

OLD GRACE HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE

ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS POLICY

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- a. The co-op does not encourage unit renovations but recognizes that alterations and improvements requested by unit occupants reflect their pride in their homes.
- b. At the same time, the board of directors has a responsibility to ensure that the proposed renovations will not have a negative impact on other occupants, or on the operations of the co-op as a whole.
- c. This policy establishes guidelines concerning the renovations (alterations and improvements) members may make to their individual units and private outdoor space (balconies or porches).
- d. In making renovations to their unit, co-op members accept the risk that unexpected life changes may result in them having to move out of their unit earlier than expected and hence not fully benefitting from the cost of the renovations.

2. DEFINITIONS

Minor additions and alterations: Changes that do not require approval by the Maintenance Committee.

Temporary renovation: A change approved by the Maintenance Committee that must be removed when the member moves out of the unit. The member is responsible for restoring the unit to its original condition.

Permanent renovation: A change approved by the Maintenance Committee and accepted by the board of directors. The member is not required to remove the renovation when moving out of the unit.

3. MINOR ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

- a. Members are encouraged to consult the Maintenance Committee for advice on suitable products and materials before making the following additions or alterations to their units:
 - Wall-mounted mirrors, pictures, artwork
 - Additional window coverings eg. valances, drapes
 - Electrical switch plates
 - Dimmer switches¹
 - Bathroom shower heads (low-flow)
 - Bathroom fixtures - wall-mounted towel bars, towel-rings, soap dishes etc.²
 - Kitchen fixtures - wall-mounted knife racks, towel holders etc.²
 - Kitchen cabinet interior organisers
 - Wall-mounted shelving in any room³
 - Wall-mounted shelving systems in closets and storage rooms.

Notes:

1. Check with the Maintenance Committee about suitable dimmer switches to use with the unit's LED light fixtures.

2. Although some brands of self-adhesive hooks claim to be easily removed, they often damage painted wall surfaces. Nail-and-hook or screw-and-anchor hooks and hangers are recommended when fixing any items to interior walls.
 3. Any shelves installed by residents should be made of materials certified as No Added Urea Formaldehyde (NAUF) or Ultra Low Emitting Formaldehyde (ULEF).
- b. If a co-op fixture is removed, the member is responsible for safely storing it. On moving out of the co-op, the member must repair any damage to unit walls or ceilings, to the satisfaction of the co-op Maintenance Committee, and replace the original unit fixture (see *OGHC Maintenance and Repair Policy*).

4. REPAINTING UNIT WALLS

Repainting is considered a minor alteration and does not require approval by the Maintenance Committee. Repainting will be done at the member's own expense.

a. Surfaces That May Not Be Painted

- Floors
- Ceilings
- Window frames (inside and outside surfaces)
- Outside surfaces of suite doors or balcony doors, and door thresholds
- Kitchen and bathroom cabinetry (including inside surfaces)
- Kitchen countertops and bathroom vanities
- Appliances supplied with the suite
- Any other unit surfaces that were not already painted on move-in

b. Choice of Paint Colour

- 1) The co-op's standard interior paint colour is white (Sherwin Williams Marshmallow G4 Satin Finish). Members may choose any colour of paint for their unit walls. However, when they move out of the unit, the co-op will repaint the walls white.
- 2) If members choose to repaint their unit walls using a colour which can be covered by one coat of white paint, no additional work (or charges) will be required on move-out. Members should seek advice from the Maintenance Committee if unsure about acceptably light colours.
- 3) If one coat of white paint will not be sufficient to hide the colour the member has chosen, the member will be required to apply a coat of primer over the coloured paint before moving out of the unit, or to pay for this additional task to be done by the co-op. Note: this proviso does not apply if coloured paint was applied to accommodate visual impairment on the part of the member or another household occupant.
- 4) Members moving into a unit may agree (in writing) to accept the paint colour applied by the previous resident. In this case they accept that they may be required to apply a coat of primer before vacating the unit, or pay for this work to be done by the co-op.

c. Paint Type

- **Acceptable:** Primers, paints and finishes with a low level of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC).
- **Not acceptable:** oil-based paint, enamel paint, or textured paint; speciality paints such as chalkboard, whiteboard, and magnetic paint.

d. Recommended Paint Finishes

- For bathroom and kitchen walls: semi-gloss
- For other walls: low gloss
- For trim or moulding: semi-gloss

e. Preparation and Process

- 1) Members should not attempt painting or decorating their unit walls themselves unless they have the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to complete the work in a reasonable period of time, with an acceptable quality of workmanship.
- 2) Drop cloths should be used to protect the floor. Switch plates and cover plates must be removed. Non-removable hardware such as window frames, electrical outlets, smoke detectors, thermostats, light fixtures etc. must be masked to avoid paint spatter.
- 3) Members should keep suite doors closed to minimize the spread of paint odours to other units and to the co-op common areas. Paint spraying devices are not permitted.
- 4) Equipment such as ladders and reusable drop cloths may be borrowed from the co-op by contacting the Maintenance Committee.
- 5) After the work is finished, any surplus latex paint should be taken to a recycling facility for re-use or safe disposal (see Recycle Manitoba for locations). Members who need assistance should contact the Maintenance Committee.

f. Application of Wall Coverings

- 1) Members may choose to apply wall-paper or other decorative finishes to their unit walls. However, cork tiles and mirror tiles are not permitted as they are almost impossible to remove without damaging the underlying wall surface.
- 2) Wall-paper and borders used must be dry-strippable. Painted walls must be sized (sealant applied) before the wall-paper or border is applied.
- 3) Wall-paper must be removed before the resident vacates the unit, unless the member moving in has requested (in writing) that the wallpaper be left in place. After the wall-paper is removed, the walls must be washed to remove any adhesive residue.
- 4) Any damage visible when wall-coverings are removed must be corrected by the member before the unit is vacated. Alternatively, the co-op will arrange for this work to be done at the member's expense.

