Good Neighbour Guide
Welcome to Niagara-on-the-Lake. We congratulate you on selecting Niagara College Canada as your educational institution, and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake as your community. Now is the most important time in your life, in which you prepare the foundation for your future.

Your decision to live off-campus means you will be a great part of our community. The house you rent or board at may be the first place/home of your own, and with that privilege brings responsibility.

Be a good neighbour, respect others, and please understand many neighbours have lived in this area all their lives.

Most Town residents welcome the changing student population each year, because many residents were once students themselves. Take the time to learn who your neighbours are, introduce yourself, and say hi.

To better understand the community’s expectations, read this pamphlet in its entirety including the sections on residents and landlords to gain a broader perspective of the issues surrounding off-campus housing.

For further details on town by-laws and community information, please visit the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake website notl.org
RESIDENTS
Please join us in welcoming new and returning college students to our great town. Students are our future and can be great citizens while also contributing to the community. Many students bring a lot more than a passionate and active lifestyle to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Many are active volunteers and/or participants in local clubs, churches, and charities.

Niagara College has flourished in the last decade, and it owes its success to the student population.

Most students are friendly and optimistic about their life and their surroundings. Communication between residents and student tenants is key in ensuring positive neighbourhood relationships. Respectful communication sets the tone for good neighbours by facilitating a healthy fit between students, landlords and residents.

It is advisable to read this pamphlet in its entirety including the sections on students and landlords to gain broader perspective of the issues.

LANDLORDS
As a landlord of tenants, including student tenants, you are providing a great service to our community and the college. Niagara College and the socio-economic spin-off from the college have flourished in part due to the supply of affordable housing available to students while selecting their college of choice.

Tenant behaviours vary. Your assistance is welcomed in ensuring a smooth transition for the students and the local residents during their rental period.

Landlords have many legal responsibilities associated with owning and supplying rental accommodation. Whether you are a home-owner renting a room or two within your house, or you are renting an entire house to a group of students, many of the responsibilities are the same.

It is advisable to read this pamphlet in its entirety including the sections on students and residents to gain broader perspective of the issues.

Helpful Websites:

niagaracollege.ca
niagaracollegeocl.ca
notl.org
ltb.gov.on.ca
TIPS ON BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

› Be friendly and introduce yourself.
› Talk to your neighbours; you may find that you have much in common.
› Keep the yard outside of your property clean and tidy; furniture outside, window signs, alcohol bottles, garbage and litter has a negative impact on your presence in the neighbourhood.
› Discuss yard maintenance such as lawn mowing, leaf raking and snow shoveling with your landlord to see who is responsible and ensure that it gets done.
› Keep excessive noise to a minimum; this is one of the largest neighbourhood nuisances to residents and it can truly disrupt their right to peace and quiet. Music, partying, and alcohol abuse all lead to an increase in noise which can become intolerable.
› You may wish to help elderly residents or other neighbours who may have difficulty with yard maintenance; such a gesture is truly appreciated in any neighbourhood. Respect neighbours’ rights to peace and enjoyment of their property.
› As you start the fall semester, we know that you will want to connect with your fellow students. We know how much you have looked forward to making new friends or re-establishing friendships from last academic year, and we understand the impulse to celebrate and have fun with off-campus parties and large gatherings.

Our message is simple: Don’t do it.

Parties are a high-risk activity that increases the chance of spreading COVID-19. We’ve all worked so hard to get to this moment, to make the changes necessary to help keep our entire community safe and healthy. Don’t let that hard work go to waste.
LEGAL ISSUES

The Town’s by-laws were established to help when a neighbour fails to maintain their legal responsibilities under those by-laws.

**Police Enforced Laws**

- Criminal and Provincial Offences
  - Disturbing the peace, public mischief, alcohol and drug related offences, profanity, public sexual behaviour, vandalism, theft, noise
- Keg parties and public intoxication will not be tolerated by Niagara Regional Police Service.

