



## Annual Pest Control Report

Item 7B

June 9, 2022

Tenant Services Committee

**Report:** TSC:2022-18R

**To:** Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

**From:** Chief Operating Officer (Acting)

**Date:** June 1, 2022

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an annual update on the provision of pest control services at Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”).

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that TSC receive this report for information.

### BACKGROUND

The provision of pest control services is governed by municipal by-laws and federal regulations and is a key responsibility of the landlord as set out in the *Residential Tenancies Act* (“RTA”). The provision of pest control services is an essential component of a broader clean buildings and maintenance strategy, which is intended to establish achievable service standards, sustainable service models, and enable consistent and cost-effective delivery of service geared to enhancing tenant satisfaction.

### PEST MANAGEMENT DATA & TRENDS

The pest management program was deemed an essential service and continued to be available throughout the pandemic. In 2021, TCHC staff fielded 52,222 work order (“WO”) requests related to pest management

issues (see Table 1). Of those issues, the top pest management treatments were for bed bugs and cockroaches.

Some factors influencing pest control requests:

- Seasonal fluctuation
- COVID-19 restrictions and;
- Integration of contract managed buildings

### **PEST MANAGEMENT DURING COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges in safely and effectively addressing pest control concerns. Where standard chemical application measures require tenants to vacate their units for 4 to 6 hours, TCHC has worked with our vendors to establish interim measures to complete treatments while limiting the need for tenants to leave their units for extended periods. Enhanced use of mechanical treatments such as steaming, vacuuming, heat treatment, and limited pesticide use has allowed for infestation level control, while it is recognized that achieving a complete resolution to pest incidents has been exceptionally difficult due to these limitations.

With the transition of the West region's contract managed to direct management in 2020, the 2021 year increased the total number of residential units that would receive services under the TCHC pest management program. Regional environmental health staff worked to assess and stabilize program delivery in these communities throughout the year.

Table 1: Pest Treatment (Demand &amp; Preventative) by Category – 2021 vs. 2020 vs. 2019

	Region	Bed Bugs	Bed Bugs Total	Cockroaches	Cockroaches Total	Mice	Mice Total	Other	Other Total	2021 Grand Total	2020 Grand Total	2019 Grand Total
Q1 2021	East	1,070	5,557	547	3,276	382	1,942	240	952	11,727	11,495	9,987
	Central	1,160		745		394		294				
	West	1,336		882		920		342				
	Seniors	1,991		1,102		246		76				
Q2 2021	East	1,057	6,185	496	2,960	346	1,783	249	1,079	12,007	8,616	10,685
	Central	1,313		685		387		263				
	West	1,466		691		806		475				
	Seniors	2,349		1,088		244		92				
Q3 2021	East	1,321	7,243	792	4,507	378	1,869	410	1,366	14,985	17,296	14,300
	Central	1,662		1,023		408		338				
	West	1,559		1,180		654		455				
	Seniors	2,701		1,512		429		163				
Q4 2021	East	979	5,943	843	4,534	360	1,858	270	1,168	13,503	13,223	15,176
	Central	1,139		1,037		389		302				
	West	1,438		1,108		708		455				
	Seniors	2,387		1,546		401		141				
Totals	<b>Mixed Portfolio</b>	<b>15,500</b>		<b>10,029</b>		<b>6,132</b>		<b>4,093</b>				
	<b>Seniors Portfolio</b>	<b>9,428</b>		<b>5,248</b>		<b>1,320</b>		<b>472</b>				
			<b>24,928</b>		<b>15,277</b>		<b>7,452</b>		<b>4,565</b>	<b>52,222</b>	<b>50,630</b>	<b>50,148</b>

*Table 2: Quarterly Average Number of Treatments in 2020 vs. 2021*

Categories	2021 Average	2020 Average	Variance
Bedbugs	6,232	5,585	+11.6 %
Cockroaches	3,819	4,058	-5.9%
Mice	1,863	1,832	+1.7%
Other	1,141	1,183	-3.6%

In Q4 2021, the TCHC portfolio included 52,621 rent-geared-to-income (“RGI”) and 6,336 market units. Vacant unit treatments are a standard operating procedure of the TCHC unit turn process and a requirement under the Rentsafe by law.

