

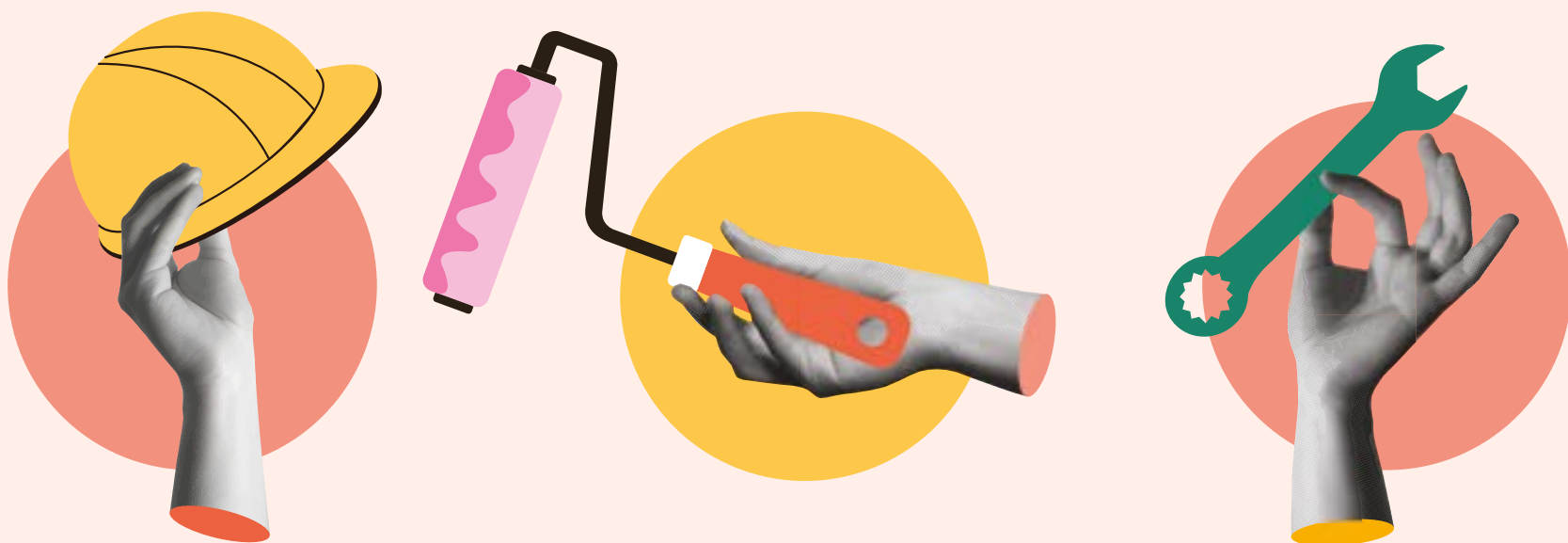
Magazine de la
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CORPIQ

MARCH 2026

n° **77**

PROPRIO



2026, A PIVOTAL
YEAR FOR HOUSING

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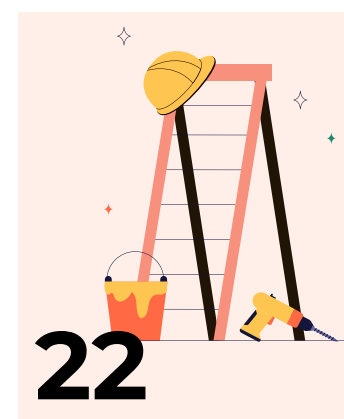
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CORPIQ@2026

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EDITORIAL

A strategic year for housing on the political front

Dear members,

Over the past few weeks, one topic has been on everyone’s lips: the new method for calculating rent adjustments. For several years, CORPIQ has advocated for a reform of the rent-setting criteria so that this method would be more balanced, easier to use, and understood by all.

Since it came into force on January 1, our advisors have received a very large number of messages, calls, and questions. This new regulation is raising concerns, scenarios, decisions to be made... and sometimes a feeling of uncertainty.



BY NATHALIE MERCIER,
GENERAL MANAGER, CORPIQ

I first want to tell you that we are here to inform you and to clarify what concerns you. Our priority is to support you on a case-by-case basis, according to your reality. We also held our annual event dedicated to the unveiling of the criteria, which was an exceptional success, with more than 4,000 registrations — a record. This is proof of the trust you place in CORPIQ. With this same desire to be close to you, our teams also went out to meet you, notably in Montréal and in Québec City, and delivered several conferences in collaboration with our industry partners. These moments in the field allow us to better understand your concerns, adjust our actions, and continue to fully play our role as a reference for landlords.

On the political front, 2026 is shaping up to be particularly busy: between the resignation of Premier François Legault and the leadership races for the CAQ and the Liberal Party, the political landscape is in motion. As the provincial elections approach, we want decision-makers to give greater consideration to an unavoidable issue: the renovation and aging of the housing stock. We must embark on a major renovation initiative in Québec — one that would be win-win-win: for landlords, who must be able to maintain and preserve their buildings; for tenants, who are entitled to quality, well-maintained and sustainable housing; and for the general population, by improving the energy performance of buildings and therefore promoting energy savings. The issue is significant. That is why, in this edition, we are offering you a comprehensive feature on renovations and maintenance to plan for the spring, in order to equip you concretely for the season that is beginning.

On a more personal note, because an organization is made up of people who shape its history, we wish to pay tribute to Ghislain Couture, who recently passed away. Having served for 20 years on CORPIQ’s board of

directors, his commitment to the association and his contribution over the years were invaluable. Ghislain cared deeply about improving business rules for landlords, and his sincere commitment to CORPIQ was greatly appreciated. We extend our most sincere condolences to his loved ones.



Ghislain
Couture

Ghislain Couture served on CORPIQ’s board of directors for more than 20 years, including several as treasurer. Landlord of an eight-unit residential building in the greater Québec City area, he was always a staunch advocate for small landlords.

As treasurer, he made it his priority to protect CORPIQ’s assets and ensure the maintenance of its budgetary balance. His rigour and sense of responsibility led him to work on improving the board’s financial practices, notably through the implementation of significant changes in the presentation of monitoring reports related to services and financial operations. As a dedicated member of the board, Ghislain Couture never shied away from any challenge that could help advance CORPIQ’s mission and ensure its sustainability.

He will be remembered as a devoted administrator whose unwavering commitment and expertise greatly contributed to the organization’s growth and strength.



Finally, it is also with emotion that we highlight the retirement of Mario Boily, Director, Central and Eastern Québec, after 42 years of service to CORPIQ and its members. Throughout all these years, Mario has been a reference and a pillar for the organization, recognized for his rigour, his professionalism, and his constant commitment to landlords. We warmly thank him and wish him a happy retirement.

The year 2026 will be strategic for housing-related policies, and you can count on the mobilization of our team to carry the voice of landlords, in light of the feedback from the field that comes from you. To this end, we will continue to gather your impressions regarding your issues and realities throughout the year.



Mario Boily

Happy retirement Mario!

Having joined CORPIQ in 1984 at the age of 26 as a representative, Mario Boily quickly left his mark on the real estate landscape of the Québec City region. Very early on, landlords became accustomed to seeing him everywhere: faithfully at his post behind the CORPIQ booth at numerous events, or on the other end of the line, always ready to answer the most complex questions. Over the years, he established himself as a true reference in residential rental real estate. His expertise, his rigour and his ability to simplify sometimes complex issues made him a valuable ally for thousands of landlords.

In 2022, when Québec City's FM93 radio station asked the question: "Who is the essential personality in your field, though little known to the general public?", one landlord did not hesitate for a second. For her — as for many others — the answer was obvious: Mario Boily. Described as "someone who has an answer for everything," he perfectly embodied that trusted figure whom landlords can always count on.

After more than four decades of commitment, Mario Boily was recognized on numerous occasions by CORPIQ's management and board of directors for his exemplary professionalism and unwavering rigour. His career reflects remarkable loyalty and a lasting contribution to the organization's reputation and credibility.

