



Housing Services
Division

Financial Housing
Services

605 Rossland Road East
Whitby, Ontario
L1N 6A3
905-668-7711

Memorandum

To: All Housing Providers

From: Mary Menzies
Director of Housing Services

Date: July 4, 2011

Re: Suite Meters and Electricity Costs Charged to Tenants

The Energy Consumer Protection Act (ECPA) was proclaimed on January 1, 2011. Part III of the ECPA mandates the installation of suite meters in new buildings and permits the installation of suite meters and their use for billing in existing buildings. The ECPA also amends the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) to allow a landlord to transfer the obligation to pay electricity costs to tenants in suite metered units and sets specific requirements to do so.

Housing providers are permitted, but not required, to install suite meters in existing units and to transfer the costs of electricity for these units to their tenants or members. Housing providers contemplating such changes are cautioned to carefully consider the impacts to the corporation and its tenants or members before doing so.

Before transferring unit electricity costs to a tenant, housing providers subject to the RTA must:

- have the written consent of the tenant
- provide the tenant with information about electricity costs, the suite meter provider, and the age and energy efficiency of the unit's refrigerator - prior to obtaining consent
- reduce the market rent to account for the new electricity costs assumed by the tenant.

Housing providers subject to the RTA must also provide the following information to new tenants who will be paying the electricity costs for their units:

- the electricity costs for the unit for the last 12 months as indicated by the suite meter provider
- the age and energy efficiency of the refrigerator.

Co-operative housing providers that want to transfer electricity costs to existing or new members should ensure that any such decision is transparent, supported by the membership and not in conflict with the articles and by-laws of the co-operative corporation.

All housing providers - including co-operative housing providers – are prohibited from transferring the cost of electric heat to tenants.

The ECPA and the changes to the RTA have no impact on tenants and members who currently pay their own electricity costs.

As required rent reduction calculations can be complex, and funding implications might not be clear, housing providers that are considering transferring electricity costs to their tenants/members are encouraged to contact Housing Services and Financial Housing Services to review the RGI funding implications before doing so.

Mary Menzies
Director of Housing Services

cc. Joanne Cermak, Director of Financial Services