

The OC Link

Off-Campus Living News for Fanshawe College Students

January 2013

LEASE SIGNING TIPS

By: Alroy

It's that time of year again when first year and upper year students alike begin scrambling to find a new rental unit. Along with that burden comes the stress of signing a lease. Before you commit yourself in a legally binding agreement with a landlord, be sure to understand all the terms of the agreement.

One of your highest priorities should be to get a lock change written into the lease. That being said, you should also ensure that any repairs that you want made are also in writing so that the landlord is obligated to comply with your demands.

Last but not least, take it upon yourself to have your lease reviewed by Fanshawe's Housing Mediation Service. You can make a lease review appointment by calling the office at 519-452-4282 or dropping in to Room F2010 on Wednesdays.

LEASE RENEWAL

By: Chelsea

It's about that time of year again. The Christmas madness is gone, school is starting up again, and landlords suddenly appear wanting to know if you're moving out. It can seem pretty over-whelming, especially when you have no idea what your plans are for the next school year.

No need to worry though. If you are covered by the Residential Tenancies Act (meaning you do NOT share a bathroom and/or kitchen with the owner or a member of their immediate family) you don't have to give written notice until 60 days from the end of your original lease term. For example, if your lease ends April 30, 2013, then you can provide written termination notice by the end of February 2013.

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Don't feel pressured into giving your landlord an answer before you think long and hard about it. Use this fill-in-the-blank form for providing your written termination notice to your landlord!

If the RTA applies to your rental situation, you don't actually need to sign a new lease if you want to remain in your rental unit for another year. Instead, you'll automatically become a month-to-month tenant at the end of your original lease term. Either way, no need to make a hasty decision. Instead, have a good talk with your roommates to figure out what you want to do.

HEATING REGULATIONS

By: Chelsea

Do people come over to your house and immediately ask to borrow a sweater? Wake up in the morning seeing frost? It could be that your rental unit is not meeting the heating regulations set by the City of London. Particularly during these long winter months, it's vital that heating regulations are being met because as students, we can't afford to get sick with a nasty cold during midterms.

Between Sept. 15 and June 15, the minimum temperature for a rental is 20 degrees Celsius

between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. and 18 degrees Celsius between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. If you think there's a problem with your unit's heating, try buying a thermometer and do some tests to confirm it. If the heating requirements aren't being met, contact your landlord, or just call the Off-Campus Advisors for advice on what your next step should be. Good luck staying warm!

KNOW YOUR SNOW - LONDON BYLAWS, SNOW REMOVAL, AND YOU

By: Jonathan

Snow: It's fluffy, fun and beautiful. However, it can also be slushy, dirty and downright dangerous! While the City is responsible for shoveling all streets and sidewalks, you as a tenant may be responsible for shoveling your walkway as well as your driveway. Remember, it is a general courtesy to shovel your walkway for visitors.

As winter is already in full swing, make sure you start your year off right by ensuring that you understand the agreement between you and your landlord, relating to property upkeep. Unless it is specifically written in the lease that the landlord will be responsible for snow removal, you may be responsible.

However, if you live in an apartment or a house with two or more units, you can breathe a sigh of relief - your landlord is required by law to remove snow from shared outdoor space.

Keep these simple but important tips in mind and you'll be well on your way to enjoying a fun, snowy winter as opposed to a dangerous, expensive one!

TIPS FOR LOWERING YOUR UTILITY BILLS

By: Alroy

As a student living off-campus, what comes to mind when you hear the words sustainability? Hopefully "environmentally friendly" rings a bell. When students live off-campus they are cemented as members of the London community. Along with that title comes the responsibility to respect the environment around you. That respect can start in your rental unit. Small but meaningful acts such as being mindful of one's limit the production of garbage, which can make an impact if everyone were to follow suit.

Furthermore, in terms of energy consumption, take it upon yourself to not leave the water running when the sink isn't being used, switch the lights off in your rental unit when you aren't in a room, and most importantly set your thermostat to lower the heat when you and your roommates leave the house during the day. All these tips will help you live a more sustainable life and will decrease your utilities too.

Do yourself a favour and take note of how you can make your living situation more practical in the broader context of our London community.

NEWSLETTER QUIZ

Send answers to gmatthews@fanshawec.ca before February 8th for a chance to win a \$25 Bookstore gift certificate.

1. What City Ward is Fanshawe College located in?
2. Who is the City Councillor for the City Ward in which Fanshawe College is located?
3. What is the address of London City Hall?

Fanshawe College Housing Mediation Service

Counselling and Accessibility Services

Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m

519-452-4282

www.fanshawec.ca/housing

OR

Monday – Friday: (519) 661-3787

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