richard.Grotsch@torontohousing.ca



Annual Unit Inspections Report

Item 6E

July 5, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-51

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Acting Chief Operating Officer

Date: June 24, 2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an annual update on the annual unit inspections (“AUI”) process conducted across the Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) portfolio.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the TSC receive the report for information.

BACKGROUND

On an annual basis, TCHC conducts AUIs, which have been typically conducted in the final quarter of the calendar year. As part of the AUIs, Superintendents provide notice of the inspections, take receipt of the inspection log books, conduct unit inspections, and enter the results into an electronic tracking system.

The completion of AUIs supports TCHC in its efforts to identify any fire life safety and compliance risks. As well, it provides TCHC the opportunity to assess the potential vulnerability of a tenant and provide supports as required to maintain successful tenancies and prevent the negative personal and community impacts of unsupported vulnerability and tenancies.

2020 AUI PROCESS

The 2020 AUI was deployed in Q4 2020 and it focused on minimizing COVID-19 health and safety risks to staff and tenants, while continuing to meet service manager requirements and fire life safety compliance obligations. The following are highlights of the 2020 AUIs:

- Inspection form was modified with a focus on fire life safety and unit condition inspection points;
- Building staff received on-line training on:
 - COVID-19 personal protective equipment (“PPE”) requirements;
 - Changes to unit entry procedures; and
 - Health and safety processes to protect tenants and staff;
- Staff procured adequate supply to facilitate essential PPE for both tenants and staff members;
- Processes were established and communicated to safely complete the inspections with tenants in place;
- Tenant communications included posters, flyers and frequently asked questions (“FAQ”) to inform tenants of changes to the inspection process and maintaining social distancing during the inspection; and
- Regular AUI reports were provided to the Regional teams that allowed for increased oversight and follow-up, which resulted in earlier resolution of work orders.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 AUIs were completed on time, with a 98.4% inspection completion rate. To date, Regional teams continue to follow-up and conduct outstanding inspections.

Table 1: 2020 AUI Results

	West		East		Central		Seniors	
	# of Units	% of units	# of Units	% of units	# of Units	% of units	# of Units	% of units
Annual Unit Inspection Completion Rate:								
Total Number of Units for Inspection	14,915		15,160		14,578		12,903	
Inspections Completed	14,620	98.00%	15,071	99.40%	14,162	97.10%	12,810	99.30%
Inspections Not Completed	295	2.00%	89	0.60%	416	2.90%	93	0.70%
Life Safety Inspection Points								
Smoke Alarms Repaired/Replaced	287	1.90%	151	1.00%	289	2.00%	433	3.40%
Window Locks and Screen Repaired	530	3.60%	101	0.70%	212	1.50%	321	2.50%
Visible Mould, Mildew "Major" and "Minor"	298	2.00%	366	2.40%	82	0.60%	12	0.10%
Fire Safety Inspection Points								
Units with any Fire Safety Issue Identified	232	1.60%	163	1.10%	239	1.60%	346	2.70%
Units Condition Inspection Points:								
Units with Clutter Level 7-9	93	0.60%	117	0.80%	169	1.20%	95	0.70%
Units with Cleanliness Ration "Poor"	388	2.60%	416	2.70%	469	3.20%	317	2.50%
Units with Major Level of Balcony Clutter	101	0.70%	110	0.70%	132	0.90%	105	0.80%
Water Penetration Inspection Points:								
Units with any Water Penetration Issue (Foundation, Roofing, Cladding, Window / Seal)	887	5.90%	1,115	7.40%	400	2.70%	1,294	10.00%

