


**Chatham-Kent Health & Family Services**  
**Social Housing**  
**Operations Policy and Procedure Manual**

SUBJECT: Air Conditioner Charge – Extra Hydro Usage		INDEX NO: CKPH 004
EFFECTIVE: May 01, 2005 REVISED: October 15, 2010	APPROVAL: 	

**Background:** Chatham-Kent Social Housing pays the hydro utility charge for a total of 547 public housing units. SHRA legislation mandates the amount that is assessed to rent-geared-to-income households for utility charges and allowances. The utility scale is not reassessed on a regular basis. As a result, actual utility costs are significantly higher than what is allowed by the utility scale. The high cost of energy requires that Chatham-Kent Social Housing establish a policy to charge applicable households for extra hydro usage to operate an air conditioner.

**Legislation:** The Tenant Protection Act (Part VI, s. 132, 1) specifies that “a landlord may increase the rent charged to a tenant for a rental unit...at any time if the landlord and the tenant agree that the landlord will add any of the following...A prescribed service, facility, privilege, accommodation or thing”. TPA, O.Reg 194/98 identifies that extra hydro for an air conditioner is listed for the purpose of subsection 132 (1) of the Act. Amendment: TPA replaced by Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) effective January 31, 2007.

**Policy:** Households occupying a public housing unit, where the hydro utility cost is paid by CKSH, will be subject to an air conditioner charge. The policy will come into effect May 01, 2005. Initial A/C charge will be \$60.00 per year, payable at \$5.00 per month (1/12 of \$60.00) in addition to the regular housing charge. The amount of the A/C charge will be subject to review based on changing energy costs. Air conditioners may be operated during the annual seasonal period commencing May 01<sup>st</sup> and ending September 30<sup>th</sup>.


**Implementation:**

- Approximately March 01, 2005, all applicable tenant households will be notified, in writing, of the details of the proposed A/C Charge Policy. Those opposed to the Policy will be invited to submit their written comments by March 31, 2005. All comments received will require personal contact to review the concerns for the purpose of reaching mutual landlord / tenant agreement.
- The lease agreement will be amended to include provision for the A/C charge. Applicable for all new tenancies effective May 01, 2005, including those with an April 2005 prorated housing charge.

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- The policy will be phased in for in-situ rent-geared-to-income households. Declaration of A/C usage will be incorporated into the annual review process commencing with the November 2005 lease month (mailed to households May 01, 2005).
- Market rent households will be sent an A/C declaration form in September 2005 (to coincide with the timing for market rent assessments). After the initial implementation stage, market rent households with A/C charges will be contacted annually (by telephone or in writing) to confirm if the A/C charge is still applicable. A/C charges will be applied to market rent households annually on January 01<sup>st</sup>.
- A lease addendum will be required for all in-situ market and rgi households to include provision for the A/C charge.
- The A/C charge will be assessed once per year and will not be adjusted mid-term.

#### General Guidelines:

- Tenants are solely responsible for arranging for the installation and removal of personal air conditioners.
- Air conditioner units, including electrical cords and plugs, must be maintained in good working order to protect against fire hazard.
- Air conditioners must be installed securely and in such a manner so as not to detract from the exterior appearance of the property.
- Installation must not create damage to the leased premises (e.g. windows, window ledges, air conditioner sleeves, etc.) Tenants will be accountable for associated costs to repair all damages caused willfully or negligently.
- CKSH staff will continue to promote the importance of energy conservation. Tenants will be encouraged to assume a shared responsibility in reducing energy costs through various conservation initiatives (e.g. replacing older air conditioners with newer energy efficient models; limiting usage during peak periods and adjusting temperature controls)