

## 2009 SAFER INCREASE REPLY

Sauzanne

According to the Housing Minister's email yesterday:

"Finally, concerning the recommendation that the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters program be adjusted for manufactured home park residents, by increasing heating allowance and making adjustments for residents who pay separately for government levies that are included in other park's rent. I am unclear on the circumstances under which residents pay separately for government levies. Please contact Suzanne Bell, Executive Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch, in order to clarify this issue and discuss any assistance that the Residential Tenancy Branch may be able to provide. Ms. Bell can be reached at: 250 356-5374."

Attached are two files that address this issue. The first shows that government levies for water and sewer are charged separately to many home owners. This applies to Reserve Lands and non-Reserve Lands. For instance, even on this Tsawout Reserve, those of us in Country Park Village pay both water and sewer while the remaining parks pay only the sewer amount. Therefore the amount of rent adjustment in our case would be \$44.16 while the remaining parks adjustment would be \$20.83. These amounts also differ between Reserves just as off Reserve amounts vary between local governments. As the amounts vary between various local governments, a copy of the actual invoice would be needed to substantiate the amount for SAFER adjustments

The second attachment shows that some landlords are splitting other expenses into a 'utility' fee and rent. The reason for this split is spelled out in the letter as a method to get these amounts outside the MHP Tenancy Act rent increase provisions or it could also be a way to reduce the amount payable when the park is redeveloped. When we found out about this, we suggested that the total amount on one cheque be given to the landlord but there are many residents who fear landlord retaliation and would pay with two cheques as requested. There needs to be a mechanism in SAFER to add these amounts together so that they are all considered as rent the same as parks where these amounts are still included in the rent total. Again, in order to be fair, proof of this split rent would need to be provided for SAFER adjustments.

The matter of justifying an increase to the heating allowance is simple. We are all aware of the amount charged and changes to the billing system by Hydro whereby elderly residents with electric heat will be paying more and that the price of heating oil has gone up is not not news anymore. We are all aware that the elderly have an increased need to turn the thermostat up in order to be comfortable even though they are bundled up in heavy sweaters.

We trust that with this information, the SAFER grant can be adjusted for these charges. If you require further information, please contact us.

Joyce Klein, Secretary Treasurer  
Active Manufactured Home Owners Association

pc: Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier  
Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister