



Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal Tenant Newsletter

June 2018 • Volume 17, No 1



## **National Holidays**

Please note that for Saint-Jean-Baptiste and Canada Day, all the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal offices will be closed on Monday, June 25 and July 2, 2018.

However, the Call and Security Centre will be open for emergencies: 514-872-6646.

## Message from the Executive Director\_\_\_\_



**Danielle Cécile Executive Director** of the OMHM

## Living in healthy and harmonious environments

Dear Tenants.

The legalization of cannabis has become a widely discussed topic since the federal government's bill was introduced in April 2017. The Cannabis Act is expected to come into effect in the coming months.

Since this project was announced, municipal housing authorities, private rental landlords and tenants have expressed concerns. The issues are many and affect, others, amona neighborliness, tenant health and safety. The Board of Directors of the Office municipal d'habitation de

Montréal is considering banning cannabis and taking steps toward banning smoking. However, it would first like to ask tenants their opinion on the issue of cannabis and tobacco use in their homes, both of which are related. The consultation results will quide the Board's decision. Please read the article on page 17 to learn more about this consultation.

In this Rose des vents, you will see that the maintenance and repair workers have busy schedules and that they care about your well-being. Maintaining our buildings is an ongoing concern for us just as it is for you. These employees play a key role in ensuring the quality of your living environment.

I would like to congratulate the recently elected members of the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants). Their commitment to tenants is exemplary. We present them in this edition.

Finally, I wish you all an enjoyable summer. We have earned it after the harsh winter we've had!

### ■ Word from your Representatives \_



Richard Gagné **CCR Chair** 

In May 2016, a few other tenants and myself founded an association in the Southwest. Shortly thereafter, I was elected to the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants). On April 24 2018, I was chosen as spokesperson. It is in this capacity that I address you today.

In Quebec, the legislation allows tenant associations in low-rent housing to participate in the management of their housing offices. They are an integral part of the low-rent housing program. How is this right exercised, and what use is made of the forums intended for it? I ask the question, so you may make it your own. So that it may become our question, so we may collectively search for an answer.

In Montréal, approximately 38,000 people live in low-rent housing. However, 50% of households are not represented by an association and 85% of family households don't have one. The young people are absent. Moreover, where it does exist, community life often comes down to social and mutual support activities. This is no small matter. However, this is only part of its role.

The challenge is huge. The CCR can increase tenant participation. However, its action will be limited if it does not have the management's help. It has means that we, the tenants, don't have. Furthermore, it is consistent with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal's mission to enable the expression of the spirit of the law.

## Maintenance and repair workers: dedicated employees

By Marie Bouchard, OMHM Communications Officer

Maintenance and repair workers are responsible for maintaining and repairing your apartments and the common areas in your buildings. I spent one morning with Karim Amrouni, a maintenance and repair worker, to better understand their daily routines.

Karim takes care of several three-storey buildings in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. Each day, he receives many requests for repairs in the form of "work orders". He makes appointments before going to tenants' homes and incorporates them into his maintenance activities. "I try to respond to tenant repair requests as quickly as possible, but I have to prioritize the maintenance of common areas," says Karim.

Here is a summary of the tasks Karim carried out in my company during half a day of work.

- Starting at 7 a.m., Karim plans out his day and prepares the equipment he will need to make the scheduled repairs.
- · Before going to his first appointment, he replaces defective ceiling light bulbs in two entrances and carries out the maintenance of a stairwell.
- At 9 a.m., we have an appointment with Ms. Marie to repair a folding closet door.
- At 9:30 a.m., we enter the apartment of a family of four kids to repair a closet door, glue back some marquetry panels and replace the shower rod.
- At 10:30 a.m., a tenant welcomes us into his home to repair a broken kitchen cabinet door. In this case, Karim transfers the request to the carpentry team responsible for this type of work.
- Between his visits, Karim carries out the maintenance of three other stairwells (he is responsible for a total of 24 stairwells), picks up trash on the grounds and stores the bags filled with waste until collection day.

Thanks to maintenance and repair workers Julie Delisle, Jean Bernard Petit-Frère and Karim Amrouni and to the Habitations Des Érables tenants.

• The last appointment of the morning is to redo the seal between the kitchen counter and the wall.

This shift with Karim has shown me that the maintenance and repair workers of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal have a lot to do and that the tenants count heavily on them. They are much more than superintendents, as it is important for them to develop a good relationship with the tenants. Karim listens to them and gives them a considered follow-up. In exchange, he askes them to respect the building rules. "I encourage tenants to do their share and respect common areas because it makes a great difference for them and for me," he concludes.



In the morning, Karim reviews his work orders to prepare his equipment before going to his appointments.



Ms. Marie appreciates Karim's work. Relationships with tenants are important for maintenance and repair workers.

## Preventive housing inspections:

By Ingrid Dirickx and Marie-Eve Leblanc, OMHM Communications Officers

The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) is concerned about its tenants' living conditions and the state of its buildings. As a result, it put together two teams to carry out preventive inspections.

- 1 The exterminator team checks for harmful insects and vermin (bedbugs, cockroaches, rats, mice, ants, etc.) in the apartments and buildings.
- 2. The preventative maintenance inspection team verifies whether repairs or work is required in the housing units.

#### TENANTS ARE ALWAYS NOTIFIED OF THEIR VISIT IN ADVANCE.

#### **EXTERMINATOR TEAM**

#### Why does the OMHM carry out such preventive inspections?

The OMHM carries out inspections because it wants to ensure that no harmful insects or vermin are present in its buildings (apartments, hallways, common room, etc.).

#### Where are the inspections carried out?

The OMHM inspects buildings where apartments have been previously infested by bedbugs or cockroaches. Furthermore, you may also receive a visit from the exterminator team if the OMHM notices any tenants in your building collecting furniture or mattresses that have been left on the street.

#### How should you prepare for the visit?

You must ensure that the exterminator can walk through all the areas of the apartment, especially the bedrooms. It is also important to **be present** to let the exterminator in.

#### How is the inspection carried out?

The exterminator inspects the cabinets, the pantry and the rear of the refrigerator for cockroaches. He also inspects the mattress, bed base, bed frame, armchairs and sofas for bedbugs. He also inspects common areas (garage, laundry room, common room, basement) to check for other insects and vermin (rats, mice, etc.).