*Table 3: Pest Treatments by Unit Types in 2021*

Quarter	RGI	Market	Vacant	2021 Totals
Q1 2021	10,679	927	732	12,338
Q2 2021	10,875	893	850	12,618
Q3 2021	13,980	1117	770	15,867
Q4 2021	12,182	1,068	770	14,020
Totals	47,716	4,005	3,122	54,843

## **REQUIREMENT FOR MULTIPLE PEST TREATMENTS**

Most pest incidents require more than one pest management treatment to be fully addressed per Health Canada Guidelines. The timing between each treatment is equally vital to achieving an optimal outcome. At TCHC, contracts with pest vendors highlight clear expectations for follow-up treatments, including the provision of a mandatory inspection as part of the warranty program in cases of bed bugs.

Considerations contributing to the increase per unit treatments are:

- Limitations to Health Canada approved product application methods;
- Adherence and accommodation are related to COVID-19 safety protocols;

- Modifications to a treatment plan to accommodate tenants in place; and
- Onboarding and reset activities with former contract-managed sites.

*Table 4A: 2021 Count of Units Requiring Treatments by Pest Type*

<b># of Treatments</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>More than 3</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Bedbugs	332	1,589	532	1,060	3,513
Cockroaches	363	1,388	494	431	2,676
Mice	237	594	192	240	1,263
<b>Total</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>3,571</b>	<b>1,218</b>	<b>1,731</b>	<b>7,452</b>

*Table 4B: 2020 Count of Units Requiring Treatments by Pest Type*

<b># of Treatments</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>More than 3</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Bedbugs	342	1,209	516	902	2,969
Cockroaches	261	885	476	356	1,978
Mice	140	316	164	135	755
<b>Total</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>2,410</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>1,393</b>	<b>6,635</b>

## **SUPPORTING TENANTS**

In 2021, approximately 15% of all the units visited by the Environmental Health team demonstrated the need for additional support, including access to support, de-cluttering, and preparation assistance for treatment or extreme cleaning services. Our partnerships with agencies such as Toronto Public Health and Ontario Works through Toronto Employment and Social Services have assisted tenants in accessing approximately \$350,000 of additional supportive funding and services. The TRO and the Regional teams continue developing and implementing resources, partnerships, and tools to continue to provide support and monitoring of units.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

An important strategy for pest reduction is ensuring that staff and communities engage in dialogue with tenants and communities; it provides staff with a better understanding of our tenants, and it provides tenants with the information and resources they require to support a proactive approach to pest management in their units and communities. Although in-person

tenant education has been paused due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, TCHC staff have worked with communications team to update education and preparation materials, including the translation of pest preparation guidelines into 24 languages. The translated materials are provided to tenants as required prior to start of pest treatments.

We are also updating staff directed training materials to reflect changes relating to restructuring, Seniors Housing Unit transition, and transfer of Contract Managed buildings to Direct Management. We will continue to partner with Learning and Organizational Development to deliver staff directed training to local teams through 2022.

### **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

Pest problems within TCHC buildings can significantly disrupt the comfort of our residents and limit the enjoyment of their homes. Without a solid and sustainable pest management program, the organization potentially faces orders and costs related to any perceived mismanagement, including potential awards of rent abatement at the Landlord and Tenant Board, MLS orders for failure to maintain the premises “pest-free,” and Health Protection orders from Toronto Public Health.

### **SIGNATURE:**

*“Nadia Gouveia”*

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Nadia Gouveia  
Chief Operating Officer (Acting)

### **STAFF CONTACT**

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