Table 2: 2019 vs. 2020 Totals

2019 vs 2020 Totals	TCHC total		2019 Total	
	# of Units	% of units		% of units
Annual Unit Inspection Completion Rate:				
Total Number of Units for Inspection	57,556		57,399	
Inspections Completed	56,663	98.40%	56,808	98.97%
Inspections Not Completed	893	1.60%	591	1.03%
Life Safety Inspection Points				
Smoke Alarms Repaired/Replaced	1,160	2.00%	8,015	14%
Window Locks and Screen Repaired	1,164	2.00%	766	1.30%
Visible Mould, Mildew "Major" and "Minor"	758	1.30%	1,261	2.20%
Fire Safety Inspection Points				
Units with any Fire Safety Issue Identified	980	1.70%	1375	2.40%
Units Condition Inspection Points:				
Units with Clutter Level 7-9	474	0.80%	459	0.80%
Units with Cleanliness Ration "Poor"	1590	2.80%	1898	3.30%
Units with Major Level of Balcony Clutter	448	0.80%	595	1.00%
Water Penetration Inspection Points:				
Units with any Water Penetration Issue (Foundation, Roofing, Cladding, Window / Seal)	3,696	6.40%	4,329	7.50%

UNIT CONDITION & EXCESSIVE CLUTTER

“Hoarding” is defined as an excessive accumulation of personal and acquired belonging/items which are being stored within a dwelling in such quantities that make the areas unsafe and/or unusable for its intended purpose. The most recent publication of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders identifies hoarding as a separate and distinct mental health disorder.

Staff are provided tools (e.g. clutter image rating) to identify units with excessive clutter, mitigate further damage or deterioration to the unit, and offer social supports to maintain successful tenancies. In 2020, there were 474 units deemed to have excessive clutter. These at-risk units are automatically flagged for follow-up through the AUI system.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

The goal of the program is to keep tenants housed in a clean and safe unit; early intervention is essential and enables better outcomes for tenants.

The Operations Division uses an integrated approach to provide follow-up activities that address the range of services that may be required to remediate unit condition or unit clutter issues:

- Regular in-home visits with tenants;
- Interdisciplinary staff teams coordinating service connections;
- Engaging external partners to access funding and resources;
- Pest control treatments where applicable;
- Referrals to the Tenancy Resolutions Office; and
- In a limited number of critical cases where staff are not able to secure consent or compliance, an application can be brought to the Landlord and Tenant Board.

EXTERNAL PARTNER SUPPORT

A critical feature of effective excessive clutter management is leveraging the support of sector partners and resources, as up to 85% of unit condition cases require coordination and collaboration with external resources to establish a sustainable resolution. Currently, TCHC actively collaborates with many external resources, which include the following:

- SPIDER Program;
- Extreme Clean Programs;
- Municipal Licencing and Standards;
- Toronto Fire Services;
- Toronto Public Health;
- Toronto Hoarding Support Network; and
- Broader health and social services networks.

NEXT STEPS

The 2021 AUIs commenced in May 2021 and will continue to focus on fire life safety and compliance risks. In addition, the regional teams are ensuring that air conditioning units that are installed outside balcony enclosures. The 2021 AUIs are expected to be completed by September 2021, ahead of the migration to the HoMES Track 2B in October 2021.

The 2022 AUIs will be fully integrated into the HoMES system and will be re-established as a year-round cyclical program. The workload related to inspections and follow-up will be distributed throughout the year, with service level standards associated to follow-up interventions. This cyclical approach will result in better quality inspections and, where issues are identified, allow for more focused interventions and monitoring by integrated teams. It may also improve access to resources available at the community level and through TCHC's partners (e.g. Extreme Clean and the Housing Stabilization Fund), as requests for assistance will be spread over the year.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The effective follow-up and management of excessive clutter mitigates safety and compliance risks. Failure to adequately manage these risks could result in fines from regulators and/or, in worst case scenarios, injury or death of a tenant or staff.

Timely and appropriate resources are required to maintain safe unit conditions and support successful tenancies. Delayed follow-up on deficiencies or failed service levels can impact tenants in neighbouring units, overall building conditions, and can inflate costs to remediate and maintain unit condition at acceptable levels.

SIGNATURE:

“John P. Angkaw”

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Acting Chief Operating Officer

STAFF CONTACT:

Richard Grotsch, Tenancy Resolutions Officer
416-981-4054
Richard.Grotsch@torontohousing.ca