#### How many preventive visits does the OMHM carry out?

Nearly 8,000 visits are carried out annually in the at-risk buildings. Unfortunately, the OMHM finds bedbugs in 15% of the inspected housing units.

Bedbugs and cockroaches reproduce at a phenomenal rate. It is therefore important to call the **Call Centre at 514-872-6646**, if you **have seen any or if you think your apartment might have any**. The OMHM will send an exterminator, free of charge, to inspect the premises. If required, treatment will also be free of charge.



It is important that the tenant be present during the exterminator's visit.

## what are they for?

#### PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE INSPECTION TEAM

#### Why does the OMHM carry out these inspections?

The OMHM carries out these inspections to record the repairs that must be done in your apartment in order to keep it in good condition.

#### How is the inspection carried out?

The OMHM technician walks around your apartment with you. He makes a note of all the repairs to be done and asks a few questions to complete his notes, but he does not carry out the work. It is important that you be present during the inspection.



The technician checks whether the equipment in the apartment is working properly.

#### What does the OMHM do with the collected information?

There are three levels of intervention: emergency repairs, nonemergency repairs, and improvements or work required in several units.

#### **Emergency repairs**

If the technician notices damages that require a quick response, he will report them immediately to the OMHM Call Centre. The repair will then be carried out within 0-7 days. Examples of emergency repairs include broken windows, plumbing system water leaks, faulty fire detectors, non-functional heating systems.

#### Non-emergency repairs

If the required repair does not pose a threat to your health, safety or the integrity of the building, it is considered to be a non-emergency. The OMHM will then intervene within 0-90 days. Examples of non-emergency repairs include: a leaking faucet, the replacement of a silicone seal around the bath, a broken cabinet door or a defective exhaust fan.

#### Improvements or work required in multiple units

The problem observed in your apartment may be related to work that needs to be carried out in several units in your building. In this case, response times are longer. The OMHM must:

- analyze the problem,
- prioritize work based on urgency in relation to the overall work that needs to be carried out across the housing stock,
- · acquire the budgets,
- prepare project specifications prior to launching a tender.

Work can only begin after all these steps are carried out. Examples of work required in several units include: replacing hot water heaters, end-of-life counters and old thermostats.

#### How many visits does the OMHM carry out?

Approximately 6,300 housing visits are carried out annually. It takes two to three years for all the units to be inspected at least once. Once the cycle is completed, the OMHM starts the next one.



#### **REPORT ANY PROBLEMS OR DAMAGES BY CALLING 514-872-6646.**

Please note that the OMHM is currently evaluating response times for repairs to be carried out in apartments and common areas.



Sylvain Labrecque Tenant OMHM **Board Member** 

## Cigarette and cannabis: It's time to put our minds to these issues

In 2017, the federal government introduced a bill legalizing cannabis (marijuana). In Quebec, the National Assembly created the Société québécoise du cannabis and established that the legal age of purchase and consumption would be the same as for alcohol, which is 18 years of age. The legislation is expected to come into force in 2018.

What will this mean for us, low-rent housing tenants on the Island of Montréal? What will be the position of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) on the various issues that may be raised by tenants?

We already know that the Quebec Superior Court ruled that owners can ban smoking in their buildings. The OMHM allows tenants to smoke cigarettes in their apartments, but not in the common areas. What about cannabis? The question has not been evoked so far, but due to this legalization project, a decision will have to be taken.

Would it be possible to have smoke-free buildings and other buildings where smoking cigarettes and cannabis is permitted? The future will tell... One thing is certain, we will have to weigh the pros and cons to avoid infringing the right to smoke and others' right to a healthy environment.



**Ghislaine Laramée** Tenant OMHM **Board Member** 

## Collaboration is the secret to pest management!

The Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) is especially concerned with pest control. In spring 2017, the committee established a sub-committee to address this issue. It has since become the joint CCR-OMHM committee, which includes employees of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal and a representative of the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à loyer modique du Québec.

We participated in a major consultation on March 27, at the invitation of the OMHM, to contribute to an effective action plan against vermin. The OMHM will prepare this plan in the coming months following the completion of its consultation process.

We, your representatives, will bridge communications between the OMHM and the tenant associations to keep you informed. The associations are called upon to collaborate,

among other things, by opening the common room to tenants who must leave their unit during and after a treatment.

Residents, employees and subcontracting exterminators must cooperate to achieve results. As tenants, we have responsibilities. I should like to remind you:

- To ring the Call Centre as soon as you discover a single bedbug.
- To be present when the exterminator visits you and to follow his instructions.
- Do not hesitate to ask questions.
- Do not treat your dwelling yourself.
- Do not pick up used furniture or mattresses.

By following these instructions, we increase our chances of maintaining healthy living environments. Let's continue our fight!

## Prevent kitchen fires

By Julie Marie Dorval, special contribution

Did you know that half of the fires reported in Montréal's low-rent housing in 2017 started in the kitchen and that the main cause was cooking fires?

Cooking is a daily task that requires certain precautions. We encourage you to follow the following safety procedures to prevent fires in the kitchen and in your apartment.

#### In the kitchen

To reduce the risk of a fire when preparing meals:

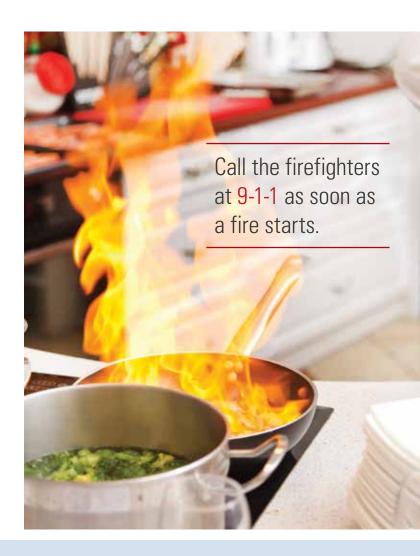
- Never leave a boiler or pot unattended on the stove;
- Do not wear loose clothing when cooking food as it may catch fire;
- Do not move a burning pot or skillet;
- Never put out a cooking fire with water, instead place a lid on the burning dish or spread baking soda on the flames;
- Avoid frying in a pot: use a fryer designed for this purpose;
- Do not store objects in the oven or on the stove;
- Turn off the stove and oven when finished cooking:
- Never leave a child alone in the kitchen.