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30	3 725 \$	8 125 \$	2 325 \$	4 625 \$
35	3 725 \$	8 925 \$	2 625 \$	6 425 \$
40	5 025 \$	13 425 \$	3 525 \$	10 425 \$
45	8 325 \$	23 025 \$	5 425 \$	16 125 \$
50	12 725 \$	38 325 \$	8 725 \$	24 325 \$
55	22 025 \$	67 825 \$	15 325 \$	37 425 \$
60	41 325 \$	108 525 \$	29 525 \$	67 625 \$
65	73 625 \$	192 225 \$	51 825 \$	104 125 \$
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PERSPECTIVES

2026, a pivotal year for housing

The year opens in a context where housing occupies a central place in the concerns of Quebecers. Access to housing, maintenance of the existing stock, homelessness, pressures on the rental market: these issues are shaping the public debate and directly influencing political decisions at the dawn of this election year.

The provincial election — scheduled for fall 2026 — is already looming in the background, following the resignation of Premier François Legault in early January, which opens the way to a leadership race within the CAQ, with the announcement of the new Premier's name on April 12. Until a new leader is chosen, François Legault remains head of the government to ensure continuity of public action.

Another leadership race is underway, that of the Liberal Party after the resignation of Pablo Rodriguez amid turmoil. At the time of writing, Charles Milliard — who was the only candidate to meet the conditions required by the party to take part in the race — has just been appointed leader of the Liberal Party.

At the same time, a by-election was held in the Chicoutimi riding on February 23.



BY ÉRIC SANSOUCY,
SPOKESPERSON FOR CORPIQ

This electoral event resulted in the election of Marie-Karlynn Laflamme—a victory that allows the Parti québécois to regain the riding. After four by-elections won by the Parti québécois, this vote could serve as a political barometer a few months before the provincial election, while also reflecting the emerging dynamics among the main parties.



Thus, 2026 represents a strategic year: one in which it will be necessary to continue to make landlords' voices heard, to remind people of the realities on the ground, and to contribute actively to finding an essential balance in the housing sector.

AN EVOLVING REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: THE NEW RENT-SETTING GRID

The year also began with the coming into force of a historic reform through the new regulation governing the rent-setting criteria. It brings a significant change to the criteria used by the Tribunal administratif du logement. This regulatory development is part of a context in which the search for balanced solutions was and remains necessary.

The new criteria help simplify understanding between the parties, be tied to actual costs and provide predictability, notably through the fixed 5% threshold for capital expenditures. This threshold is a step in the right direction to ensure the sustainability of Québec's rental housing stock, while 70% of rental buildings were constructed before 1980. Nevertheless, given the scale of the challenge, it is necessary to go further by proposing concrete measures to protect Québec's housing model and the rental offering.

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THE MAJOR CHALLENGES OF 2026 IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE

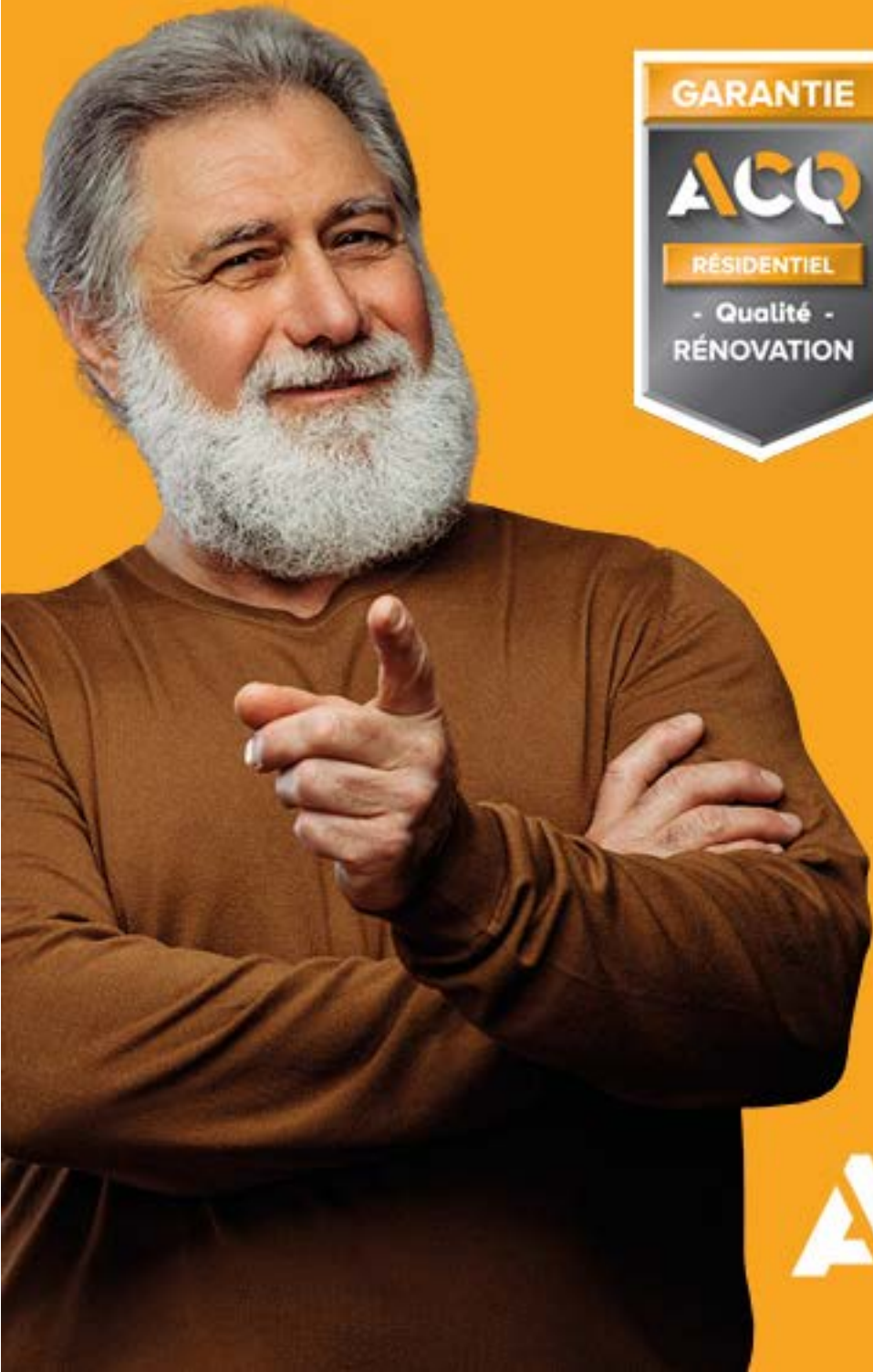
In our view, the following issues will undoubtedly be part of the public debate this year:

- The sustainability of the existing rental housing stock through a major renovation initiative to address current and future challenges (modernizing the stock, ensuring housing quality, improving energy efficiency, reducing GHG emissions and adapting the stock to environmental requirements). These challenges will require programs, effective incentives and close collaboration among all levels of government.
- Social issues, particularly in response to the needs of individuals in vulnerable situations. Landlords are often on the front line in identifying individuals at risk of vulnerability and may face complex situations that require coordinated interventions (government and municipal bodies, social and community organizations, and landlords).

Other issues will be at the heart of the debate this year, and CORPIQ will continue its role as a credible and constructive partner with decision-makers. Our organization will continue to bring forward landlords' concerns and to reiterate a fundamental reality: without landlords, there is no rental housing.

We are working on the priorities that will be brought forward to political stakeholders, and we will share our areas of focus with you shortly. Our commitment is based on a desire to contribute to balanced public policies, grounded in realities on the ground, that make it possible to preserve the rental offering, support the renovation and modernization of the stock, recognize landlords as economic and social stakeholders, and maintain a responsible dialogue among all parties involved.

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COLUMN

ESG and real estate: why sustainable practices are no longer just a luxury, but a game plan to breathe

It is 6:42 a.m.

Two messages are sent back to back.

The first comes from a tenant: “It’s cold. I’m not sleeping well. On top of that, my heater isn’t working anymore.”