**Parking By-law 4308-09**
The following are some parking infractions subject to a fine:
- Parked vehicle facing the wrong way on a roadway
- Vehicle stopped or parked on or over a sidewalk
- Vehicle parked within 1.5m of a driveway
- Parking in prohibited areas
- Parking within 3m of a fire hydrant
- Parking within 10m of an intersection
- Parking on a boulevard
- Parking on a city roadway for longer than 12 hours
- Parking during snow clearing operations

**Noise By-laws**
The Noise By-law is enforced on a complaint basis by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake By-law Enforcement Officers and Niagara Regional Police Service.

- Noise By-law infractions start at $350 with repeat offenses having a maximum penalty of $5,000.

  - Daytime complaints: 905-468-3061, ext. 279.
  - After hours and weekend complaints: Niagara Regional Police 905-688-4111.

**The Clean Yards By-law**
Details yard maintenance standards that property owner(s) and tenant(s) must adhere to.

- Yard maintenance includes the removal of waste which may include but is not limited to, rubbish, garbage, and debris, excessive growth of grass, weeds and bushes, damaged or decaying trees, wrecked, dismantled, unlicensed or inoperative vehicles, trailers, machinery, furniture and appliances.
- Clean Yard Violation Fines are $150 to $300 fine

The Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board is a great resource! [ltb.gov.on.ca](http://ltb.gov.on.ca)

**Knowfire.ca**
Knowfire.ca is a fire safety awareness program for students. [knowfire.ca](http://knowfire.ca)
Information for RESIDENTS and LANDLORDS

Niagara-on-the-Lake is a town that champions education and community. The Good Neighbour Guide’s intent is to help tenants, landlords, and neighbours live together more comfortably and harmonious in our neighbourhoods.

TIPS FOR RESIDENTS

› Treat new student neighbours as you would any new neighbour. Welcome them in the best way suited to you; this may involve offering to help them move in, giving a small gift or meal, or simply introducing yourself and family.

› Be friendly, greet them everyday.

› If you have a problem with your student neighbours, talk to them about it. If you are open and communicative, you may find the problem can be resolved easily. Many times the student neighbour does not realize a problem exists if they are not informed.

› Use this informational pamphlet when discussing issues with a student. If something is officially issued by an enforcement agency, it becomes more of a justifiable concern.

› Ask to be informed about upcoming parties and express your concern if you have had bad experiences with previous student neighbours. If you have parties planned, you may wish to do the same as students require quiet time for exams and homework.

› Don’t escalate problems by confrontational approaches.

TIPS FOR LANDLORDS

› Ensure your rental dwellings are both safe and legal. This will not only benefit student tenants and landlords but also provide some comfort for local residents.

› Ensure the property is kept up to standards on the outside, including yard maintenance, garbage disposal and parking; it is ultimately the landlord’s responsibility.

› Develop and maintain quality tenancy agreements which clearly outline your responsibilities and those of the tenant. Ensure that the tenant understands all clauses before signing the agreements. Items such as parking, noise, yard maintenance and waste disposal should be properly addressed.

› Learn and understand all laws governing private property including those listed and not listed in this pamphlet.

› Be aware of concern and anxiety of local residents about new neighbours.

› Have a presence at the property. Tenants tend to be better neighbours and more respectful with a landlord presence.

› Consider allocating a portion of rental revenue towards property improvements for the benefit of residents, tenants and your future marketing of the property.

› Meet and discuss any issue of mutual concern with local residents. Exchange names and phone numbers; they may be of great assistance in minding your property.
PROBLEMS?

If problems with neighbours persist and your communication efforts are not effective, please report these issues to appropriate authorities.

Become familiar with the laws affecting the problems to know if a law can be applied. There may not be laws for all behaviours and issues.

Police/Criminal Matters
Serious matters such as alcohol and drug related issues, sexual behaviour, vandalism, mischief and loud parties should be reported to the Police by calling 905-688-4111. 
*Non-emergency issues can be reported by calling 905-688-4111. If it is an emergency situation, please call 911.*

Town Matters
Parking problems on both Town-owned and private property can be reported to Parking Enforcement.
Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm: 905-468-3266 ext. 226.
After-hours: 905-468-3278.