#### In your apartment

To prevent a fire or mishaps from occurring in your apartment:

- Have a portable fire extinguisher close by and learn how to use it before you need to use it;
- Use quality extension cords;
- · Avoid using candles and potpourri jars;
- Do not smoke in bed;
- · Do not leave burning cigarettes unattended;
- · Check that your smoke detector is working;
- If your smoke detector goes off and there is no fire, open your balcony door, not your apartment door, as this would trigger the general alarm.

"These guidelines may seem simple, but they need to be applied to ensure your safety and that of others. A fire is always unfortunate and causes a great deal of damage," explains Alain Hébert, Director of the Call Centre and Security Service at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal.



#### **PARTICIPATE IN EVACUATION EXERCISES!**

The OMHM organizes evacuation drills once a year in low-rent housing towers. Shortly before these exercises are held, the OMHM updates the list of tenants with reduced mobility or who are temporarily disabled. If you are affected, contact your rental agent to ensure your name is on this list.

Make a point of participating in evacuation drills! If a fire occurs, you will be ready.

## Housing transfer requests: what to know

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

There are many housing transfer requests. They are treated according to the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)'s policies and procedures.

Since it is impossible to respond favourably to all transfer requests, the OMHM must rank them in order of priority on waiting lists. Here are a few examples of requests that are prioritized. Your rental agent can provide more information depending on your situation.

#### **Priority requests**

- Relocations required as a result of damage, for example a fire, or technical problems that render the unit uninhabitable.
- Requests arising from major safety or health causes.
   Examples: a person is experiencing serious threats related to a criminal act; a person has significant physical limitations as a result of illness and is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of a low-rent housing project without elevators.
- Housing transfer requests regarding the type of dwelling are the most common and are assessed according to the composition of the household. This refers to an apartment that no longer meets the needs of the tenant and OMHM occupancy standards. Example: an apartment that has become too small or too big as a result of a child's birth or departure from an apartment.

It should be noted that the OMHM must also respond to people waiting for low-rent housing. There are currently approximately 23,700 applicants on our waiting lists.

#### Other possible transfers

Have you been living in low-rent housing reserved for seniors for at least 3 years, but would like to move to another apartment of the same size? Ask about the 60+ Optional Transfer. Please note that there is a fee for these transfers as well as an annual limit.

#### Who to contact to change housing?

Tenants who wish to transfer to another apartment must send their application in writing to their rental agent stating their reasons and neighbourhood choices. The agent will notify them of their eligibility in writing.

#### DO YOU KNOW THAT...

... the OMHM can request a transfer if the type of dwelling occupied does not fit the reality of the household? As a tenant, you must provide the OMHM with the names of everyone living with you. You have to notify your rental agent in writing as soon as someone moves out of the dwelling. You must obtain prior written authorization from your rental agent in order to add an occupant. This information allows the OMHM to allocate an apartment of an adequate size to you that meets occupancy standards.



## NOT A MEMBER YET? Just fill out and return Flower and Garden Club The 2018 season promises to be beautiful and fruitful for our members!

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

Once again this year, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) offers free horticultural support, advice and training to tenant members of the Flower and Garden Club.

The OMHM created the Flower and Garden Club in 2011 to meet the following objectives:

- » Stimulate greening and urban agriculture projects among people living in low-rent housing;
- » Embellish living environments by engaging citizens.

The Club has many benefits: it promotes biodiversity, cleanliness, community life and neighborliness in living environments. Furthermore, horticultural creations provide tenants with a sense of pride and safety.

#### An indispensable partner

Every spring, all members of the Flower and Garden Club receive a list of the benefits and services offered for the season by the OMHM, and provided by Sentier Urbain, the Club's partner organization.

During the summer, Sentier Urbain's experts roam the buildings to meet with tenants. They also take orders and deliver materials (flower boxes, plants, soil).

#### Inspiring garden tours

This summer, the OMHM obtained 50 passes for Club members, which were graciously offered by Space for Life, for visits of the Botanical Garden and its greenhouse exhibitions.

Sentier Urbain also offers a visit of its Circuit Jardins. Activities, snacks, door prizes and music are on the agenda. "This activity allows participants to discover islands of greenery in the heart of the city. They are interested in several topics and enthusiastically participate in the workshops," says Lucie Vallée, a well-known advisor to Sentier Urbain.

Club members register with Sentier Urbain to participate in these tours. Tenants who wish to become members must fill out the form below.



#### Membership Form

# Flower & Garden

Together, we make life beautiful!

#### Over \$10,000 in prizes!

A draw will be held at the beginning of the season. Members can register in different categories (balcony or land). As a member, you can benefit from several other advantages, such as advice, training, garden tours and donations of gardening material (limited quantities).

For further information, go to the "Existing Tenants" section under the "Thinking Green" tab at www.omhm.qc.ca

### Sustainable development



Adrienne Lambert from Habitations De Marseille is very active within the Flower and Garden Club.



Urban garden tours allow participants to discover islands of greenery in the heart of the city.

#### A recreational activity encouraged by the OMHM

Last May, the OMHM held draws for gift certificates for nursery purchases and sent them to the winners so they could make the most of the start of the season. We would like to thank the following participating nurseries: Angel Jardins, Frank Fleuriste, Mega Centre Montréal, Les serres Noël Wilson et fils, Pépinière Jasmin and Willy Haeck et fils.

Furthermore, the Flower and Garden Club provides financial support to approximately fifteen community and environmental organizations through its youth component, encouraging dozens of young tenants to discover the pleasures of gardening.

"The individual and collective benefits of the Club demonstrate how this is a unique, unifying project," concludes Brigitte Laliberté, OMHM Sustainable Development Project Manager.