The second comes from the landlord, a few hours later: “I know. I’m sorry. I feel like I just can’t keep up anymore. I need to find some room to take care of the renovations.”



BY KAROLE-ANNE GAGNON
FOUNDER OF GESTION
ACCELIA AND COLUMNIST
FOR LES AFFAIRES

At that moment, it becomes impossible to claim that real estate is just a simple investment.

In this exchange, there is no “good” or “bad” person. There is a building whose maintenance costs, taxes, and all expenses related to its management are weighing more and more heavily in the equation. And there are people who are living the consequences, on both sides.

That’s often what the field looks like.

Not a pro forma.

Not an exit strategy.

A reality. A building. A system. And the question that keeps coming back: “How do we put an approach in place that actually holds up?”



I know that many landlords are currently going through a difficult period. Interest rates, materials, labour, insurance, taxes, deferred maintenance, emergencies piling up. There are landlords who feel like every month is a battle.

So I want to state this clearly: this article is not meant to make anyone feel guilty. It’s not about telling you that you should “do better” because it looks good on social media.

I am telling you that there is a way to breathe.

A way to create some margin.

A way to make your building more stable, without getting into major, unattainable certifications or expenses that bring you no return.

Because sustainable real estate, when approached properly, is not a moral concept. It’s not a “bonus” to look good. It’s not a \$30,000 certification.

It’s a game plan.

And often, that game plan can allow you to:

- reduce your operating expenses;
- stabilize your income;
- improve tenant retention;
- increase the value of your building;

and yes, in many cases, facilitate refinancing.

Sustainability is a survival and growth strategy.

And the longer we wait, the more it costs, because what doesn’t get addressed accumulates.

I was first exposed to the term ESG during a university real estate competition.

At the time, we had to work on a development project for a site of nearly 600,000 square feet. The difference between the “regular” case and the advanced case was striking. On one side, we talked about returns, costs and planning. On the other, environmental, social, and governance considerations were integrated as structuring variables of the project.

That day, I understood something simple: large developers have no choice but to consider those variables, otherwise their projects get blocked.

Refused. Delayed. Challenged. Questioned.

But I also understood why, when you buy a plex or a multi-unit building, the concept seems out of reach, abstract, sometimes even useless.

With hindsight, I realize that it's not ESG that is inaccessible to small landlords, it's the way we talk about it. We turned it into jargon. Into a report. Into a box to check. When in real life, it's much simpler than that.

ESG is not a term reserved for institutional funds. It's an acronym that brings together the words environmental, social and governance. Nothing complex in itself.

What makes the concept intimidating is its frequent association with heavy reporting, costly certifications and regulatory obligations designed for institutional players. You may already have heard of LEED or WELL in new construction projects. These approaches are interesting, but that's not the angle I want to take here.

My objective is rather to show you how to take these principles back and adapt them to your middle-market reality, meaning buildings with 6 to 60 units. There are assistance programs, grants and concrete levers that allow you to act effectively, without incurring disproportionate expenses.

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After several years managing and optimizing buildings in the field, I can state that ESG is already applicable on a small and medium scale. It is simply underused. And also, because for twenty years we have been doing things the same way. We repeat what we know.

The real turning point: sustainable does not mean “expensive,” sustainable means “smart”

When a landlord tells me, “I’d like to, but I don’t have the means,” I understand. Truly.

In reality, what they often mean is, “I don’t have the means to carry out work that won’t bring me any return.”

And that is a perfectly rational reflection.

My proposal is therefore simple: stop seeing sustainability as an additional expense and start viewing it as a lever to create margin.

Because a building that costs less to operate is a building that can breathe. And a building that can breathe is a building that is more financially stable.

ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR:
REDUCE COSTS, INCREASE
VALUE, IMPROVE COMFORT

1. Heat pumps, an underestimated lever

Installing heat pumps is one of the most accessible investments today for a real estate landlord. Thanks to programs such as LogisVert, grants make this type of project much more affordable than it was just a few years ago.

In the field, the impact is immediate: improved thermal comfort, better quality of life for tenants and increased perceived value of the unit.

This element is important, because it is not just an “environmental” gesture. It is something tangible that is experienced on a daily basis. A person who sleeps better and feels less cold is generally more satisfied, stays longer in their unit, takes better care of it and feels respected.

In many cases, these improvements also allow for a reasonable rent increase. This increase is accepted and understood by the tenant, because they see the benefits in their daily life.

One often overlooked element concerns financing. Heat pumps allow you to accumulate points under CMHC’s APH Select program, which can lead to more advantageous financing conditions during a refinancing or an acquisition.

A simple line drawing of a two-story house with a blue roof and white walls. To the right of the house is a green tree with a brown trunk. Further to the right is a solid green circle with a brown trunk.

2. Dual-energy systems, to eliminate a structural expense

Programs offered by Énergir make it possible to go further through dual-energy systems. When a landlord acquires a building that uses oil, they often end up absorbing a significant long-term energy bill.

Dual energy allows, in many cases:

- to benefit from additional grants;
- to reduce, or even eliminate, a major recurring expense;
- to increase the value of the building by lowering its operating costs.

In the field, this reduction in expenses has a direct impact on net profitability. It is not a one-time gain, but a structural improvement. And it is often this type of adjustment that makes the difference between a building that survives and a building that truly becomes profitable.

3. Heat recovery: when innovation becomes profitable

For larger buildings, certain innovative solutions are emerging. It is now possible, in some contexts, to convert hot water or oil heating systems by integrating computer server towers.

The principle is simple: servers generate heat which, usually considered thermal waste, is recovered and then used to heat the units.

The landlord can therefore generate income through leasing the servers, while reducing heating costs. The notion of “thermal waste” is in fact a strategic element, since it can facilitate access to certain grants or sources of financing.

This type of solution is primarily aimed at larger buildings, but it is an option that clearly illustrates how the environmental pillar can become a true economic lever when approached strategically.

SOCIAL PILLAR: RESIDENTIAL STABILITY AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Moving beyond the myth of luxury housing

A portion of the housing stock could play a key role in the social reintegration of individuals who have gone through difficult periods. Yet the dominant narrative still too often associates profitability with high-end housing.

However, what we are currently observing — notably with certain rental towers in downtown Montréal — shows that the issue is no longer solely a general housing crisis, but rather an affordability crisis. Demand remains strong for units with rents below \$1,500, while vacancy rates tend to increase in higher segments. When the situation is analyzed from this angle, one thing becomes clear: the affordability issue is not only a social challenge. It may be relevant to reposition part of the supply toward more accessible units, capable of meeting a real need while ensuring rental stability.

Rent support programs

There are programs that support tenants while securing landlords' revenues, notably the Québec Rent Supplement Program (PSLQ) and the housing allowance (provincial and federal).

Eligibility criteria and permitted rents are publicly available, but remain underused by private landlords. Yet these programs help ensure income stability, reduce the risk of non-payment and support low-income households.

When properly structured, these mechanisms become a true lever for stability across the entire rental ecosystem. And a stable ecosystem benefits all stakeholders.

The key role of property managers

Property managers are often the first to notice when a tenant begins to lose autonomy. Changes in behaviour, difficulty maintaining the unit, increased isolation... these signals are visible well before the situation becomes critical.

As private landlords, we do not always have the necessary tools to support someone experiencing psychological or financial distress. Taking the time to become familiar with community organizations in your area makes it possible to direct tenants toward the right resources and prevent situations from deteriorating in silence. With proper follow-up and established partnerships with CLSCs or home support services, some tenants can remain housed longer, while contributing to maintaining the good condition of the buildings.

The dilemma we rarely talk about

Even when supply increases, rents do not necessarily decrease. Landlords are hesitant to adjust downward, which is understandable: no one wants to absorb a loss, especially in a context where costs are skyrocketing.

But behind these figures, there are concrete realities. Households that devote a significant portion of their income to housing.

Meanwhile, some units remain vacant. And the system becomes strained, fragile, unpredictable. This is not about pointing fingers. It is about recognizing that an unbalanced market ultimately weakens everyone.

