



2021 Annual Inspection Results

Item 10

March 29, 2022

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2022-19

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Chief Operating Officer

Date: February 25, 2022

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with information regarding Toronto Community Housing’s Annual Unit Inspection process and results for 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Tenant Services Committee receive the report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The information contained within the following report provides the Committee with the requisite details necessary to meet its responsibilities as set out in its terms of reference.

BACKGROUND:

Toronto Community Housing conducts in-suite unit inspections on an annual basis. Superintendents are coordinated to provide notice of the inspections, take receipt of the inspection logbooks, conduct physical inspections of each unit and enter the results into an electronic tracking

system. Inspections are typically conducted in the final quarter of the calendar year.

Completing the annual unit inspection supports TCH in its efforts to mitigate the risks related to life safety, fire safety and compliance with legislated building standards.

The Annual Unit Inspection process affords Toronto Community Housing its most substantial opportunity to assess the potential vulnerability. Effective management of the process assists in supporting successful tenancies and preventing the negative personal and community impacts of unsupported vulnerability.

2021 AUI PROCESS:

The AUI inspection process commenced in May 2021. This earlier start was intended to allow time to complete all inspections prior to the transition to HoMES Track 2b, initially anticipated to take place in October 2021.

The AUI process deployed in Q2 2021 focused on minimizing COVID-19 health and safety risks to staff and tenants while meeting Service Manager Requirements and Fire Life Safety legal obligations.

- The inspection form was modified to focus on Fire Life Safety and unit condition inspection points.
- The inspection form was modified to include air conditioning units installed outside balcony enclosures
- Building level staff received online training on COVID PPE requirements, changes to unit entry procedures, and health and safety processes to protect tenants and staff.
- Staff procured adequate supply to facilitate essential PPE for tenants and staff members.
- Processes were established and communicated to complete the inspections with tenants in place safely.
- The tenant communications campaign included posters, flyers and an FAQ to inform tenants of changes to the inspection process and options for maintaining social distancing during the inspection.

- System-generated reporting was provided to Regional teams starting at the commencement of inspections, which resulted in a trend towards earlier work orders.

2021 AUI RESULTS

The 2021 AUI process was completed before the anticipated Track 2b transition. Despite COVID-19 challenges, the 2021 AUI process was completed on time, with a 98.9% inspection completion rate. Regional staff teams have continued to follow up on and resolve outstanding inspections. By streamlining the inspection criteria, Regional teams successfully redeployed the resource hours into maintaining enhanced cleaning and disinfection activities in our communities which is vital to our COVID-19 response.

Table 1: 2021 AUI Results

	West		East		Central		SHU	
	# of units	% of units						
AUI Inspection Completion Rate:								
Total # of Units for Inspection	14,916		14,150		14,521		13,959	
Inspections Completed	14,621	98%	14,096	99.6%	14,258	98.2%	13,930	99.8%
Inspections Not Completed	295	2%	54	0.4%	263	1.8%	29	0.2%
Life Safety Inspection Points								
Smoke Alarms Repaired/Replaced	793	5.3%	60	0.4%	136	0.9%	360	2.6%
Window Locks and Screen Repaired	396	2.7%	47	0.3%	164	1.1%	152	1.1%
Visible Mould, Mildew "Major" and "Minor"	408	2.7%	245	1.7%	189	1.3%	35	0.3%
Fire Safety Inspection Points								
Units with any Fire Safety Issue Identified	197	1.3%	159	1.1%	227	1.6%	257	1.8%
Units Condition Inspection Points								
Units with Clutter Level 7-9	103	0.7%	137	1%	202	1.4%	95	0.7%
Units with Cleanliness Rating "Poor"	316	2.1%	352	2.5%	458	3.2%	370	2.7%
Units with Major Level of Balcony Clutter	119	0.8%	107	0.8%	152	1%	130	0.9%
Water Penetration Inspection Points:								
Units with any Water Penetration Issue (Foundation, Roofing, Cladding, Window/Seal)	1,039	7%	1,046	7.4%	530	3.6%	724	5.2%

Table 2: 2021 vs. 2020 Totals and Percentage of Change in 2021

2021 vs. 2020 Totals	2021 AUI		2020 AUI		% change in 2021 AUI
	# of Units	% of Units	# of Units	% of Units	
Annual Unit Inspection Completion Rate					
Total # of Units for Inspection	57,546		57,556		-0.02%
Inspections Completed	56,905	98.9%	56,663	98.4%	0.4%
Inspections Not Completed	641	1.1%	893	1.6%	-28%
Life Safety Inspection Points					
Smoke Alarms Repaired/Replaced	1,349	2.3%	1,160	2%	16%
Window Locks and Screen Repaired	759	1.3%	1,164	2%	-35%
Visible Mould, Mildew "Major" and "Minor"	877	1.5%	758	1.3%	16%
Fire Safety Inspection Points					
Units with any fire Safety Issue Identified	840	1.5%	980	1.7%	-14%
Units Condition Inspection Points					
Units with Clutter Level 7-9	537	0.9%	474	0.8%	13%
Units with Cleanliness Rating "Poor"	1,496	2.6%	1,590	2.8%	-6%
Units with Major Level of Balcony Clutter	508	0.9%	448	0.8%	13%
Water Penetration Inspection Points:					
Units with any Water Penetration Issue (Foundation, Roofing, Cladding, Window/Seal)	3,339	5.8%	3,696	6.4%	-9.7%

UNIT CONDITION & EXCESSIVE CLUTTER:

"Hoarding" is defined as an excessive accumulation of personal and acquired belonging/items which are being stored within a dwelling in such quantities as to make the areas unsafe and unusable for their intended purpose. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders identifies hoarding as a separate and distinct mental health disorder.

