

Newsbriefs

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO EDITION Spring 2007 – Volume 2, No. 1



Tim Finockio, Tolpuddle's building superintendant, installs a new shower head.

Energy Efficiency in Action

When **Tolpuddle Housing Co-op** in London faced serious financial challenges, **Julie Campbell**, the co-op's manager, says they came up with ways to save both money and the environment. Julie, who is Area Manager for Homestarts, a co-op property management company, works with five co-ops in three counties, Oxford, Elgin and Middlesex. "Despite severe financial shortages, including very limited capital reserves," she says, "Tolpuddle has been able to take initiatives that save them money, help the environment and move the co-op towards sustainability."

Tolpuddle is a 132-unit building with stacked apartments in downtown London. [2] ▶



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Join the Advisory Committee

Volunteer to take part in shaping the CHF Canada services for your region.

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Greening your Co-op

Resources to help your co-op save energy and money.

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The 2007 AGM

Welcome to Winnipeg and this year's "green" annual meeting with a focus on environmental sustainability in co-ops.

Join the Advisory Committee

Now that CHF Canada members have agreed they want local services to continue in Southwestern Ontario, we're looking for member input on those services.

Last October, members agreed to phase in local dues to support such local services as an education conference, newsletter, local advice and support, **Co-op Cost Cutters** group buying program and more.

Now we're calling for volunteers to join a new Advisory Committee. The committee will give feedback to our local office on the issues affecting co-ops in the region and the services those co-ops need.

Joining the committee is a great chance to have your say and contribute to the strength of housing co-ops in our local area. The committee will meet four times a year, either face to face or by conference call.

The members of the interim advisory committee will serve until the fall education conference, when a new committee will be selected. To serve on the committee, you must be in good standing at your co-op, with no arrears.

To volunteer, or for more information on the Advisory Committee, please call **Denise McGahan**, Member Services Representative, at (519) 453-0999 in London, 1-800-644-3949 toll-free, or e-mail dmcgahan@chfc.ca.

cover energy efficiency

◀ [cover]

The building pays a water fee for all of the units, as well as common-area electrical costs. They are not alone in facing financial challenges or needing to become more energy efficient. But Tolpuddle shows what is possible when a co-op makes choices and changes to become more sustainable.

WATER CONSERVATION

The co-op replaced toilets with low-flow ones, which don't require lined tanks. They also chose a toilet without a "flapper," which can deteriorate over time and cause leakage of extra water. Tolpuddle also put in low-flow showerheads and low-flow aerators. Tap aerators restrict the flow of water from your tap without reducing water pressure. They can reduce the amount of water you use by more than 50%. With these changes, the co-op saved over \$11,000 in less than a year. Julie predicts that the capital costs for these replacements will be realized in savings to water bills over a period of only 2.5 years.

CONTRACTED LAUNDRY SERVICES AND MORE EFFICIENT MACHINES

The co-op replaced their washers and dryers with high efficiency ones. They used to own their washers and dryers but, because they were getting old and costing a lot in repairs, they decided to use a local appliance company, Middlesex Appliance. Since last March, laundry revenues have increased by more than a third. The co-op saves money with newer, more reliable machines and cost-savings in water and electricity use. They also

have less potential for theft because the system is controlled by the appliance company and no member has access to override it.

LIGHTING REPLACEMENT

Before Julie started to work with Tolpuddle in November 2005, the co-op had already replaced their standard hallway lighting with compact fluorescent bulbs.

"We do not have statistics on the energy savings for the co-op although I'm certain there are some. We plan to look now at replacing lighting in the garage as well and to ensure exit signs and the like are also energy efficient."

Other co-ops get energy efficient

Other co-ops in the area have started the process of making changes for energy efficiency too. **Clairvue Housing Co-op** in Chatham, managed by M&P Property Management, is installing the low-flow showerheads and aerators in their units now too. They are also using pipe wrap to insulate their pipes.

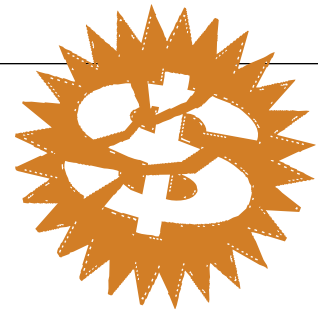
Whiteoak Heritage Housing Co-op in London has completed the installation of the low-flow showerheads and aerators. **Muriel Stilson**, manager for the co-op, says that the savings on their water bills has more than covered the cost of hiring a handyman to do the installations.

Julie is impressed by how much these changes can make a difference for co-ops and urges all co-ops, regardless of their financial situation, to consider making the move towards sustainability.

“While some environmentally friendly programs are quite costly, there are many initiatives that can be done and costs are likely to be recouped in a relatively short time frame. Co-ops with limited resources like Tolpuddle can also simply commit to replacing items using energy efficient products whenever they require replacement.” ☺

Co-op Cost Cutters

Why Co-op Cost Cutters is worth more for Southwestern Ontario....



Local co-ops continue to discover the benefits of membership. With our group purchase program, Co-op Cost Cutters, the buying power of many co-ops equals real benefits for CHF Canada members and their co-ops. Co-ops save money when they buy maintenance supplies, electrical, plumbing and cleaning supplies, appliance parts, flooring, carpets, tile, paint and wall coverings, office supplies and furnishings, when they purchase or lease appliances, and when they need credit reports and checks.

To find out more, contact Denise McGahan 1-800-644-3949 (toll free) or (519) 453-0999 in London, e-mail dmcgahan@chfc.ca.