For the names of gift certificate winners and more information, visit our website omhm.gc.ca/en/flower-and-garden-club

### **GARDENING BOOST**

Did you know that great vegetables can be grown even if your garden is not sunny? The smart gardener's motto: think of the right plant in the right place! Here are some suggestions for those with a shaded balcony:

- Favor leaf vegetables (lettuce, spinach, rocket (arugula), swiss chard, watercress, sorrel, cabbage, kale);
- Try root vegetables (radish, beet, turnip, rutabaga, Jerusalem artichoke);
- Avoid fruit vegetables (tomato, pepper, cucumber, squash, ground cherry, eggplant).

Participant's first and la	st name (Only one me	mbership per hous	ehold)	
Address		Apt.	City	Postal Code
[] Telephone	Ē-m	ail		
W	hich of the following b	est describes your	project?	Information
	Balcony 🗆 Land 🛭	<ul> <li>Balcony and la</li> </ul>	and 🗆	514-872-2016
N.B. As a member of	the Flower and Garden Club	your membership will be	renewed every year	A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR

You can fill in a membership form online at www.omhm.qc.ca, under OR "Existing Tenants", "Thinking Green".

Send your membership form to the following address:

OMHM - Club Fleurs et Jardins 415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest, 2º étage, Montréal, Qc H2Z 1H8 By joining the Flower and Garden Club, I authorize the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal to use my photo in various publications.

News on tenant action in Montreal's low-rent housing

June 2018 Vol. 17 • No 2



## Meet your newly elected members

The tenants that now make up the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) were elected in April in the three sectors by tenant association representatives. Together with your two representatives on the Board of Directors, Ghislaine Laramée and Sylvain Labrecque, the CCR members take your needs and expectations into account in their discussions in order to make recommendations and provide opinions to general management and to the Board. The CCR contributes to the OMHM decisions that affect you.

At their first meeting on April 24, the CCR members elected their liaison committee: Richard Gagné, Chair; Sylvain Labrecque, Vice-Chair; and Tina-Lili Gagné, Secretary.

#### A meeting to get to know one another better

The OMHM arranged a meet-and-greet so that members could get to know one another and chat with the Executive Director and several OMHM directors. This initiative was much appreciated, especially since the experience is a first for close to half of the elected members. Executive Director Danielle Cécile took the floor and stressed that the OMHM's relationship with tenants will be defined by three key words: openness, support and collaboration.



Members of the CCR, joined by Robert Pilon from the FLHLMQ (top left) and, below him, Lorena Garrido, Director of the Social and Community Development Department.

Tenants then expressed their commitment. "I wanted to get involved with the CCR because I care about the living conditions of people in low-rent housing. I want to speak on behalf of the silent majority and future generations," said Carole Guilbault, a recruit from Habitations La Seigneurie des rapides. Joanne Aubin and Gaétan Gauvin, both from Habitations Séguin, added: "On the CCR, we speak directly with OMHM management. We are the voice of all the tenants, and we want to work on improving living environments." See page 2 for a complete list of CCR members.



A meet-and-greet brought together the CCR, the Executive Director and OMHM directors.

## Committed to moving forward



I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new members elected to the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) in April. I thank them for their commitment and look forward to working with them in the future.

The elections to select these representatives were supposed to have taken place in December 2017. However, they were postponed until spring 2018 because the OMHM Board of Directors had asked the Social and Community Development Department to analyze the various tenant participation forums for all buildings administered by the OMHM. A working group, made up of tenants, a representative from the Fédération des locataires de HLM du Québec (FLHLMQ) and employees, was created and will be submitting its recommendation to the Board by the end of June.

I am delighted to see that all the wonderful ID<sup>2</sup>EM projects presented in this issue are thriving. The subsidies you received will allow you to come up with your own solutions to the problems you are facing. By fostering mutual support and engagement, these initiatives will improve your living environments in tangible ways. If you have a project in mind for next year, check with your community organizer about the deadline for submitting applications.

The annual meeting of social and community workers from the Regroupement des offices d'habitation du Québec on May 16 and 17 was packed full of attendees discussing and exchanging thoughts and ideas. This is an important event, and one of our community organizers sits on the organizing committee. Many initiatives carried out in Montréal were presented at the meeting, whose theme was *L'accompagnement social pour mieux vivre ensemble*. Our workers came away with new ideas to accompany you in building social togetherness.

Now that summer is upon us, take advantage of the nice weather to garden and beautify your balconies and plots! And, when the heatwaves come, remember to take precautions against heat stroke and to open the air-conditioned common rooms to tenants. Have a wonderful summer!



Lorena Garrido, Director Community and Social Development Department



Liaison Committee members, from left to right: Richard Gagné, Tina-Lili Gagné, and Sylvain Labrecque.

#### COMITÉ CONSULTATIF DES RÉSIDANTS (CCR) BY SECTOR

REPRESENTATIVES FOR SENIORS

REPRESENTATIVES FOR FAMILIES AND PEOPLE LIVING ALONE

#### **EAST SECTOR**

**Serge Arbour** Terrasse Ontario

**Monique Belisle** Habitations Adélard-Langevin

**Francine Dagenais**Les Jardins Châteauneuf

Joanne Aubin Habitations Séguin

**Tina-Lili Gagné** Habitations Saint-André

**Gaétan Gauvin** Habitations Séguin

#### **SOUTHWEST SECTOR**

François Mikhail

Habitations Adrien-

Trudeau

Carole Guilbault

Habitations La Seigneurie

des rapides

**Raymond Saulnier** Habitations des Fleurs **Sean MacKenzie** Îlots Saint-Martin

Richard Gagné

Îlots Saint-Martin **Suzanne Payant** 

Habitations De l'Érablière

#### NORTHWEST SECTOR

René Cordero

Habitations Saint-Roch

François Marquis Habitations D'Auteuil

Jacqueline Moisan

Habitations Émilien-Gagnon 3 vacant positions\*

\* Elections will be held in June during a Sector Committee meeting

## ID<sup>2</sup>EM projects liven up your environments

Fourteen initiatives for sustainable development, mutual support and engagement (Initiative de développement durable, d'entraide et de mobilisation or ID<sup>2</sup>EM) received funding this year to improve your living environments. We present below an overview of three of them, one from each sector, and a list of other funded projects on page 4.

