

The Tenant

April 2003



**Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations
- Fighting for Tenants' Rights since 1974 -**

**Don't miss the
All Party Debate
April 14 2003**

see page 2 for more details

The Time for Action is Upon Us

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Five years of unfair and unrealistic rent increases is enough. Five years of people losing their homes due to evictions is enough. Five years of Government doing nothing to ensure that our homes are well maintained and that landlords treat tenants fairly is enough. Five years of this Rental Tribunal is enough.

It is time for tenants to be heard like never before at the ballot box. An election is looming. The FMTA's newly named TENANT ACTION COMMITTEE is working for you.

First, we will have our big ALL PARTY DEBATE on APRIL 14. Let's pack the joint. We also have volunteers working in a number of key ridings to help get

the tenant vote out and keep our issues at the forefront.

We have established a special link on our web site for the election. Go to our website at www.torontotenants.org and keep an eye on our activities.

Tenants can participate in a number of ways. Join us on April 14. Work in your community passing out literature on tenant issues. Encourage your neighbours to vote. Volunteer to work on your favourite candidate's campaign. Go to all candidate meetings and ask questions. Work with the FMTA.

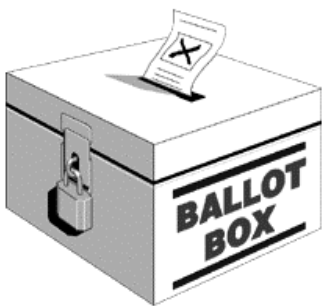
The pay off? A new legislature that has heard from tenants is much more likely to get rid of the awful Tenant

Protection Act. The more that they hear from us, the quicker they might act.

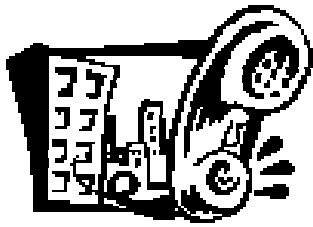
If we are not heard, it will cost us dearly: Higher rents and less protection. Landlords are likely to be lining up at their Tribunal in the Fall to sock us with more increases based on this year's higher fuel costs.

Landlords will be out in full force during the election. They will finance campaigns and work for candidates that support anti-tenant law. That is their right.

Our right is to be out there to make democracy work for us. There has never been a more important election for tenants.



The Election Issue



Hotline Questions of the Month

By Beth McNabb

Q. I am on a one year lease that ends in October 2003. I am being relocated to Vancouver and want to break my lease. Can I give a 60 day notice?

A. Tenants cannot give a 60 day notice if they have signed a lease. The only way to get out of the lease is to assign the residential unit. An assignment occurs when a tenant permanently leaves their apartment and gives up their rights and responsibilities to another person.

A landlord can refuse to let you assign your tenancy. If the landlord refuses to let you assign your tenancy, he or she must have a good reason to turn down a particular person. You can apply to the Tribunal in a dispute over the landlord's reason, and the Tribunal can override the landlord's decision. Fill out form A2 - Application about a sublet or assignment.

If your landlord refuses to let you assign the unit, you can then give 30 days notice and move out without further responsibility.

Q. Under what circumstances can I sublet my apartment?

A. A sublet occurs when one tenant moves in for a limited time, with the original tenant planning to. The landlord must have a good reason to refuse to let you sublet your apartment. You can apply to the Tribunal for a review of the landlord's reasons. If you sublet without your landlord's permission, the landlord could apply to evict the "unauthorized occupant" as well as evict you for not receiving the landlord's permission to sublet. However, the landlord must submit this application no later than 60 days after the landlord has discovered the "unauthorized occupant".

The original or "head" tenant cannot charge the sub-tenant more than the lawful rent. The sub-tenant can be evicted by the head tenant or the landlord if they do not move out at the end of their term.

In this situation, vacancy decontrol does not kick in (although it will come into play if the sub-tenant tries to stay beyond the end of the lease). Also in this situation, the original tenant does keep some responsibilities. For example if the sub-tenant doesn't pay the rent, then the original tenant is legally responsible for that payment to the landlord.

If you have any questions about renewing your lease or any other questions about your legal rights as a tenant, please feel free to call the Tenant Hotline at 416-921-9494 Mon.-Fri. 8:30am – 6:00pm or email us at hotline@torontotenants.org

The FMTA Brings the Politicians to You!

Tenants should mark April 14, 2003 at 7:00 PM on their calendars. The FMTA has arranged an All Party Debate on issues that affect tenants.