Although staff often identify conditions consistent with the description noted above, they cannot diagnose or treat the root medical disorders. However, staff are given tools to identify units with excessive clutter to ensure that unsafe conditions are identified, further damage or deterioration is mitigated, and social supports are offered to maintain successful tenancies where possible.

Staff were provided with identification tools, including the clutter image rating tool widely used throughout the health and social service sector. The training was delivered to reinforce both the need to identify clutter and calibrate how to evaluate units.

2021 UNIT CONDITION PRIORITY RESULTS

The clutter image rating tool provides a 1–9 rating; units receiving a rating of 6 are considered “at risk,” and units that receive a score of 7 or higher are deemed to be a priority for follow-up. There was an upward trend in 2021 compared to 2020 in the number of units identified with a clutter rating of 7–9, representing an approximately 0.1% increase. However, the total number of units identified with excessive clutter increased by 63 from 2020.

Unit Condition	Total Units	% of Total TCHC Units
Excessive Clutter (7-9)	537	0.9%

Units identified with a clutter rating of 7–9 are automatically flagged for follow-up through the AUI system.

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

The Operations Division uses an integrated approach to provide follow-up that addresses the range of services required to remediate Unit Condition or Unit Clutter issues.

- Regular in-home visits with tenants;
- Interdisciplinary staff teams coordinating service connections;
- Engaging external partners to access funding and resources;
- Pest control treatments where applicable; and
- Referrals to the Tenancy Resolutions Office, i.e. Complex Tenancy team.

The goal of the program is to keep tenants housed in a clean and safe unit; staff have found through experience that intervening early and often enables better overall outcomes for the Tenant.

Staff conduct follow-up inspections to ensure that the Tenant maintains the unit at an acceptable standard. This allows staff to initiate early interventions before clutter levels reach unsafe conditions.

EXTERNAL PARTNER SUPPORT:

A critical feature of successful excessive clutter management is the support of sector partners and resources. Operations staff often encounter tenants

who may be experiencing vulnerability when they intervene on excessive clutter cases.

It is estimated that up to 85% of unit condition cases require coordination and collaboration with external resources to establish a sustainable resolution. TCH actively collaborates with many external resources, some of our partners include:

- SPIDER Program
- Extreme Clean Programs
- Municipal Licencing and Standards
- Toronto Fire Services
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Hoarding Support Network
- Broader health and social services networks

The Operations Division is actively engaged in establishing new and innovative partnerships advocacy for system improvements and system reform, which will reduce instances of excessive clutter and promote successful tenancies.

ANNUAL UNIT INSPECTION CHANGES FOR 2022 AND BEYOND:

In 2020, The Tenancy Resolutions Office launched a review and re-design of the AUI process to align it with the HoMES system and make process improvements. In 2021, the Internal Audit completed a review of the 2020 AUI process and made 16 recommendations incorporated into the re-design.

In the future state, the AUI process will be fully integrated with the HoMES system and aligned with the HoMES Track 2b launch. The AUI results will be collected in real-time utilizing available technologies such as tablets and cell phones instead of manual entry used in the previous years. This will eliminate the delay in transcribing results from paper form to application software, reduce the opportunity for error and ensure issues of an urgent nature are identified in real-time.

Each item on the inspection form will have a built-in automated follow-up process where issues related to general maintenance and unit condition violations can be flagged promptly. The software will automatically

generate a series of work orders for follow-up and allow the inspecting staff member to document the conditions with photography options.

The workload related to inspections and follow-up processes will be distributed throughout the year, with service level standards associated with follow-up interventions.

These changes will result in better quality inspections and, where issues are identified, allow for more focused interventions and monitoring by integrated teams. It is anticipated that it will also improve access to resources available at the community level and through TCHC's partners (e.g. Extreme Clean and Housing Stabilization Fund), as requests for assistance will be spread over the year.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

The effective follow-up and management of excessive clutter mitigate the risks related to life safety, fire safety and compliance with legislated building standards. Failure to adequately manage these risks could result in fines from regulators and, in worst-case scenarios, injury or death of a Tenant or Staff member.

Timely and appropriate resources are required to maintain safe unit conditions and support successful tenancies. Delayed follow-up on deficiencies or failed service levels can impact tenants in neighbouring units' overall building conditions and inflate costs to remediate and maintain unit conditions at acceptable levels.

SIGNATURE:

"Sheila Penny"

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