#### Growing a community garden of flowers and vegetables

"I think people need to go outside. Tending to a garden is always good for morale and mental health," says Lorraine Bédard, Chair of the Tenant Committee for Habitations **John-Patterson** in the **Southwest Sector**. But, how do you offer this type of activity in a 102-apartment building with many seniors who use wheelchairs, four-wheel scooters or walkers?

With advice from Sentier Urbain, Ms. Bédard and her volunteers will create a flower and vegetable garden in raised boxes. This will make planting and maintenance easier. Most tenants will be able to participate and add some life to their yard. Each gardening activity—sowing seeds, planting, upkeep and harvesting—will be a chance to connect, share knowledge and break loneliness.

#### Eating at affordable prices, it's possible!

In downtown Montréal, tenants find it difficult to eat inexpensively because affordable food resources are scarce. In the **East Sector**, the OMHM proposed a project, with the support of the tenant committees for Habitations **Sainte-Catherine-d'Alexandrie**, **Saint-André**, **Terrasse Ontario and small family buildings**. The Centre communautaire et de loisirs Sainte-Catherine-d'Alexandrie will lead this initiative.



Spring was in the air when Lorraine Bédard and Suzanne Brisebois took to their shovels to prepare the site.

The project essentially consists of nutrition and affordable cooking workshops based on tenants' recipes (enhanced by a nutritionist) and tips for avoiding waste. This will be complemented by neighbourhood walks so that tenants can learn more about their food resources. The project will affect 432 people living in 3 high-rise buildings for seniors and about 15 small buildings for families. It will give them an opportunity to get to know one another better and socialize through food.



#### Mending the social fabric by sewing together

The committee for Habitations **André-Grasset**, in the **Northwest Sector**, is setting up a sewing workshop with the participation of Entre-maisons Ahuntsic. Once a week, a seamstress will teach tenants to repair or make clothing and other fabric items. There will also be time for free sewing. Danielle Duperron, a committee member and project leader, believes that "this will promote intercultural connections, improving the atmosphere and living conditions."

Habitations André-Grasset has 99 apartments for families, of which 60% are single parents. Mothers rarely go out and struggle to develop social connections. The Tenant Committee reaches out to some of them, who had the idea of the sewing workshop. A multicultural community kitchen event will also be held every two weeks to solidify the relationships created through the sewing workshop.

Once a week, a seamstress will teach tenants to repair or make clothing and other fabric items.

#### New tenant committees

Since February, 14 elections took place in Montréal's low-rent housing buildings, including 4 to create new tenant associations. Congratulations to all those newly elected members who are improving quality of life where you live!

#### SOUTHWEST SECTOR NEW ASSOCIATIONS Montmorency S Richmond F Duclos, Manon Flores Villegas, Delmy Guadalupe Coveyduck, Donald McTavish, Donna Godi, Chantal Skerrett, Sandra Morisette, Jean-Daniel Fernande-Rochon de Gongre S Wade, Yvette Résidence H. F.-Malo S Calzada, Angela Corbin, Bertha Gingras, Michel McLean, Michael Labine, Patricia-Joyce Monkland S Lauzon. Claudette Gheorghe, Lidia Haines, Diane Watts, Marion Aznaourian, Dmitri Plamondon 5 Clyke, Grace Baranova, Valentina Ta, Binh Subramaniam, Krishnathasan Simeonova, Cvetana Modlinsky, Carolyn Tyson, Dora Andren, Helen Rodricks, Clare Jessica S OMHM low-rent housing for seniors

This information is provided as a guideline and is subject to change as tenant associations evolve.

 $\overline{m{F}}$  OMHM low-rent housing for families and people living alone

NORTHWEST SECTOR De Bellechasse S NEW ASSOCIATION Lagacé, Malvina Gabriel-Sagard 5 Lafrance, Carmen Lebœuf, Guylaine Dupuis, Manon Caitak, Raquel Rodriguez, Maria Hortensia Henri-Gratton S F Martinez, Lourdes Vilsaint, Marie Violette Abdelmalek, Ennaji Saint-Marc S Frangipane, Monique Dubé, René Busque, Réjean Corneau, Nicole Heycak, Mary Ann Pelletier F Paul, Monique McGraw, Jeannie Sperano, Francine Léveillé, Karine Gallant, Michel Rousseau, Yelda Couture, Mireille Fortin, Guylaine **EAST SECTOR** Terrasse Ontario A et C S Hôtel-De-Ville 5 Hébert, Pierrette Browne, Glenmore Renaud, Pierrette Blackburn, Denise Pineau, Rachel Houle, Christian Arbour, Serge Lefebvre, Colette

	0	other 2018 ID <sup>2</sup> EM Projects
Sector	Building	Project name
Northwest	André-Corneau De La Visitation Meunier-Tolhurst Rosemont	Dynamic seniors garden together Cook'Art workshops Collective community kitchens Taking root for a sustainable future!
Southwest	Côte-des-Neiges De Carillon De l'Érablière Duff-Court HLM de la Petite-Bourgogne	A garden for all Carillon: gathering a community around its garden and market Health through gardening Duff-Court in a pot Café-Market of Little Burgundy: an integrated food channel
East	La Pépinière	Vert l'harmonie—Let's cultivate our future
Southwest and Northwest	Alexandra, Notre-Dame-de- Grâce, Saint-Raymond, Saint-Sulpice	Art Hives in low-rent housing, year 2



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Graphic Design: Communication Art & Graf

Please send your comments and suggestions to suzanne.dupaul@omhm.qc.ca.

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## Take care of your pet for everyone's well-being!

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) allows domestic animals in its apartments. This is based on the regulations of the Ville de Montréal regarding the number of animals allowed in an apartment and the rules of conduct and civility.

An animal is a sensitive being with needs that must be met. This means taking care of them while respecting the rules that ensure the safety of citizens and the cleanliness of public spaces, such as:

- Keep your dog on a leash;
- Do not allow your cat or dog to roam freely;
- Do not tie your animal outside unattended;
- Pick up and dispose of feces in a garbage can;
- Ensure that your pet does not disturb other residents.

