

Fall is Here!

From The Staff

Place
Refrigerator
Magnet
HERE

at Shires Housing

IMPORTANT DATES:

Flu Clinic - October 1, 2015 - See Enclosed Flyer

Household Hazardous Waste Collection - October 3, 2015 - See Story on Page 2

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Shires Housing Office: 802-442-8139

Regular Maintenance Requests: 802-442-8139 ext. 4

EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE ONLY - 1-844-256-4706

(stoves, refrigerators, and cable hookups are not considered emergencies)

★ **IMPORTANT: General and Emergency Maintenance Procedures are included with this Newsletter.**



We Want Your Thoughts & Feedback!

Stop by, call, write, or e-mail us!

Our Shires Housing office is located at 302A South Street.
Mail: Shires Housing, P.O. Box 1247 • Bennington, VT 05201
Phone: 802-442-8139 • Fax 802-442-5125
www.shireshousing.org • info@benningtonhousing.org



Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 4
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Shires Housing, North Branch Street Extension

The Truth About "Affordable" Housing

For many people, the phrase "affordable" housing has negative connotations. People imagine low quality slum housing full of bad people doing bad things, that they are subsidized housing, that only welfare cheats live there... this list goes on.

Of course you already know that this is completely false. In fact, Shires apartments are well known for their high quality. Got a leak? Need maintenance? NO PROBLEM! Simply call the office and schedule an appointment. If it's an emergency, call the Maintenance Emergency Answering System for immediate response (see included flyer). We take pride in having only the best apartments. In fact, even if you don't notice any problems, we will do an annual inspection to verify that everything is in tip-top shape to ensure maximum enjoyment of your housing.

Almost all the people who live in Shires housing are good hardworking people. There are NO subsidies on any housing (although those with section-8 vouchers must be allowed to use them as per state law, which applies to any landlord and not just Shires Housing).

Shires Housing also conducts extensive background checks on every applicant and every individual living in a Shires apart-

"Affordable" housing is simply housing that fits the budgets of regular working folks.

The difference between Shires Housing and other low-cost housing is the amazing quality of the apartments.

ment. We don't just talk the talk — we walk the walk: we do this for EVERY person, despite the cost and time involved for such checks. In many ways, we are like an extended family, and keeping everyone safe and healthy is of extreme importance to us (see story on SASH inside).

Now that we are clear on what "affordable" housing ISN'T... what exactly is it? Simply put, it is housing that fits the budgets of regular working folks... or in other words, a monthly rent amount that does not exceed 30-34% of the household's total annual income. This is extremely important! If you are paying more than that per month for rent, you simply don't have enough left over

for all your other expenses. Not only is that unsustainable, it's unfair in a fundamental way; if you work hard, you deserve a great place to live. Shires Housing gets that and makes it happen for you.

Not only is it good for you, it is good for the economy. One of the biggest complaints from major employers in our town (according to a BCRC study done last year) is the lack of good quality workforce housing. Shires Housing is a great example of one place where it is happening, and we are committed to making more housing available to fill this need and ensure economic growth and vitality for our community as we move forward.

One final note... Shires Housing pays the same municipal taxes as any landlord in our town. The only tax benefit we receive is a tiny credit on our state tax that is available to any landlord who is willing to offer housing that meets state standards at affordable rates. In our case, that "credit" ends up being less than \$2 per month per apartment when you add it all up.

So the next time you hear someone saying something bad about "affordable" housing... make sure they have their facts straight!

★ **IMPORTANT: NEW General and Emergency Maintenance Procedures are included with this Newsletter.**

Recycling is NOT “in the bag!”

First of all, YOU ROCK! We've been delighted by the response we've had to our new recycling program. Hey, it's the only planet we have, so it makes a lot of sense to take care of it as best we can.

But here is something you probably did not realize... Bags need to be emptied in to the receptacle and not left bagged. Oddly, this is the thing that is apparently really annoying our recycling provider! So do them a favor and let them rest easy by not leaving the recyclable in bags. Who knew?

Do NOT leave your recycling in bags... dump it straight into the receptacle!

Best of all, everything we put into recycling does NOT end up in the dumpster! But speaking of dumpsters... who does not love rescuing items from the dumpster? Isn't that a form of ultimate recycling? You certainly can make that argument! Unfortunately, there are a couple of good reasons why you should NOT do any dumpster diving for any treasure while it is still on Shires Housing property. For one thing, garbage is still private property until it is picked up by the garbage

man. For another, there is the chance of injury while doing the diving. Not to mention that it can be rather smelly!

So respect the privacy of your neighbors (as you want them to respect yours) and please DO NOT indulge in the time honored hobby of dumpster diving. Instead, you might consider visiting the transfer stations where many items considered salvageable are often put off to the side for intrepid folks, or even better, at the local Goodwill Store where you can get amazing deals and support a good cause at the same time. Good luck treasure hunting!

We will be utilizing a new, live person answering service, for **EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE PURPOSES ONLY.** The number will be, **1-844-256-4706**, as of October 1, 2015.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection



For Residents & Small Businesses!
Saturday October 3, 2015 - 8:00am to 1:00pm
Bennington Transfer Station
904 Houghton Lane
Bennington, VT 05201

Bring any substance with labels that say CAUTION, TOXIC, CORROSIVE, POISON, FLAMMABLE, DANGER, WARNING or CAUTION. For more information please visit www.casella.com/dropoff/vt/bennington

**See Something?
Say Something!**



Refer a Friend to Shires Housing and earn \$100.00 OFF Your Next Month's Rent!*

Find the Magic Pumpkin and win a \$25.00 gift certificate to Ramunto's Pizza!

