

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE ISSUES



Your landlord is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of your unit. Your landlord must fix or replace amenities that are in bad condition or that do not work properly. These include things that came with your unit, such as big appliances, elevators, hallways and parking lots.

YOUR BELONGINGS

Your landlord is not responsible for your personal property (such as furniture, clothing, or electronics) unless it is their fault that your belongings were damaged. For example, there is water damage to your couch because your landlord did not fix a plumbing problem.

Though it is not mandatory in Ontario, consider getting tenant insurance. Tenant insurance (also called renter's insurance,) is a type of property insurance that protects your personal property within your rental unit against theft, fire, loss and more. Most basic policies also provide coverage for personal liability and additional living expenses.

CLEANING & OUTDOOR MAINTENANCE

It is your landlord's responsibility to clean and maintain the common areas. These are areas, both inside and outside the building, that are not part of tenants' apartments. For example, your landlord must:

- make sure that the hall, elevators, stairways, and lobbies are clean
- keep garbage disposal rooms and laundry rooms are clean
- pick up garbage outside the building
- cut the lawn
- shovel snow and keep ice off driveways and sidewalks

It is your responsibility to keep your own unit clean.

If you rent a whole house, the law is not clear about who is responsible for outdoor work like lawn mowing and snow shovelling.

NEXT STEPS

STEP 1: TELL YOUR LANDLORD ABOUT THE PROBLEM

- If something in your unit or your building needs repair, immediately tell your landlord what is wrong and ask to have the problem fixed.
- Take photos of the problem and put the date on them.
- Take notes of when you talked to your landlord and what you both said.
- If your landlord does not fix the problem within a reasonable time, you can write to them (through an e-mail or a letter) to ask them again. If you write to them, keep a copy for yourself. Continue to pay your rent while your landlord works on repairing the problems.

STEP 2. TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Speak to the other tenants in your building and see if they have had similar problems. If you are experiencing problems in common areas, (for example, the elevators, the stairway, lobby areas) you can work together.

STEP 3. CALL AN INSPECTOR

If your landlord does not fix the problem, you can call:

- Your local by-law department or property standards department
- Your town or city hall
- Your Municipal office
- Your Local councillor

If there are no housing standards by-laws where you live, your municipality has to enforce the provincial maintenance standards.

Depending on what the problem is, you can contact your local Fire Marshal's office or Public Health or the province's Electrical Safety authority at 1-877-372-7233.

STEP 4: APPLY TO THE LANDLORD AND TENANT BOARD

You can apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board using a form T6 if your landlord is refusing to do repairs or maintain your unit/building according to health, safety, housing or maintenance standards. Visit stepstojustice.ca for a free, guide to applying for this.

After you apply to the LTB, they will schedule a hearing where you and your landlord can explain the problem to a Board member. Before this hearing, you and your landlord can mediate the problem in front of a dispute resolution officer.

At the hearing, it is up to you to convince the Board member about the problem. It is important that you bring evidence to your hearing, e.g. witnesses, photos, audio or video recordings, inspectors' reports, work orders, letters, notes, and anything that can help you prove your case.

Get **free** legal advice to see if your unit is covered under the RTA and how to enforce your right by contacting:



Waterloo Region
Community Legal Services

450 Frederick St. #101, Kitchener ON N2H 2P5

Phone: 519-743-0254 or Online Contact Form found at: www.wrcls.ca