#### Resources to help you

Unfortunately, too many animals are abandoned in the apartments when the owners move. Yet there are resources to welcome them and offer them a second chance by offering them up for adoption. The City's 3-1-1 service will provide references such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and Le Berger Blanc. Visit these shelters' websites: spca.com and bergerblanc.com.

#### Living in Montréal with your pet

The City demands an annual pet licence for dogs and, in most boroughs, for cats, too. When you register your cat or dog, the borough provides you with a tag that your pet must wear at all times or you may be subject to a fine. For more information, call 3-1-1.

The website ville.montreal.qc.ca/animals/ provides citizens with a wealth of information. The City also produces a very good, small and practical guide: Living in Montréal with your pet. You can find a copy in a Accès Montréal office or online at tinvurl.com/omhmpets.

#### Measures to promote a harmonious cohabitation

The OMHM has implemented measures to harmonize the relationship between tenants, employees and animals. These measures include a door hanger, used by OMHM employees to warn a tenant whose dog inconveniences other tenants.

There is also the form I love my Pet. I don't forget about it! Tenants can use this form to list the contact information of a person who can take care of their pet in the event of an unexpected situation (hospitalization, urgent departure) and place it behind their apartment door. Please be sure to update the information as needed.

	FORGET ABOUT
6	
You have a pet animal. You of it if something happens to	love and care for it. However, have you thought about who will take co
Please display this notice pro measures to take with your p	minently behind your apartment door, so that the OMHM will know whoet in case of an emergency.
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You can get the form I love my Pet. I don't forget about it! from your rental agent.

## The OMHM's Code of Ethics Say thank you... the right way!

By Annette Franz, OMHM Communications Officer

Did you know that, as part of their work, all Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)'s employees must comply with the OMHM Code of Ethics?

This code sets out the rules of conduct that employees must follow as part of their work and in their dealings with you. It applies to all employees, but also to OMHM interns, volunteers and suppliers.

Many of you would like to thank employees on special occasions, such as during the holiday season, or in recognition of a service rendered. Whether it's a bottle of wine, a box of fudge, money or a gift certificate, our employees must refuse this gesture even if it comes from the heart. The OMHM Code of Ethics prohibits anyone from accepting gifts and tips.

#### A code based on the OMHM values

The code of ethics is based on the OMHM's values of integrity, loyalty, the pursuit of excellence, respect, client satisfaction and transparency. We apply them daily in everything we do. Examples include:

- Employees must formally address you and call you by name using the term "Mr." or "Ms./Mrs.", unless you ask them to do otherwise.
- Employees must protect your personal information. They are not allowed to share your details outside the OMHM. This information is only circulated within the OMHM when it is necessary to carry out the work.

- Employees must strive for excellence. If they cannot provide a service in a timely manner, they must notify you and inform you of the follow-up. If necessary, they should try to refer you to someone who can help.
- Employees can only carry out their duties and cannot be paid by tenants.

#### **Avoid favouritism**

It is essential for the OMHM that employees carry out their work honestly and impartially: there is no place for favouritism. You can therefore expect to be treated with the same respect, diligence and within the same timeframes as your neighbor, regardless of whether you have known the employee for a long time or have just arrived in the building. And employees should not consider your language, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

To avoid any perception of favoritism, gifts and gratuities are prohibited. So, what can you do to thank an employee? A smile, a "thank you" or a "merci" said in person or written in a greeting card is the best gift and reward you can give us!



## A great dancer born at **Habitations Place Normandie**

By Julie Marie Dorval, special contribution

Lakesshia Pierre-Colon's passion for dancing started when she was very young. Now 26 years old, she was a contestant in the TV show Danser pour gagner!

A daughter of Haitian immigrants, Lakesshia was born in Montréal at Habitations Place Normandie. Her mother didn't have time to go to the hospital to give birth: paramedics came to pick her up in her apartment! The low-rent housing therefore holds a large place in the heart of the family. Moreover, her grandmother still lives there.

#### A childhood filled with the rhythm of dance

As a child, Lakesshia enjoyed listening to music and dancing for fun. Her uncle Jean-Marc shot home-made dance videos with her. This prompted her to take dance classes at the Place Normandie community space.

Around the age of 17, she moved to Laval and then attended a private college and a public college. Dancing was always part of her life. When her father died two years later, she decided to step it up. "My father's death was a shock for me. I took my life seriously and committed to making my dreams come true. I wanted to dance at any cost, compete and make a career out of it," said Lakesshia.

After attending CEGEP, in the field of humanities, she enrolled in university as an interpreter in contemporary dance. Competitions and travel followed. With her dance company, 24K (for 24 karats), she performed and competed in Ontario, Yukon, New York, Amsterdam, Paris and Japan. Nothing stopped her! This company was led by Cindy «Goldylocks" McAuliffe, co-founder of the Urban Element Zone Studio and one of the urban dance mentors in Montréal.

#### The show *Danser pour gagner*

**International competitions** 

Members then left the company, but another company was created: Ör Pür. The dancers passed an audition on the popular TV show Danser pour gagner and were selected from one hundred teams!

These six boys and Lakesshia, the group's only girl, trained from Monday to Friday at the TV station and practiced on weekends with Cindy. She was their choreographer on the show and their regular coach.



Although Ör Pür was eliminated on the week of March 12, the group was part of the top 6 of the show and also delivered an excellent performance during the big finale on March 28.

Lakesshia is very happy and hopes to continue dancing for a long time. If something were to prevent her, she would open her own dance school and start an association to help people achieve their dreams. "It's important to believe in yourself. Trust your instincts and realize your dreams. It is possible and essential."

Lakesshia during rehearsal with Ör Pür members on the TV network V.

# The Foundation goes to the movies for the benefit of young people living in low-rent housing!

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

This year, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)'s Foundation innovated by presenting its spring fundraising cocktail at the Grévin Museum.

Presented for a second year in a row by the Geyser Group, the event held on May 29 was brilliantly hosted by Ms. Danielle Ouimet. Close to 350 guests took the opportunity to visit the museum of wax statues and "mingle" with political, sports and movie stars!