Tenants live with insecurity. Landlords live with uncertainty.

The question therefore becomes: “How do we maintain balance while contributing to a more stable ecosystem?”

This is where sustainability takes on its full meaning. Because if you reduce your expenses, if you increase the real value of your building, if you stabilize your tenants, you create margin for yourself.

And sustainability, often, is exactly that: creating margin.

GOVERNANCE PILLAR: THINKING IN TERMS OF LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

The governance component of ESG primarily concerns real estate service companies as well as investors who wish to hold their buildings over the long term. In large investment funds, the presence of advisory committees or boards of directors is common practice. These structures frame decision-making and ensure more rigorous management.

However, if you are the sole landlord of your building or if you own the property with one or two partners, formal governance is generally less complex. In this case, a well-drafted shareholders’ agreement or co-ownership agreement may be sufficient to frame decisions. The objective remains the same: to establish clear rules to prevent a single person from making major decisions without consulting the other partners.

When a real estate project involves several investors or stakeholders, setting up a board of directors becomes relevant. This structure makes it possible to distribute responsibilities, ensure greater transparency and frame management, somewhat similar to how a condominium board operates.

On the side of real estate service companies, governance takes on a strategic dimension, notably due to the significant number of

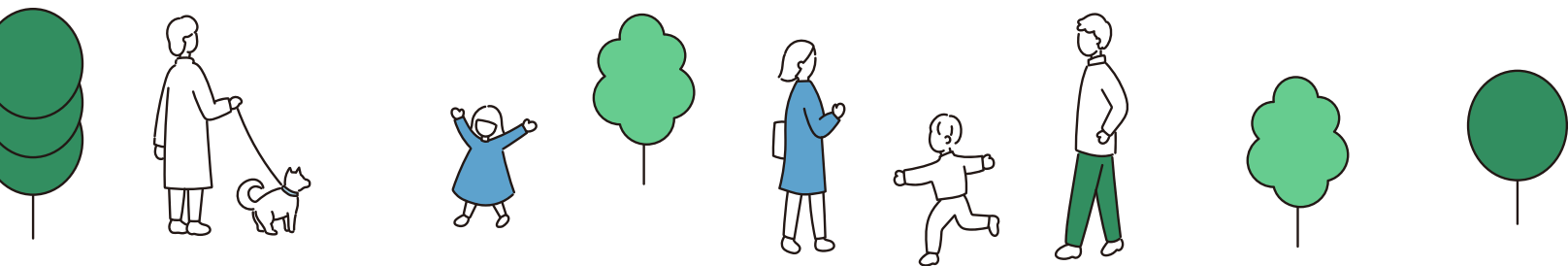
business transfers expected in the coming years. In this context, surrounding yourself with an advisory committee composed of experienced professionals can represent a major advantage. These external advisors can help identify blind spots in management, anticipate market cycles and avoid certain costly mistakes.

Relying on trusted individuals who have already gone through periods of growth, slowdown or transition helps strengthen the stability of the company. Structured governance thus contributes to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the real estate project and, over time, to supporting the strength of the entire real estate ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

If the most forward-thinking real estate companies are taking the time to adapt to ESG expectations, middle-market landlords have every interest in looking into it now. ESG is not a trend. It is a modern framework that enables more informed and more strategic decision-making.

Starting modestly can already transform the financial balance of a building, improve the quality of life of your tenants and ensure the sustainability of the housing stock. To obtain support in integrating these strategies into your portfolio, you may contact us at [Gestion Immobilière Accelia](#) or consult my monthly articles published in [Les Affaires](#).



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REPORT

Spring maintenance of your building: complete guide



BY ÉRIC SANSOUCY,
SPOKESPERSON FOR CORPIQ



As a landlord of rental buildings, I have seen how acting at the right time can make all the difference. Spring offers a unique opportunity to inspect your building, plan the necessary work and avoid costly repairs. Here are a few guidelines to help you prepare properly.

In Québec, spring is much more than simply the return of sunshine. It is the time when you can take the pulse of your building. After several months of cold and snow, you must identify damage, plan the work and ensure that each unit remains comfortable and safe for your tenants. The [Civil Code](#) requires the landlord to provide a dwelling in good condition and fit for habitation throughout the term of the lease. Québec municipalities also require the maintenance of the envelope, the structure and the plumbing or heating systems. Neglecting these obligations can therefore lead to several repercussions, including fines.

1. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND GOOD REASONS TO ACT IN THE SPRING

You have a legal obligation to ensure the maintenance of your building: the lease requires you to deliver a dwelling in good condition, clean and fit for habitation, and to maintain it as such; municipal by-laws require the maintenance of the envelope and essential systems.

We have been seeing it more and more often in recent years, freeze-thaw cycles in addition to snow accumulation on roofs weaken materials. When the snow melts, cracks, clogged gutters, or torn flashings are sometimes discovered. Identifying this damage as quickly as possible is imperative to prevent it from worsening.

- **Inspect closely:** in May, when all the snow has melted and the days are long enough, a detailed examination of the façades and the roof makes it possible to identify damage.
- **Clean to see better:** a complete exterior cleaning in the spring prepares the building for the warm season and helps you detect signs of moisture, stains, or debris that has become lodged.
- **Examine your heating and air conditioning equipment:** after a heating season, a thorough inspection of your gas or oil furnace is welcome before proceeding with a light cleaning. Take the opportunity to also schedule maintenance for your air conditioner: companies have more availability in April and May and provide more thorough service than in the middle of summer.
- **Make appointments with your experts:** whether it is a façade inspection, chimney sweeping, air conditioner maintenance or checking smoke detectors, it is prudent to book early. Engineers and technicians are in high demand as the warm season approaches.

2. PROPERLY
PLANNING YOUR
MAINTENANCE
PROGRAM

Proper maintenance cannot be improvised. The first step is to organize your approach: who does what and when?

Draw up a list of all equipment (roof, gutters, façades, mechanical systems) and note their inspection dates, lifespan and past interventions. It is also recommended to keep a register indicating the history of work and the lifespan of components. For buildings of five storeys or more, the Régie du bâtiment du Québec (RBQ) requires a detailed [façade register](#) including a description of the construction, inspection reports and a maintenance program.



Adopt a two-phase schedule:

- **Immediate inspections (March–April):** as soon as the snow melts, check roofs, gutters, foundations, balconies and mechanical systems to identify urgent issues.
- **Planned repairs (May–June):** book work that requires specialists (façade inspection, chimney sweeping, air conditioning and heating maintenance) and plan the necessary budget to complete everything.
- **Keep quotes and appointment confirmations:** in the event of a dispute, you will have proof of your diligence.

Finally, do not forget that your tenants are your best allies in quickly identifying problems. Keep them informed of upcoming inspections and invite them to report water infiltration, electrical issues or suspicious odours. An informed tenant will more readily accept visits and work, and you will thus avoid last-minute interventions.

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3. INSPECTING AND MAINTAINING THE EXTERIOR ENVELOPE

The roof

The roof protects your tenants from the elements; it therefore deserves your full attention. In the spring, carry out a visual inspection of the condition of the shingles or membrane: identify missing, cracked or warped shingles. Also check nails that are at risk of giving way, any proliferation of moss or algae, and the condition of the flashings around chimneys and dormers. If you have a flat roof, clean the drains of all debris around them that could fall in. If you observe any irregularities, call on a professional roofer to repair or replace damaged components and to inspect the attic insulation. Demand for roofers surges in the fall; by booking in the spring, you will avoid waiting lists and be able to plan major work (complete replacement, insulation, flashing replacement) at the time that suits you best.

EXPERT'S ADVICE

In the spring, it is strongly recommended to take a look in your attic, if it is accessible. This preventive check makes it possible to quickly identify any signs of moisture, mould, water infiltration or even structural deformation. These anomalies, often subtle at first, may be the first signs of a more serious problem which, if not detected in time, can lead to costly repairs.

Carrying out this inspection rigorously, in the spring but also in the fall, allows you to quickly identify any deterioration and plan the necessary interventions before the situation worsens. Spring, in particular, is a key period: snowmelt, combined with episodes of heavy rain, can reveal weaknesses in the roof's watertightness.

Furthermore, maintaining gutters and drains is another essential task to be carried out each fall in preparation for the coming winter. Dead leaves, debris and dirt can clog the conduits and prevent the normal flow of water. The result: accumulation that promotes overflow, ice formation and, ultimately, water infiltration into walls or the roof. By carefully cleaning your gutters before winter, you allow water to flow freely during snowmelt and minimize the risk of damage related to poor drainage.

These simple but essential measures can significantly extend the lifespan of your roof.

— [Toitures Wally](#)

* FOR MORE ADVICE ON ROOF MAINTENANCE, CONSULT THE FEATURE PREPARED BY CORPIQ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TOITURES WALLY ON [PAGE 52](#) OF THIS ISSUE.

Gutters and drainage

Clogged or sagging gutters promote water infiltration and damage foundations. As soon as spring arrives:

- **Clear them of debris** (leaves, branches, ice) and ensure that water drains at least 1.5 m away from the foundations.
- **Test the flow:** pour water and observe whether it moves away from the building; make sure downspouts and gutter guards are securely fastened.
- **Inspect the structure:** identify cracked sections, loose fasteners or sagging gutters. Remove debris by hand or with a blower, then rinse with a hose to confirm that water drains properly.
- **Repair or replace:** do not wait for the damage to worsen. Specialists are in high demand in the summer, so contact them in the spring if you notice significant cracks or sagging.



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Foundations, siding and window wells

Inspect the foundations for cracks or signs of moisture, especially in the basement. If a crack exceeds 6 mm, consult a professional. Examine the siding (brick, stone, wood, vinyl) to detect deteriorated caulking joints and seal them as needed. Remove snow, leaves and debris around window wells to prevent water accumulation. Monitor the condition of brick joints, spalled stones or split boards. Masonry work must be entrusted to specialists, generally in the middle of the warm season to benefit from mild temperatures.

EXPERT'S ADVICE

- In the spring, with snowmelt and heavy rains, it is the ideal time to carry out a general inspection of your home's foundations. A simple visual inspection often makes it possible to identify early warning signs and intervene before problems worsen.
- Begin by observing visible above-ground cracks in the foundation. Fine, superficial cracks are common, but those that widen, multiply or allow water to seep through deserve special attention. Stair-step cracks in masonry may also indicate foundation movement.
- Next, pay attention to the sealing around basement windows. Caulking joints must be intact and must have maintained their adhesion. If the sealant is stretched, cracked or detached, this may indicate that the structure has shifted. A window that appears crooked or displaced is also a possible sign of soil settlement beneath the foundation and should be assessed.
- Indoors, inspect foundation walls for the presence of efflorescence, a whitish powder that sometimes appears on concrete. This efflorescence is caused by moisture passing through the wall and may indicate inadequate drainage around the foundation, even if no water is visible inside.
- Also check the proper operation of your sump pump, if your property is equipped with one. Pour water into the basin to confirm that the pump starts and discharges water away from the foundation.
- Finally, examine the slope of the ground around the house. The soil must slope away from the building to direct water away. An inadequate slope may promote water accumulation and increase pressure on the foundations.
- These simple checks help protect your home and prevent costly repairs.
- [Bisson Expert](#)

Balconies, stairs, and guardrails

Balconies, decks, and stairs made of wood or metal are exposed to moisture and freezing temperatures. Check the solidity of railings and steps; tighten screws or replace rotted boards.

Test the stability of patios, steps and guardrails, replace mouldy boards and monitor the appearance of fungi.

Clean surfaces and, in dry weather, apply a protective sealant or anti-rust paint depending on the type of material.

4. MECHANICAL SYSTEMS AND INTERIOR SAFETY

Air conditioning and ventilation

Before the onset of hot weather, ensure that your air conditioning and ventilation systems are operating properly. Begin by clearing debris from around the outdoor unit and maintain a clearance of at least 1 metre around it.

EXPERT'S ADVICE

The heat pump has become an essential appliance in many homes, both for heating and air conditioning. For it to operate efficiently and maintain its performance over the years, regular maintenance is essential. Too often, people wait until a problem arises before taking action, whereas preventive maintenance helps avoid many breakdowns and unnecessary increases in energy consumption.

Do not hesitate to clean the filters yourself about once a month. This simple habit ensures proper air circulation, improves comfort in the home and contributes to better indoor air quality. Clean filters also allow the unit to work less hard and more quietly.

In addition to this basic maintenance, it is recommended to have a complete service performed by a professional at least once a year. This more thorough cleaning ensures that the system operates optimally and allows early detection of signs of wear or malfunction.

If you plan to schedule this maintenance, spring or fall are ideal times, since your heat pump will be less heavily used during these periods.

By taking care of your unit regularly, you extend its lifespan and ensure consistent comfort, season after season.

— [Confort Prestige Inc.](#)

EXPERT'S ADVICE

In a condominium building as in a house, cleaning ventilation ducts and air exchange systems plays a decisive role in indoor air quality. According to public health authorities, indoor air can be more polluted than outdoor air due to the accumulation of dust, allergens and moisture-related contaminants. When these particles accumulate in the ducts, they can be redistributed into the units and affect occupants' respiratory comfort.

In a residential setting, it is generally recommended to clean ventilation ducts every three to four years, or more frequently if you have pets, have recently carried out renovations or if certain occupants suffer from allergies. A decrease in airflow, persistent odours or visible dust accumulation may indicate that cleaning is necessary.

With respect to wall-mounted air conditioners, internal cleaning every two years, ideally before the summer season, is recommended. This intervention helps prevent the accumulation of dust and mould and improves energy efficiency. It is also advisable to clean the filters with soapy water at the beginning and mid-point of the summer season.

Cleaning dryer ducts is recommended every two to three years for normal use, and more frequently in cases of intensive use. This measure helps prevent fire hazards and optimize the appliance's performance.

— [MaxiClean](#)

Plumbing

After the winter, pipes may have been affected by freezing. Inspect outdoor faucets to identify cracks or leaks and examine the water heater and sump pump. Indoors, check the connections of the dishwasher, sinks, washing machine and toilets and replace worn hoses. Clean the sewer backwater valve once a year; if it is clogged, call a plumber. Schedule major replacements (water heater, sections of plumbing) early in the spring, as plumbers are often called out for basement flooding during the thaw.

Heating and chimneys

Even though heating equipment is less in demand once the extreme cold has passed, spring is the ideal time to turn your attention to your heating system. Prepare your equipment for the fall by scheduling maintenance now; this will allow you to avoid the September rush. Chimney sweeping must also be carried out at least once a year to prevent fires and carbon monoxide poisoning. Have it done in the spring, when deposits are easier to remove.

Electrical and safety

To prevent incidents, test all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and replace the batteries. Check the location and condition of fire extinguishers. An electrician should also inspect ground fault circuit interrupters and the overall electrical installations. Make an appointment early; electricians are in high demand for air conditioner installations and summer renovations.



5. INTERIOR CLEANING AND COMMON AREAS

Spring cleaning

Cleaning is an integral part of inspecting your vacant units throughout the year. Dust and clean surfaces, wash windows and screens, and disinfect handles and switches. Take the opportunity to clean appliances (refrigerator, oven, microwave) and textiles (curtains, rugs, covers). Lubricate door hinges, check and clean weatherstripping around windows. Also, take advantage of a cloudy day to wash exterior windows to avoid visible streaks.

Common areas and exterior spaces

Corridors, vestibules and laundry rooms must be clean and safe, in accordance with municipal obligations. In the spring, wash carpets, disinfect surfaces, and check the condition of secure entry systems. Elevators require inspection by a certified technician; this should be scheduled in the spring to avoid delays in the summer.

Test smoke detectors and alarm systems in stairwells and replace defective components.

Outdoors, prepare yards, gardens, and parking areas: rake leaves and reseed damaged areas of your lawn. Repair fences and put terraces back in order to provide a pleasant environment.



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6. ANTICIPATING REPAIRS AND PLANNING THE BUDGET

Reviewing your finances

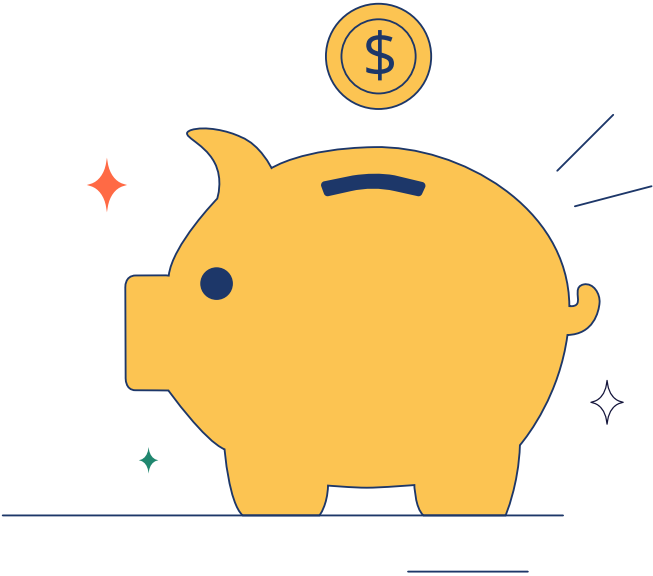
Planning a maintenance budget helps you avoid unpleasant surprises. Experts recommend setting aside approximately 1% to 2% of your property's value each year to cover unforeseen repairs and major work.

Condominium corporations are required to prepare a maintenance log and a contingency fund outlining the work to be carried out over 25 years and its estimated cost. Even if you own a rental building, there is nothing preventing you from drawing inspiration from this approach: your spring inspection will help you set priorities and plan your investments over several years.

7. PREPARING FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Maintenance is not limited to routine upkeep: it also includes emergency preparedness. It is recommended to implement emergency measures to protect occupants in the event of fire, gas leaks, or [flooding](#), and to communicate these procedures to all residents. Take advantage of inspections to update your evacuation plans, verify that fire extinguishers are accessible and test alarms. Ensure that sump pumps and backwater valves are functioning properly. Clearly identify the location of the main shut-off valve and the backflow prevention valve for quick access if needed. Keep an up-to-date list of trusted emergency contacts (plumber, electrician, roofer, chimney sweep, locksmith) and post it in common areas.

Spring is not only the return of budding trees: it is the key time to inspect, prevent, and plan. By respecting your legal obligations and implementing a structured maintenance program, you protect your investment, ensure occupants' safety and avoid costly repairs. By planning inspections and repairs in advance, as well as communicating effectively with your tenants, spring maintenance becomes a way to enhance and ensure the sustainability of your building. For more information on landlords' and tenants' rights and obligations related to maintenance and work, consult our [practical guide](#).



PARTNER COLUMN

Rent adjustments: a financial lever to approach with balance

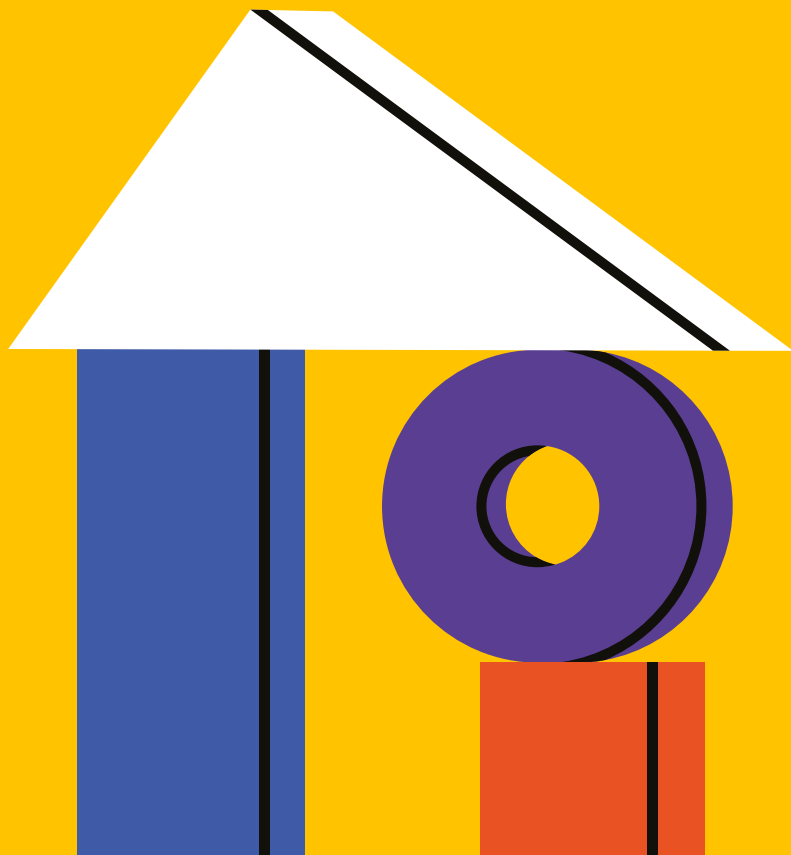
In the current context of Québec's rental market, the issue of rent adjustments raises many questions each year, both for the landlord and the tenant.

In 2026, the Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) suggested an average rent increase of 3.1%. This recommendation is part of a regulatory framework and aims to reflect the evolution of actual costs related to building operations. For landlords, the annual rent adjustment must be approached with rigour and transparency, as it can have major impacts — both positive and negative — on a building's value, its borrowing capacity, and its overall financial health.

Several different approaches may be considered. Some landlords will choose not to increase rents, favouring rental stability. Others may seek to reflect the real increase in their operating costs. Between these two approaches, there is an unavoidable financial reality: **a building's income is the primary driver of its value and financing.**



BY PETER QUINN
DIRECTOR AND COMMERCIAL
MORTGAGE BROKER
AT MULTI-PRÊTS COMMERCIAL



RENTAL INCOME: A KEY ELEMENT IN ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF BUILDINGS

Unlike a single-family residential property, a rental building relies on a financial balance that makes it possible to cover the expenses essential to its management and to its ability to generate stable and predictable cash flow.

The income collected is used in particular to cover taxes, insurance — the costs of which have risen sharply in recent years — routine maintenance, major repairs, as well as the work required to maintain the quality of the rental offering. Thus, rent adjustments primarily help ensure the sustainability of buildings and of Québec's rental housing stock. In commercial financing, a building's market value is generally determined based on its net operating income. Even a modest rent adjustment therefore has a multiplier effect on the value of the building.

It should be noted that the gradual increase in expenses will reduce the increase in gross income. Therefore, net income rather than gross income must be analyzed. For a landlord considering refinancing in the medium term, this gradual and structured increase in income becomes a strategic tool rather than a simple annual decision.

A DECISION THAT MUST TAKE SEVERAL PARAMETERS INTO ACCOUNT

Any financial decision involves risks, and rent adjustment is no exception. The first risk, and not the least, is the loss of a stable tenant, who represents significant value for a building, although difficult to quantify, and a poorly explained or overly abrupt increase can weaken the rental relationship or lead to a departure. This would result in:

- A vacancy period;
- Refurbishment costs;
- Re-leasing costs;
- A temporary loss of income.

In a context where Québec's economy is showing certain signs of slowdown and vacancy rates tend to increase in some markets, this risk must be assessed seriously.

RENT ADJUSTMENTS AND VACANCY RATES: A BALANCE TO FIND

A building rented with rents slightly below market may, in some cases, be more profitable in the short term than a partially vacant building with theoretically higher rents.

This is why the adjustment suggested by the TAL must be seen as a "benchmark", not as a blind obligation. Each building, each neighbourhood and each tenant profile presents a different reality.

From a financial standpoint, the key question then becomes: "Does the projected increase offset the risk of vacancy?"

A prudent landlord will assess this decision not solely from the perspective of monthly income, but also from that of the overall stability of the asset.

The most common mistake is to approach rent increases emotionally, either out of fear of conflict or frustration with rising costs. A well-planned increase, clearly explained and aligned with the TAL’s rules generally makes it possible to:

- Maintain a healthy relationship with tenants;
- Preserve the stability of the building;
- Gradually improve the financial performance of the asset.

The particular situation of each building must therefore be considered, along with communication and transparency, while respecting what is permitted under the rent-setting criteria.

THE IMPACTS ON BORROWING CAPACITY

From the perspective of a commercial mortgage broker, one of the first elements analyzed by a lender is the building’s ability to support its debt. This capacity essentially rests on two pillars:

1. The net income generated by the building;
2. The stability and sustainability of that income.

A rent adjustment improves the financial ratios used by financial institutions, particularly debt coverage. The stronger this coverage, the more willing the lender will be to:

- Grant a higher financing amount;
- Offer better terms;
- Extend the amortization; or
- Accept a refinancing with equity take-out.

In other words, increasing rents today means expanding your financing options tomorrow.

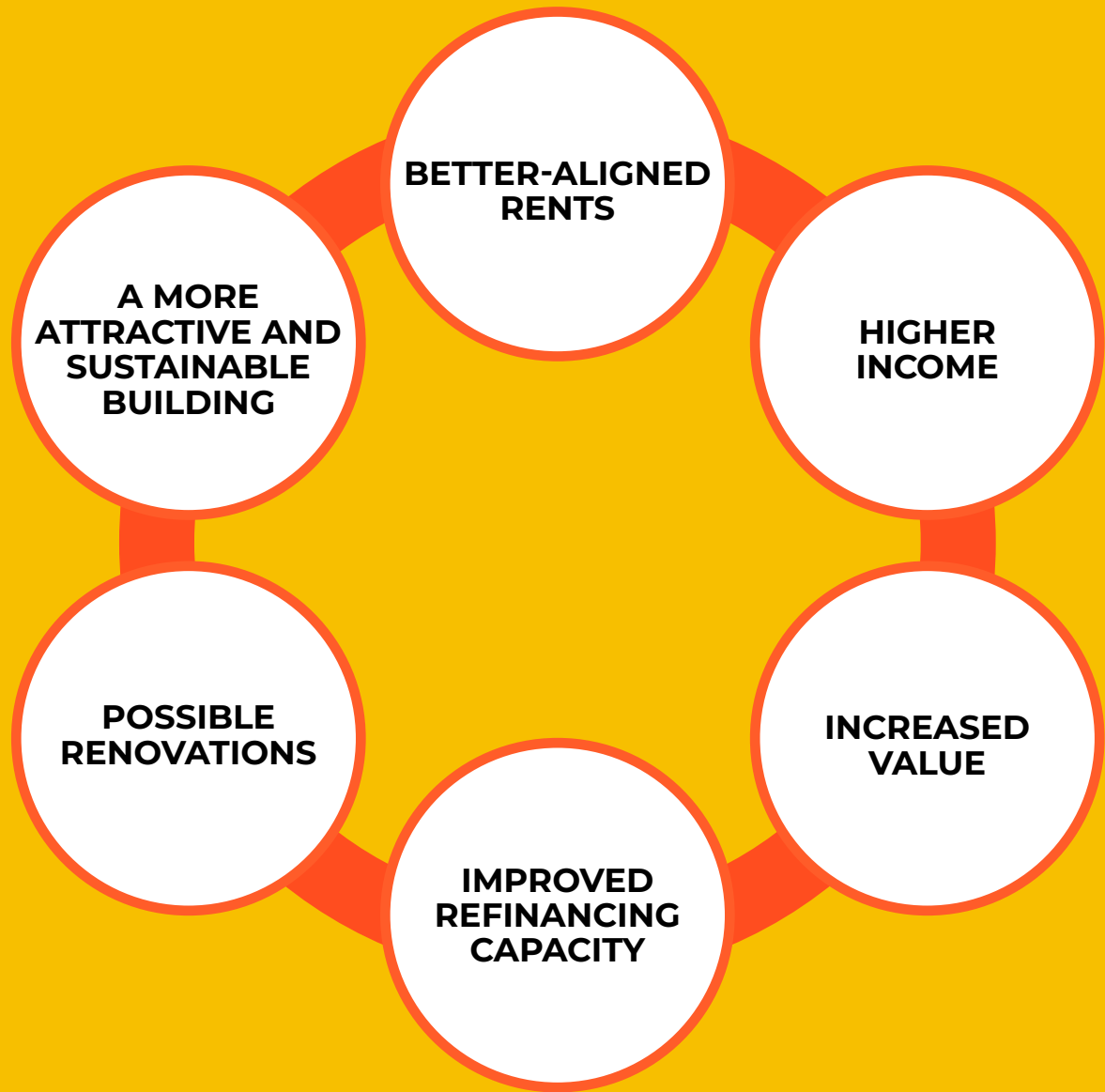
THE IMPACTS ON REFINANCING, BETTER MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION

A well-maintained building is a building that will be sustainable. However, maintenance and renovation require liquidity. Too often, landlords attempt to finance this work solely from their personal savings, whereas the building itself can become the source of that capital.

When income increases and the economic value improves, refinancing becomes a powerful lever to:

- Modernize units;
- Improve energy efficiency;
- Correct major deficiencies; or
- Reposition the building in its market.

It is a virtuous circle:



CONCLUSION: RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT
FOR A LONG-TERM VISION

From a strictly financial standpoint, rent adjustment must be approached with clarity and discernment for rental management that is rooted in a long-term perspective.

When properly managed and explained, the annual adjustment can help improve borrowing capacity, facilitate refinancing, free up liquidity and open the door to necessary or strategic reinvestments.

In the long term, buildings that generate optimized, stable and well-documented income are those that attract the best financing and offer the strongest growth opportunities.

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ADVICE

Renewal notices sent: how to manage refusals, silences, and negotiations without error

Each year, spring marks a key moment in the rental cycle. Renewal notices have been sent, deadlines begin to run and, for many landlords and managers, questions start to accumulate. “What should I do if the tenant refuses?” “What is the procedure to follow if the tenant does not respond?” “Do I have to go to the Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) to resolve my situation?”

This period, which extends from March to May, is decisive. The decisions made now can influence not only the rent, but also the rental relationship and the legal risks for the coming year. A good understanding of the rules set out in the Civil Code of Québec (C.c.Q.) makes it possible to act with confidence and method.



BY SOPHIE SALLALEH
DIRECTOR OF CONSULTING
AND TRAINING SERVICES,
CORPIQ



SPRING: A PIVOTAL PERIOD IN RENTAL LAW

In matters of residential leases, renewal is based on a fundamental principle: the lease is renewed by operation of law, unless a compliant notice is given within the prescribed time limits (articles 1941 and 1942 C.c.Q.). It is therefore understood that if the landlord does not send any notice during the renewal period (for leases from July 1 to June 30, for example, this period is between 3 to 6 months before the end of the lease, that is, from January 1 to March 31) and the tenant has also not sent a notice of [non-renewal of the lease](#) (art. 1946 C.c.Q.) during the same period, the same lease will be renewed under the same conditions.

Warning: in light of the recent legislative amendments, it is essential that landlords ensure that their lease renewal notices contain all the mandatory information provided for in article 1943 of the Civil Code of Québec as well as in the Regulation respecting the mandatory content of the notice to modify the lease of a dwelling (see the templates available in CORPIQ's [sample letters](#) and forms).

Once the renewal notice has been sent by the landlord, the legal framework is clear, but often misunderstood. Several errors may occur at this stage: missed deadlines, negotiations without follow-up, or lack of knowledge of the available recourse.

FOUR POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOLLOWING THE RENEWAL NOTICE

After receiving the notice of modification of the lease, the tenant has a period to respond, in accordance with article 1945 C.c.Q.

Four situations are then possible:

1. The tenant accepts the proposed modifications;
2. The tenant does not renew the lease and will vacate the dwelling at the end of the term;
3. The tenant does not respond;
4. The tenant refuses the rent increase and renews the lease.

