

## **Can Say of Ms. Rina Hermkens – January 22, 2020**

Ms. Rina Hermkens rents a duplex home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The house was built in the 1930s and is heated by natural gas. Ms. Hermkens rents the main floor unit with three people in her household. There are three people living in the second floor unit of the house.

The household income for the main floor unit is on average \$3500/month and the second floor unit household income is on average \$3300/month. Two persons on the main floor and one on the second floor receive Employment and Income Assistance. Their rent portions are paid through Employment Income Assistance to the landlord. The remaining tenants pay their rent portions directly to the landlord. Approximately 10% of the total household income for both units is paid towards energy bills.

Ms. Hermkens electrical and natural gas bills are paid by the landlord. The landlord has informed her that they are on average \$700/month. The electric consumption rate is on average the same in the summer and winter. The residents use air conditioning units during the summer and space heaters during the winter. The natural gas consumption rate is higher in the winter given furnace use. Ms. Hermkens believes the landlord is on the Equal Payment Plan, but is not sure.

On a scale of one (1) being not very energy efficient to ten (10) being very energy efficient, Ms. Hermkens would rate her home at a five (5). The landlord has installed a few new energy efficient windows in the main floor unit, however the remaining windows throughout the house are older. Ms. Hermkens indicates that there is no insulation in the house, including in the basement. The bathroom pipes freeze every winter.

Ms. Hermkens has tried to access energy efficiency programs through Manitoba Hydro, such as the piping insulation kit. She heard about this program from some construction workers who were building houses in her neighbourhood. Ms. Hermkens tried to call Manitoba Hydro for the insulation kits in October 2019, however she never heard back. She collected leftover insulation from the construction workers in her neighbourhood to insulate her basement and bathroom piping. Ms. Hermkens heard about the furnace replacement program in September 2019 and would like her landlord to utilize the program, given that a Manitoba Hydro worker recommended it during the last furnace inspection. She would also like the remaining windows in the house to be replaced. She heard about this program in the summer of 2018. She is also aware of the appliance replacement program from the Manitoba Hydro building mural on St. James Street.

Ms. Hermkens had heard of Efficiency Manitoba through advertisements on the public transit system and from posters. She learned more about Efficiency Manitoba through Winnipeg Harvest. She would like to learn more about the recycling program and what types of energy efficiency programs are available to landlords. Ms. Hermkens recommends that information be distributed through the mail, flyer inserts, commercials, online and through community events in a downtown location. She indicates that being

able to speak to someone over the phone and not a recording system would make the programs more accessible.