5. RENOVATIONS REQUIRING APPROVAL

- a. Members must receive prior written approval from the co-op Maintenance Committee before making renovations to their unit or private outdoor space which:
 - involve structural changes to the unit (eg removing interior walls, removing closets)
 - alter the division of space within the unit (eg installing a fixed room divider or kitchen island)

- require a building, electrical, plumbing or other municipal permit, for example:
 - changes to unit electrical wiring for lighting fixtures
 - changes to unit plumbing for bathroom or kitchen faucets
 - may have a negative effect on building air quality, water conservation or energy efficiency.
 - alter the overall appearance of the building, including the common areas and corridors
 - may increase the co-op's maintenance costs, property taxes, or insurance premiums.
- b. The member making the renovation request shall not proceed with any of the work before receiving written approval from the Maintenance Committee. There is no exemption from this policy for renovations either started or completed prior to the member receiving written approval.
- c. Any unapproved renovation is a violation of Article 5.2 of the Occupancy Rules. Members who make unapproved renovations assume all liability for possible costs and damages incurred by the co-op as a result of the renovation. They may be required to reverse the changes immediately.
- d. In reviewing the renovation request, the Maintenance Committee will consider the following questions:
- 1) Will the renovation proposed enhance the unit?**
Alterations that suit the current occupants' lifestyle may make a unit less marketable to future co-op members.
 - 2) Will the number of bedrooms be reduced?**
Members' housing charges are based on the number of bedrooms in the unit, as originally designed. An incoming household requesting a 3-bedroom unit, for instance, will reasonably expect to have 3 useable bedrooms.
 - 3) Will the renovation affect the visitability of the unit?**
All co-op units were designed to meet visitability standards. Does the renovation proposed negatively affect less-mobile visitors by reducing the width of a doorway, or by limiting bathroom access?
 - 4) Will the change proposed be costly to reverse?**
The occupant is responsible for the cost of restoring the unit to its original condition. However, a complex restoration may prevent the next occupant moving in as soon as the unit is vacant. This could result in the co-op losing one month's housing charges.
 - 5) Will the change proposed negatively affect members living in adjacent units?**
Does the renovation reduce daylight, increase noise transmission, negatively affect another member's view, reduce air circulation etc.
 - 6) Will the work be of acceptable quality?**
If members wish to do all or part of the renovation work themselves, they must assure the Maintenance Committee that a) all the materials to be used comply with the co-op's standards and b) the members have the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to do the work. The co-op accepts no liability for injuries to members, non-member occupants or non-occupants during renovation work.

7) Will the work be completed in a reasonable period of time?

Renovation work is disruptive to other co-op occupants, so should be completed in a timely manner. This is a particular concern if members wish to do the work themselves, in their free time.

- e. The co-op will not reimburse the member for materials or labour at the time renovations are carried out, or when the member leaves the co-op.
- f. Permanent renovations become a part of the unit and hence the property of the co-op. When the member leaves the co-op, he/she may not ask for reimbursement for materials or labour from the member moving into the unit.
- g. Temporary renovations remain the property of the unit occupant. When the unit occupant leaves the co-op, he/she may sell these additions to the incoming member for a mutually acceptable price. The incoming member is under no obligation to accept the renovations, and can require the unit be restored to its original condition. Restoration costs will be paid by the co-op member who is leaving the unit (deducted from the member share).

6. RENOVATION APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- a. Renovation requests must be submitted to the OGHC Maintenance Committee using the designated form (*OGHC Renovation Request Form*). Members can informally contact Committee members for advice if they are unsure whether a planned renovation requires co-op approval, or have questions about how to proceed.
- b. When applying, members must indicate whether the renovation is intended to be a temporary or permanent alteration to the unit. The renovation request must provide sufficient detail to assure the Maintenance Committee that the work proposed will be done in a competent and timely manner. Drawings or plans should be included as appropriate.
- c. The Maintenance Committee will review the renovation request and respond in writing within 28 days, indicating whether or not the proposal is acceptable to the co-op.
- d. Conditions may be attached to the approval. If these are met, the application can be resubmitted. If the application is turned down, the member may appeal to the board of directors.
- e. If the renovation request is approved, the member and the co-op will enter into a simple contract to ensure that:
 - the work is done in a competent manner
 - changes to electrical or plumbing systems are carried out by a licenced professional
 - all persons doing the work have appropriate liability insurance
 - the member is responsible for supervising the work
 - the member is responsible for all renovation costs
 - in the case of default, the member will pay the co-op's costs to restore the unit to its previous condition
- f. A copy of the approved application and contract will be placed in the member's Unit File. The member is responsible for applying for any necessary permits, with the co-op's assistance. The member must pay any related fees and provide the Maintenance Committee with a copy of the permit.
- g. To ensure an appropriate standard of workmanship, permission for a permanent renovation is conditional upon the completed work passing a final inspection by the Maintenance Committee or a

designated agent of the co-op. Results of the inspection will be documented and a copy sent to the member.

h. If the renovation does not pass the final inspection, the co-op may:

- approve the work as a temporary renovation to the unit, or
- require deficiencies in the work be corrected, or
- require the unit be restored to its original condition immediately, at member cost.