Jump on the subway, take a streetcar, walk, or bring a carload of your neighbours to the Bahen Auditorium at 40 St George Street, just north of College Street. The Liberals, the

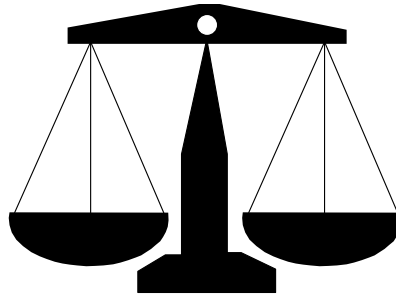
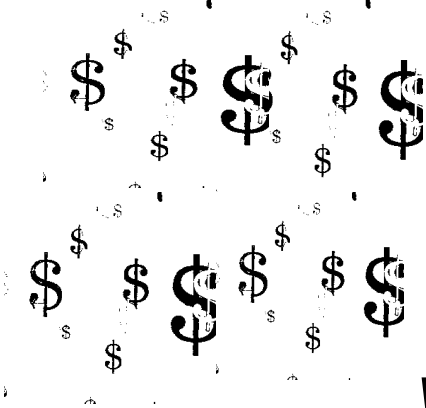
New Democratic Party and the Progressive Conservatives will be asked to debate issues vital to tenants. Before you cast that all-important ballot on election day, find out where the parties stand on the Tenant Protection Act, a rent freeze, rent controls and tenant rights.

Sue Cox, Executive

Director of the Daily Bread Food Bank, will moderate the debate. Tenants will have an opportunity to ask questions of the representatives of the Parties.

We look forward to a lively discussion and a substantial increase in tenant voters.

Remember your fate is in your ballot!



We're Asking Again...

Thanks to all who responded to our last request for donations. Your FMTA has resolved to make sure that the tenant voice is heard in the upcoming election and to do it, we need money for mailings, flyers, room rentals, etc.

To those who have yet to make a commitment, we know there are a lot of pressures on your pocketbook. But we're asking again — whatever you can contribute will help a lot.

The landlord lobby may be rich, but it's small in numbers. We tenants, on the other hand, have the numbers. The last census showed there are over 600,000 tenant households in the GTA. A small donation from each can add up fast!

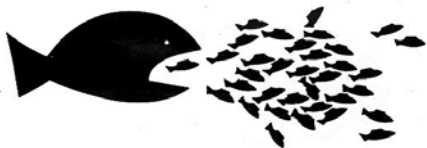
Money can represent your commitment, but it can't replace it. Whether you are able to make a donation or not, make sure your voice is heard. Vote.



Suggested Questions for Your Political Candidate

The 2001 Census data showed a net loss of 17,000 rental units in the Toronto area. The Census also showed a dramatic increase in young people still living with their parents.

- What would you do to increase the supply of affordable rental housing?



Each year the Government sets an annual guideline for rent increases. That increase takes into account charges in costs for utilities, taxes and maintenance and then adds 2% for no apparent reason.

- What are your views on the setting of the Annual Guideline Increase?
- What would you do to prevent the "extra dipping" for utility cost changes?

Each month more than 5000 households in Ontario are evicted.

- What measures do you support to prevent evictions?



Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations

27 Carlton St.,
Suite 500
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1L2

TENANT HOTLINE:
(416) 921-9494

FMTA OFFICE:
(416) 646-1772

OUTREACH AND ORGANIZING:
(416) 413-9442

FAX:
(416) 921-4177

We're on the Web!
www.torontotenants.org

E-MAIL:
fmta@torontotenants.org

Democracy's FAQ's

Tenants have a lot of good reasons to vote in the upcoming provincial election. Here are some frequently asked questions about the voting process.

Do I qualify to vote?

You qualify to vote in Ontario if you are a Canadian citizen, over the age of 18 years, and a resident of the electoral district.

How do I register to vote?

Because there is now a permanent Voters List in Ontario, a regular enumeration will not be conducted this year. If you do not receive a Notice of Registration from Elections Ontario once an election is called, your name may not be on the voter's list.

How do I make sure I'm on the Voters List?

You have one of two options: You may obtain a certificate to Vote from the Revision Assistant at your electoral

district Returning Office or at any advance poll location. Certificates to vote are issued only up to 8 pm on the day before election day.

Your other option is to have your name added to the voter's list at your poll on election day by signing a declaration stating that you are who you say you are, and that you have not voted already. You must also bring appropriate identification (something with your name, address and signature, or two pieces of id that combined have your name address and signature; an Ontario Health card or driver's liscence will suffice).

Before an election, you can bring the appropriate identification to the office of your Municipal Clerk, and they will put you on the Voters List.

How can I find out more information about the voting process?

Visit Elections Ontario's website at www.electionsontario.on.ca, or call them at **1-800-677-8683**.

Yes, I want to be part of the Tenants' Movement!

Please send me my membership card and information about the services that I receive a member.

<p>I will pay my membership dues by:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cheque or money order (made out to FMTA) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash</p> <p>Please Print: Name: _____ Address: _____ Apt. #: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____ Telephone #: (h) _____ (w) _____ Fax: _____ e-mail: _____</p> <p>Yes! I would like to donate \$ _____ to the FMTA!</p>	<p>I am joining as the following type of member:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New Member <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal</p> <hr/> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual: \$15/year <input type="checkbox"/> Senior, student or unemployed: \$5/year <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Member: \$50/year <input type="checkbox"/> Homeowner (non-voting): \$25/year <input type="checkbox"/> Organization (non-voting): \$25/year <input type="checkbox"/> Tenants' Association: _____ units, \$10 per year per unit (minimum 3 units)</p>
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Send to: Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, 27 Carlton St., Suite 500, Toronto ON, M5B 1L2