Greening your co-op

The Green Light Initiative of the Social Housing Services Corporation (www.shscorp.ca and click on Energy-GLI) offers incentives and information about energy efficiency for co-operatives in Southwestern Ontario. These include financial incentives either through Green Light Loans or through the Ontario Power Authority Phase I incentive which provides financial assistance, loans or grants, to help with energy-saving measures. For more detailed information, see the website or call 1-866-268-4451 and ask for a member of the GreenLight Team.

Tolpuddle was able to take advantage of the Green Light Initiative through Union Gas. Co-ops who use natural gas from Union Gas to heat their water can get, free of charge, low-flow showerheads and aerators for their kitchen and “vanity” taps for all of their units. The program also offers a deal on thermostats. There are more details on what is available through Union Gas on the Green Light website (above) or on the Union Gas website at: www.uniongas.com/ and look under “your home”, “energy efficiency” and then, “incentives and rebates”.

Other local utility providers offer a range of information and some incentives to help with energy efficiency. To get the latest information on what’s available, check these web pages:

Blue Water Power (www.bluewaterpower.com and follow the link to “energy services”).

Chatham-Kent P.U.C. (www.chatham-kent.ca/default.htm and follow links under “community services”).

Erie Thames Hydro (www.erietham.espower.com/ and follow links under “conservation”). There are no current incentives, but their website gives details of a proposed “province-wide centralized energy management service for the social housing sector” that it might develop in collaboration with the provincial government and other utilities. Check back for updates.

Enwin Utilities (www.enwin.com/ and follow links under “community initiatives”) in Windsor. Enwin has provided incentives to non-profit housing in the past. If your co-op is thinking of investing in changes, they ask that you get in touch with them to discuss your plans and they will try to offer you an incentive, depending on what they have

available at that time. Their website also gives tips on energy conservation.

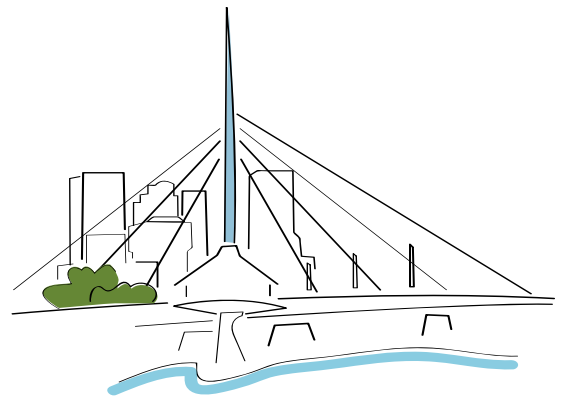
London Hydro (www.londonhydro.com/). Nothing at present, but they will be bringing back a refrigerator rebate program. Check their website under “residential” for this and other incentives. They also have an electricity price calculator on their website.

Union Gas (uniongas.com) details are outlined above as part of the GreenLight Initiative.

Woodstock Hydro (www.woodstockhydro.com). No incentive programs at present, but check for updates as they have been working to establish a program for low-income housing with the Ontario Power Authority:

Environment Canada’s (www.ecoenergy.gc.ca) new energy efficiency program was announced in April. For details of how it applies in your area, check their web page. The federal government also announced new funding for energy efficiency to come through the Canada ecoTrust for Clean Air and Climate Change partnership with the Province of Ontario.

Come to
Winnipeg
June 7-9!



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2007 annual meeting

Last year CHF Canada met in London and local people will recall what an amazing event the meeting can be. This year, the future of our co-ops is on the table. As many co-ops near the end of their operating agreements, we've prepared the 2020 Compass - a tool that will help members prepare for this transition and "map the road ahead." It might not be a coincidence that CHF Canada's annual meeting will take place in Winnipeg, on the eastern edge of the prairies, where you can see for miles.

In Winnipeg, members can sit down together and discuss the steps they need to take now before their agreements end. And we can all set our sights on a future for housing co-ops well past the year 2020.

And still with an eye on the future, members have chosen environmental sustainability as this year's Annual Meeting theme – we will be pioneering a "green" co-op movement that protects our co-ops and communities for future generations.

And you can experience great local entertainment and fun too. The meeting will include hand-clapping, toe-tapping dance at the Red River Celebration social night in St. Boniface, the largest French Quarter in Western Canada. There will be a chance to tour local co-ops too and time to discover the many diverse neighbourhoods that make up the city of Winnipeg. The CHF Canada Annual Meeting is the premier meeting for all members and staff – don't miss it!

Watch for the registration package, mailed to member co-ops at the end of February, or register online in the AGM section of the CHF Canada website at www.chfcanada.coop.

Thinking of running?

The world of housing co-ops stretches far beyond your front door. Have you ever thought about learning more about the issues affecting housing co-ops across Canada? Have you considered how you could play a role in the outcome of those issues? Have you thought about running for the CHF Canada Board?

CHF Canada is a national federation representing co-ops in every province and territory in the country. Members elect a regional director for each province and five at-large directors to represent them on CHF Canada's Board.

At-large elections for CHF Canada's Board, Ontario Council and Finance Committee will take place during the AGM in Winnipeg, June 7 – 9.

Nomination forms are available in the AGM section of the CHF Canada website at www.chfcanada.coop. You can find information on what's involved and the role of directors there too. Or contact **Nick Sidor**, Director, Corporate Affairs at 1-800-465-2752, ext.231 or by e-mail at nsidor@chfc.ca.