This annual Foundation event was at its 8<sup>th</sup> edition and helped raise funds to encourage the roughly 10,000 young people living in low-rent housing to continue their studies and actively engage in Montreal and Quebec society. For the 2017-2018 school year, through the Éducaide's Persévéra program, the Foundation

provided 48 scholarships to support young people in their individual academic journey. Furthermore, 7 community organizations working with youth in low-rent housing have received financial support to increase access to homework programs as well as cultural, educational and sports activities.

The Foundation organizes fundraising events throughout the year, in addition to two major benefit events. The next big event will be held on October 29, 2018. Popular singer-songwriter Vincent Vallières will perform. Remember, Ariane Moffatt, Florence K, and Les soeurs Boulay signed up for the cause in the past. To learn more about the Foundation's mission and achievements, visit www.fondationomhm.ca.

# The OMHM Foundation is active on social media

By Martin Després, OMHM Communications Officer



The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)'s Foundation is now on social media. This presence will highlight its achievements and promote its activities.

Social media attract more and more people of all ages. It was therefore important that the Foundation get up to date to publicize its activities aimed at promoting the success of young people in low-rent housing, promoting its charitable activities and the visibility of those who are actively involved in the cause.

Over the following days and weeks, new content will be added to the site to, among other things, introduce young people who benefit from the actions and mission of the OMHM Foundation. Stay tuned for stories, exciting projects and announcements of upcoming events.

Encourage us: like and follow our pages! Invite your friends to do the same! Like and pass on our content! Share the news!







## The MOUV: a place for exchange and dialogue among young people in low-rent housing Our strength is in our number!

By the youth members of MOUV

Did you know that members of MOUV organized a free outing at the iSaute Entertainment Centre in February 2018 that involved over 50 young people living in low-rent housing?

This is an initiative demonstrating the drive of MOUV (youth movement in low-rent housing). Are you a young person from low-rent housing? Through the MOUV, which exists since 2014, you have the opportunity to express yourself, share your ideas and be heard.

The movement is made up of representatives from different neighborhoods striving for a better quality of life. It consults with young people to collectively define projects that will promote young people in low-rent housing. Every year, MOUV receives funding from the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) to carry out its various projects. It also has the opportunity to meet twice a year with the OMHM's general management to discuss its concerns.



The outing to iSaute was very popular.

All young people aged 12 to 25 living in low-rent housing can get involved by proposing projects that engage other youth in their community. If you wish to get involved in this movement, send an email to: lemouvomhm@gmail.com. MOUV is also on Facebook: mouv omhm or jeunesse omhm.

Keep your eyes open because MOUV has scheduled other activities in the coming months to bring young people from lowrent housing together.

## Discovering a workplace

By Valérie Rhême, OMHM Communications Officer

Last March, 25 young people living in low-rent housing were welcomed by OMHM employees during a one-day internship. This allowed them to discover different aspects of a profession (secretary, receptionist, maintenance and repair worker, etc.). The youth and staff really enjoyed the day.



Intern Aashiha Babu (right) was welcomed by Vanessa (left on photo), Lise and Stéphanie from the Complaints Office. The Secondary V student exclaimed: "I love it! It's interesting!" Lise pointed out: "It's great! She is highly motivated. In return, we learned a lot about her involvement in the community, in MOUV amongst others, because Aashiha is one of its dynamic members."



The intern at the Call Centre, Sipula Ravi Ambrosio, was surprised by the variety of calls: "I thought people were mostly calling for a leaking pipe, but there are also calls concerning heating, parking, elevators, etc."



The photo of Ravi was taken by Yousra Bahi, the intern at the Communications Department. "I entered the professional world! I enjoyed the tour we did to gather feedback from other interns. I took pictures and thought they might be published in the next Rose des vents!" It has now been done, Yousra!

## Support services for independent living

By Mélanie Samson, OMHM Social Worker

One of the fears associated with aging is the gradual loss of autonomy at home. Fortunately, there are various support services for seniors in the community.

Day-to-day activities such as eating, hygiene and maintaining a household can become difficult with age. These setbacks, which are often due to getting older, result in the fear of having to leave one's home.

This fear can impact a senior's quality of life and cause them to hide their difficulties to function at home, putting them at risk in their apartment. For example, a person who needs assistance with hygiene care may fall in the bath when showering alone.

assessment of your needs will be conducted as a result. You will then have an opportunity to discuss what works best for you with your home support team.

The everyday tasks allow you to maintain your physical and mental health. You need to recognize the things you can do by yourself. The service workers are committed to respecting and preserving your ability to care for yourself.

Requesting support quickly when needed allows you to maintain your independence longer.

#### A network to help you

At some point, an aging individual may experience a mild or severe loss of autonomy. It is possible to stay at home with the help of family members and community organizations. Furthermore, the health and social services network affirms its desire to help seniors maintain their independence for as long as possible.

The first step in accessing public resources is to contact your CLSC, either by phone or in person, and explain that you would like to receive home-based support for various tasks. An

Staying physically and mentally active, eating well and maintaining friendly relationships help improve our ability to live at home.



The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal (514-527-1375 or the 2-1-1 phone line) provides information on Montreal's social and community resources, such as low-cost meal delivery services and household assistance organizations funded by the Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec (depending on income and family status).

The info line Info-Social 8-1-1 is a free phone service. You can reach a psychosocial intervention worker if you are going through a situation that makes you suffer from anxiety.

## Impacts of the Cannabis Act: Tenants will be consulted

By Mathieu Vachon, OMHM Director of Communications

The federal government's bill to legalize cannabis in 2018 has been the subject of much talk in Quebec for several months. You have certainly read or heard all sorts of opinions on the subject and you're probably wondering about the consequences of this law to your living environment.

This topic is of as much concern to the management and Board of Directors of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) as it is to you. The potential impacts of this new law on safety and harmonious cohabitation are at the centre of our deliberations. It is up to the owner of the property, the OMHM, to decide whether they want to ban the use of cannabis in apartments and outdoor common areas.

For this reason, the OMHM Board of Directors wants to take the time to properly assess the impacts resulting from such a

ban. It first wants to consult the tenants and their representatives before taking any decision. Furthermore, the topic of cannabis has lead the OMHM to examine the issue of smoking tobacco, as issues related to smoking both substances are similar.