Hidden somewhere in this newsletter is a pumpkin. Can you find it? If you can, send in the completed form below for a chance to win, a \$25.00 Gift Card to Ramunto's Pizza.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Where did you find the pumpkin? _____

Return to Shires Housing, P.O. Box 1247, Bennington, VT 05201 by 10/30/15

What is SASH?

Answer: Support And Services at Home



The SASH approach is designed to provide personalized coordinated care to help adult participants stay safely at home. The SASH (Support And Services at Home) model is part of the Blueprint for Health, Vermont's statewide health care reform initiative.

SASH helps Vermont's seniors and individuals with special needs access the care and support they need to stay healthy while living comfortably and safely at home. SASH is available in many communities throughout Vermont and serves primarily persons 65 and older and persons with disabilities.

Participation is voluntary and free of charge. SASH communities include a care coordinator and wellness nurse who work in partnership with a team of community

providers to assist SASH participants.

Foodbank and SASH:
A new collaboration between the Vermont Foodbank and SASH is bringing fresh, healthy food to Vermonters in need.

Through programs and a network of 225 food shelves and meals sites, the Vermont Foodbank helps feed as many as 153,000 Vermonters each year. For the past year, Support And Services at Home (SASHSM) and the Vermont Foodbank have been working together to bring food to seniors and adults with disabilities at their homes.

If you know of a person you feel would benefit from SASH (Support And Services at Home), contact our office and we will provide you with a referral form.

Your Top Quality Housing

Because you deserve a great place to live!

As you know, Shires Housing is committed to providing top quality housing. So you can have maximum enjoyment of your housing, we are ready to fix any problems or issues that come up.

Report any maintenance problems and we will fix it!

All regular maintenance that is considered “wear and tear” is done for free, so don't hesitate to call us. Other needed repairs (hey, accidents happen!) are done at below market rates by our dedicated maintenance staff. If you have a general maintenance request, please call Shires Housing at **(802) 442-8139 ext. 4** and follow the directions. This will lead you to the designated maintenance voicemail, where your work request will be generated and addressed as promptly as possible.

Report Water!

If you ever notice water leaks in your apartment, or in any common areas, please contact us immediately! Water leaks can cause a lot of damage and wasting water is a major environmental problem. One suggestion is to make sure you have the shower curtain inside the shower stalls or bathtub to avoid nasty water damage. Those of with you tub cutouts should pay particular attention to keeping the

shower curtain inside, to prevent a slippery exit! Help us keep your rent as low as possible by keeping an eye out for water problems.

When is Maintenance An Emergency?

Good question. Fire, no heat, hot water is cold, fire alarm, sewer backup, sink or tub fully clogged, water leak that a bucket cannot contain, toilet is plugged after using a plunger, or being locked out of your apartment are all emergencies. If you have any of these issues, be sure to follow the enclosed **new emergency maintenance answering service procedure.**

One thing that is NOT an emergency is Comcast needing to get in the basement. Make sure to contact the office during regular business hours to schedule a Comcast installation that requires basement access.

Don't Worry About Inspections

Our goal is to make sure your housing is in tip-top shape, not to judge your decorating choices. Any problems or issues we find, we will fix so you can have maximum enjoyment of your housing!

The Bulletin Board

FOUND RING – There was a women's ring found in the Shires Housing main parking lot. Please call the office if you've lost one!

Rental Payments – When you pay by money order, please write clearly so we can be sure to credit the right person! I'm sure your neighbor will appreciate you paying their rent... but maybe you better not!

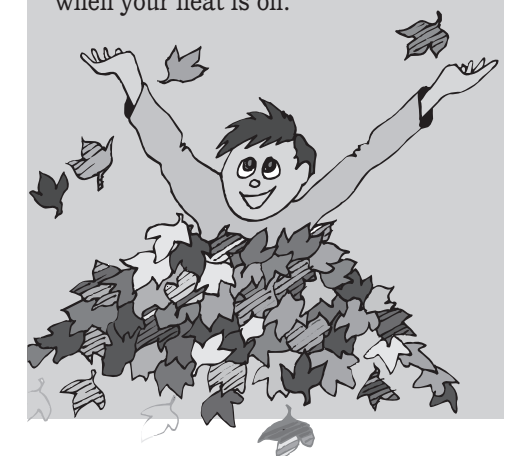
Protect Kitty! – Life is busy, and cats can be in great danger when left loose outside. Make sure to keep your indoor kitty inside!

Don't Leave Food Out – Sure, kitty might like a snack outside, but DON'T DO IT! You may get a lot more than you bargained for, perhaps even a snazzily dressed visitor in black with a fancy white stripe down the back.

Put Away Outside Toys and Furniture – All outside toys, furniture etc. need to be stored by November 1st. This is very important to make sure that your property is not destroyed by the weather or hidden by snow and crushed by the snowplow!

Remove Air Conditioners – Air conditioners must be removed by November 1st.

Close Windows – All windows must remain closed after November 1st when your heat is on.



*Available after your referral results in a signed lease with Shires Housing.