Noise Related Issues
Noise problems occurring at nighttime such as shouting, yelling, and loud parties should be directed to the Niagara Regional Police Service at 905-688-4111.

For minor repetitive noise during daytime hours please contact By-law Enforcement at 905-468-3061, ext. 279.

For barking dog or other pet-related issues, please contact the Town’s Canine Control Officers at 905-658-8712.

Clean Yard Issues
For complaints related to excessive waste on property; excessively high, uncut grass should be reported to By-law Enforcement at 905-468-3061, ext. 279.

Rental Property Land Use
Issues in general, a home owner can rent an entire house (single or semi-detached) to a group of students who live together as a single house-keeping unit.

For reporting a recently converted illegal unit, please contact the Town at 905-468-3266, ext. 279.

Backyard Fires
Should you, your neighbours, or tenants want to have a campfire, chimney, barbecue, grill fire, or simply light patio torches, the rules set out in the Open-Air Fire by-law must be followed.
Property Standards By-law
To file a complaint, forms for by-law infractions are available from the Clerk’s department at the Town Administration Offices in Virgil.
Written complaints can be directed to the By-law Enforcement office:
1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. Box 100,
Virgil, ON
L0S 1T0
Or call 905-468-3061, ext. 279.
notl.org

Fire Code Violations
Concerns related to Fire Safety should be directed to the Town’s Fire Prevention Officer: 905-468-3266, ext. 262.
notl.org

Garbage Collection
Niagara-on-the-Lake is a recycle friendly community. Waste management is organized by Niagara Region. Every other week garbage collection has started. The Blue Box, Grey Box and Green Bin will continue to be collected every week. There’s no limit to the amount of recycling and organics that can be placed at the curb. Information is available, as well as brochures that outline recycling, organics, and garbage collection. Please provide appropriate information to tenants so that they can contribute to Niagara Region’s aim to redirect waste to landfills. Please contact Niagara Region Solid Waste Management Service for information or to request information brochures at 905-356-4141 or 1-800-594-5542. notl.org

Learn the Laws
Laws affecting properties are numerous, as you have come to realize from your experience as a landlord. As you may or may not be aware, you can be held accountable for the result of some actions of your tenant(s) simply by virtue of being the property owner.

According to the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board, a copy of the Information for new Tenants must be given to the tenant on or before the date of tenancy begins.

The Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board is a great resource!
ltb.gov.on.ca

Laws, which as a landlord, you are directly responsible to comply with include:

Rental Property Land Use Zoning By-law
Ensure that both the property and the building are properly zoned for the proposed use. Is it a single-detached, semi-detached dwelling, basement dwelling unit, a room with a boarding house, or other type of dwelling? Fines for contravening Zoning By-law can be up to a maximum of $25,000 if convicted.
notl.org

Ontario Fire Code
It is the Landlord’s responsibility to provide and maintain working smoke alarms on every floor level in a residential unit. Fines for failing to do so are $295 if ticketed and up to $50,000 if convicted in a court of law. Landlords are responsible to keep a rental property safe with respect to fire separations, exits, and electrical wiring.
ontariolandlords.org

Property Standards
Any building or property owned must be maintained in compliance with the Property Standards By-law by the owner. Failure to do so may result in a fine of up to $50,000 if convicted in a court of law.

Some Laws that you may be responsible to comply with are:
- Clean Yards By-law
- Noise By-law
- Parking in Front Yard By-law
- Waste By-law

Recovery of Costs
The Municipal Act and the Fire Protection and Prevention Act give municipalities the authority to have a matter remedied where a Town by-law or the Ontario Fire Code require such thing to be done. The authority allows municipalities to enter private property, hire contractors, and cause physical changes to property to effect compliance. The cost of work is charged to the property owner and, if unpaid, can become municipal taxes owing on the property.
mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca