



## **July 2007 Newsletter**

**Alderman Diane Colley-Urquhart**

### **Property Tax Assistance Program**

With 'market value' property assessments increasing this year, many homeowners will see a rise in their property taxes; increases some homeowners may find difficult to manage. With this in mind, the City is again running its' Property Tax Assistance Program to help low-income property owners by offering grants to ease the burden.

This year the program will be a little different; for the first time the City is collaborating with Credit Counseling Services of Alberta to hold information sessions entitled, *Financing Options: Choosing Wisely*.

These sessions are to be directed primarily to seniors and will offer advice on financing options like reverse mortgages and home equity lines of credit, in addition to the Property Tax Assistance Program.

The assistance program has been growing significantly in the past few years, as property values have increased. In 2006, 994 applications were approved; 65% of which were applications by seniors, the remaining 35% were low-income Calgarians including single parent families, couples, and disabled individuals, with all grants totaling \$122,082.

### **Who is eligible?**

To be an eligible candidate for the grant program, you must:

- Experience an increase in municipal property taxes from 2006 to 2007;
- Have a low- income (\$21,202 for a single person, \$26,396 for a couple);
- Be a residential property owner;
- Reside in your own home for a minimum of one year;
- Own no other property; and
- Provide proof of income (copy of 2006 income tax return is required).

To find more information call 3-1-1, or to apply, visit [www.calgary.ca/propertytax](http://www.calgary.ca/propertytax)

### **When are the info sessions?**

September 11, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
Haysboro Community Association, 1204 89 Ave. S.W.

October 17, 10 a.m. – noon  
Canyon Meadows Community Association, 844 Cantabrian Dr. S.W.

October 22, 10 a.m. – noon  
Good Companions, 2609 19 Ave. S.W.

Calgary seniors interested in learning more about the sessions or wanting to register should call Susan Fernando at 268-4833.

### **Open Window Safety**

Summer is coming up fast and temperatures are rising. Calgary paramedics respond to emergencies every year involving small children who have fallen from open windows in their home, often from the second story. It is important to remember that windows can often be an easily overlooked hazard in the home.

Parents with younger children should be careful with their open windows, and should follow safe practices.

In the past three years alone, paramedics have responded to 15 incidences where the falls from open windows have resulted in serious or even life-threatening injuries. Children, especially younger children, have poor balance, and can easily fall. Screens usually offer little protection, as they are designed to keep insects out, not children in.

It is also important to remember the placement of furniture around the room. Parents should be cautious about putting cribs, beds, chairs or change tables close to windows, which is the most common sources of accidents, according to Calgary EMS. Further, ensure that cords from blinds or drapes are securely tucked away, to avoid the possibility of strangulation.

#### **Some safety tips:**

- Make sure that closed windows are locked ;
- Move furniture such as cribs, beds, stools and change tables away from windows;
- Keep cords out of the reach of children;
- Teach children not to lean on or play near windows; and
- Screens are to keep bugs out, not to keep children in.

A few simple steps can prevent a potentially life threatening injury.

For more info visit [www.calgaryems.com](http://www.calgaryems.com)

### **Seasonal Garbage Bag Limits**

During the spring and summer months your yard waste can up to triple your weekly garbage. Due to the huge increase in waste that comes with spring-cleaning, the City enacts its' weekly garbage output limits. Residences are limited to five bags or cans per week, with a maximum of 20kg each.

Residences that exceed the weekly limit are asked to place household waste in front of yard waste, to ensure they are removed, with the remaining yard waste being removed as time and capacity allows.

Residents are encouraged to keep their garbage area tidy to aid in garbage removal, as well as making efforts to recycle paper, cardboard and other items.

**As always, you can contact my office regarding this or any other civic matter at 268-1624, by email at [dcolley@calgary.ca](mailto:dcolley@calgary.ca), or through my website, [www.aldermandiane.ca](http://www.aldermandiane.ca). Alternatively, you can contact '311.'**