The consultations began last May and will continue until the fall. The resulting recommendations will be presented to the Board in December 2018. They will guide the Directors' decision.

This will be a new situation for everyone. It is therefore important to think carefully about the consequences of our decisions.

We will keep you informed as we move forward.

## Rubbing Shoulders \_

#### Stories from Habitations Gabriel-Sagard

The launch of the booklet Les petites histoires... des habitations Gabriel-Sagard was held on February 16, 2018 and was attended by many guests. The booklet relates touching moments in the lives of a number of residents of this low-rent housing project, located in the borough of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension, and provides information on Gabriel Sagard and the Saint-Michel borough. This is a great initiative by the Association des personnes aînées Gabriel-Sagard (Association of Seniors Gabriel-Sagard). Congratulations to Guylaine Leboeuf and Rachel Caitak, tenant committee members, for this inspiring booklet!



#### **Habitations La** Pépinière in the spotlight for the project Vert l'harmonie

The Projet Harmonie's Vert l'harmonie, established in the Habitations La Pépinière, won the award for the category "Nonprofit organizations, associations and collectives" at the Gala de reconnaissance en envi-



ronnement et développement durable de Montréal (Recognition of Environment and Sustainable Development in Montréal). The threeseason urban greenhouse in the heart of the low-rent housing project is very popular among residents of all ages and has inspired the creation of collective kitchens. Sharing common penchants, such as gardening and cooking, allows tenants to develop good neighbourly relations.

# Washers and Dryers: An important change

By Marie-Eve Leblanc, OMHM Communications Officer

The OMHM mandates a company to supply and maintain washers and dryers in its laundry rooms. Every 5 to 8 years, it issues a call for tenders to select a supplier.

The company must offer the best price for the services and comply with OMHM requirements; among others, it must agree to:

- · install new washers and dryers;
- maintain for the next 5 years a price of \$0.75 for one cycle of washing and drying.

The Debsel company was selected to replace Coinamatic. It is the second time round for Debsel, as it provided the service from 2004 to 2012.

#### A large operation

The replacement of the machines has been planned to limit the duration of service interruptions. From February to June 2018:

- 395 addresses will be visited;
- 1,753 washers and dryers will be installed in 598 laundry rooms.



#### **Changes and utilization tips**

The new machines don't have timers. Therefore, please remember:

- one washing cycle lasts 30 to 36 minutes, depending on the program selected;
- one drying cycle lasts 60 minutes.

It is important not to overload machines. This will limit breakage and obtain:

- · better washing results;
- · more efficient rinsing and drying.

To report a problem or ask questions on how to operate the machines: **Debsel 514-481-0215.** 

A Debsel assistant will answer your call from Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. After these hours, leave a voicemail with your name, address and phone number and a description of the problem. If required, a technician will be on site within 48 hours.

## Rubbing Shoulders \_

#### A new committee at Habitations Beaudet

November 23, 2017, marks a big day for Habitations Beaudet. Without a tenant committee for almost 10 years, the building now has a new committee thanks to the work of engaged and motivated tenants and the help of a community organizer and a community outreach worker. Long live this committee!



#### A new laundry room at Habitations Roland Farineau



At the request of the tenants of Habitations Roland Farineau, located in the Lachine borough, the OMHM moved the basement laundry room to the main floor to render it accessible to everyone. Since then, it has become a popular place to talk and socialize!

### **Gateway to Tenant Services in Three Steps**

1

#### WHERE TO DIRECT YOUR REQUEST

#### **CALL AND SECURITY CENTER**

514-872-0MHM (6646)

For any requests related to:

- maintenance
- repairs
- sanitation
- security (noise, intruders on OMHM premises or in apartments, intimidation, any other securityrelated issues)

A receptionist will pick up and will take down your request so that it can be handled by the right person.

#### **RENTAL AGENT**

The rental agent's telephone number is on your lease, in your *Tenant's Guide* or in any letter sent to you.

For any information on:

- · lease renewals or cancellations
- · rent payments
- parking
- housing transfers
- · problems with neighbours

You can call your rental agent or write to him or her at your sector office (the address is in *La Rose des vents* and in your *Tenant's Guide*).

2

## THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVED WAS NOT TO YOUR FULL SATISFACTION?

Call the Call and Security Center (514-872-6646) to have a message forwarded to the director of the department concerned; the director will call you back as soon as possible. The receptionist will know which director to contact based on the type of your request. Please note that the director has

20 business days to process your request and respond.



## HAVE YOU RECEIVED NO RESPONSE OR ARE STILL DISSATISFIED WITH HOW YOUR REQUEST WAS HANDLED?

It is at this time, once steps 1 and 2 have been completed, that you can file a complaint with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal **Complaints Office**, which will investigate within 20 business days of the case being opened.

You can reach the Complaints Office in writing at:

Bureau des plaintes Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal 415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest, 2<sup>e</sup> étage Montréal (Québec) H2Z 1H8

- By phone: 514-868-5999, Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- By email: bureau-plaintes@omhm.gc.ca
- In person; you need to make an appointment by calling 514-868-5999, Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.



Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

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Translation: Ubiqua

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# CALL AND SECURITY CENTER

514-872-OMHM (6646)



#### SOUTHWEST

SECTOR

2247, rue Delisle
3º étage
Montréal, QC
H3J 1K4
Open weekdays,
8:30 a.m. to noon and
1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### NORTHWEST

SECTOR

255, boul. Crémazie Est bureau 150 Montréal, QC H2M 1L5 Open weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## **EAST**

SECTOR

3330, boul. de l'Assomption Montréal, QC H1N 3S4 Open weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.



#### EMERGENCY CALLS OUTSIDE REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS

In case of emergency only, our employees work until 11 p.m. on week nights, as well as during the day on Saturdays and Sundays. Don't be surprised if a maintenance and repair worker or other OMHM specialist (plumber, electrician) arrives at your door outside regular business hours. You can let him in without fear for your safety, once he has identified himself.



## QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR LEASE OR GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

Contact YOUR RENTAL AGENT for any information related to the renewal or cancellation of your lease, the arrival or departure of an occupant, your lease payment, parking, a housing transfer or a neighbourhood issue. The telephone number of your rental agent can be found in your lease.