Each of these scenarios entails distinct legal consequences.

WHEN THE TENANT ACCEPTS: CONSOLIDATE WITHOUT COMPLICATING

When the tenant accepts the increase and/or the proposed modifications, the lease is renewed under the new conditions. The Civil Code does not require any additional formality: acceptance, even tacit or simply in writing, is sufficient (art. 1945 C.c.Q.).

Best management practices:

- Keep proof of acceptance;
- Update the rental file.

To avoid:

- Requiring the signing of a new lease unnecessarily: the renewal notice as well as the proof of acceptance become integral parts of the lease;
- Modifying other clauses without express consent.

WHEN THE TENANT DOES NOT RENEW THE LEASE AND WILL VACATE THE DWELLING AT THE END OF THE TERM

When the tenant notifies that they do not wish to renew the lease and that they will vacate the dwelling at the end of the term, the lease ends in accordance with article 1945 C.c.Q. The landlord must then prepare for the re-leasing of the dwelling, a step that also involves its own obligations and best practices: planning visits, respecting the tenant's right to peaceful enjoyment until the end of the lease, restoring the dwelling to good condition and preparing for the next rental cycle. To further explore this situation and properly manage the re-leasing process, do not hesitate to consult our [complete article](#) on this subject.

THE TENANT'S SILENCE: A SPECIFIC LEGAL EFFECT

It should be specified that the tenant's silence following receipt of the renewal notice is equivalent to an acceptance of the proposed modifications, if the notice was given in accordance with the law (art. 1945 C.c.Q.). It is therefore important to ensure that the notice is sent by a method that provides proof of receipt by the tenants (e.g., registered mail with signature, certified [Pronotif](#) email, bailiff or hand delivery with signature).

This means that:

- The lease is renewed;
- The new rent applies at the next term;
- No additional steps are required.

Attention: if the tenant is able to prove that they did send their response within the month following receipt of the renewal notice, but that it was received by the landlord after the deadline, their response is nonetheless valid.

Best practice: even if the law is clear, it is recommended to record the absence of a response and to send a written confirmation of the changes applicable at the next term, in order to avoid any grey area or misunderstanding.

WHEN THE TENANT REFUSES THE MODIFICATIONS AND RENEWS THE LEASE: UNDERSTANDING THEIR RIGHTS AND ACTING ON TIME

A refusal of the modifications proposed by the landlord does not necessarily terminate the lease. Under article 1945 C.c.Q., the tenant may refuse the modification while remaining in the dwelling. The lease is then renewed, but the modifications (often the rent increase) become contested.

The landlord then has a specific remedy within a specific time limit: to ask the TAL to rule on the contested modifications by filing an [Application to modify the lease](#), within the time prescribed by law, which is one month following receipt of the tenant's refusal (art. 1947 C.c.Q.).



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Attention: contrary to a widespread belief, the Civil Code of Québec does not prescribe any particular form for the tenant's refusal. The essential element is that the tenant ensures that the landlord has received their response. It may therefore be sent by various means, including by email or text message, without being invalid for that reason. However, a "[Tenant's Response](#)" template is available on the websites of the TAL and CORPIQ, and may be enclosed by landlords when sending the renewal notice.

NEGOTIATING: A PERMITTED (AND REGULATED) OPTION

Negotiation is entirely legal, and even encouraged, since it may lead to a written agreement that is satisfactory to both parties. However, it is essential to understand that a new offer or a counter-offer, whether from the landlord or the tenant, does not suspend or restart the one-month period available to the landlord to file an application to modify the lease in order to have the rent and/or other changes to the conditions set by the TAL.

This time limit therefore continues to run during discussions. It is crucial to monitor it carefully (for example by using an alert in your calendar or a reminder in your management software), because once this time limit has expired, the lease is automatically renewed under the same conditions, without any modification.

Best practices:

- Present the calculation grid to the tenant along with the supporting documents. This approach demonstrates your good faith and the reasonableness of the proposed amount. It may also allow you to obtain reimbursement of costs if the file is brought before the TAL and the clerk sets an amount equal to or higher than the one proposed (Schedule I, art. 3 of the Regulation respecting the mandatory content of the notice to modify the lease of a dwelling).
- Before undertaking legal steps, it is relevant to assess the situation as a whole: the deadlines, the costs, the impact on the rental relationship, as well as the current context of the rental market. If the requested rent is higher than that of comparable dwellings, it may be preferable to prioritize negotiation. This helps avoid the risk of ending up with a vacant dwelling and therefore significant financial losses.
- It may be useful to request a conciliation session by checking the appropriate box in the [application](#) and inviting the tenant to participate. Ultimately, rent setting is a precise calculation, often misunderstood by the parties, and the conciliator will be able to explain the process in a neutral manner, fostering a constructive discussion. Conciliation is a confidential process. If there is no agreement, the hearing remains scheduled and if there is an agreement, delays and procedures are avoided.

To avoid:

- Sending a second renewal notice following negotiations. The agreement reached should instead be recorded in a clear written document summarizing the situation and the conditions accepted by the parties.



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RECOURSE TO THE TAL

Failing an agreement, the landlord may apply to the TAL to have the rent set in accordance with the criteria provided by law or, as the case may be, to have any other modification of the lease ruled upon (art. 1947 C.c.Q.).

The application to modify the lease also allows the landlord to request that the monthly rent be set at the amount of \$X, but this option is applicable only in very specific exceptional cases, notably in the case of a preferential rent.

- Failing to file proof of notification and, where applicable, the list of exhibits within 45 days following the filing of the application;
- Failing to file the [required information form](#) (RN form) within 90 days from the date the form is sent by the tribunal.

It is essential to comply with these time limits, since these procedural errors will lead to the closing of the file.

Frequent errors:

- Failing to file the application within the prescribed time limit, which results in the renewal of the lease without an increase. Attention: an application received by the tribunal on a statutory holiday or after 4:30 p.m. on a business day is deemed received on the next business day following its receipt;



PREPARING FOR
A RENT SETTING: RELYING
ON EVIDENCE

When a rent setting is requested, the tribunal analyzes the elements provided in the [Regulation respecting the criteria for the setting of rent](#) (this regulation is available in French only at the moment), notably the basic rent adjustment (the average annual variation of the Québec all-items Consumer Price Index (over the last three years), a portion of the variation in taxes and insurance if the variation exceeds the basic rent adjustment, capital expenditures (major repairs and improvements) and expenses resulting from the implementation of a service, accessory or dependent facility, incurred in the previous year. It also ensures that the legal time limits have been complied with.

Key documents:

- Renewal notice;
- Proof of receipt of the renewal notice by the tenant;
- Tenant’s response and proof of the date of receipt;
- Required information form properly completed;
- Invoices and proof of work;
- Municipal and school tax statements and fire and liability insurance policies;
- Lease history (original lease and the latest renewal notice);
- Any other relevant document depending on the specific situation.

The TAL bases its decision on concrete and documented evidence. Have on hand a copy of your evidence for the tribunal and a copy for the responding party (tenant). It is recommended to keep your originals.

In cases where the landlord is the new owner of the immovable, they must obtain from the previous owner the invoices for the expenses incurred for the applicable reference period. These expenses must be added to the calculation even if the new owner did not personally assume payment of them. If it is not possible to obtain these documents, it is possible to ask an administrative judge or a special clerk of the TAL to issue a subpoena compelling the seller to appear at the hearing with the required supporting documents for the application. Moreover, please note that the seller may provide a copy (scanned or photographed) and keep their original documents.

For many, the period from March to May is decisive in matters of residential leases. By understanding the rules set out in the Civil Code of Québec and by adopting structured management practices, landlords and managers can secure their decisions, reduce conflicts and better prepare for the upcoming rental cycle.

Sound legal information, combined with rigorous management, remains the landlord’s best ally. For any questions or information regarding management during this pivotal period, do not hesitate to contact CORPIQ’s advisors.



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REPORT

Freeze, rain, thaw: is your roof ready?

The roof is often perceived as a technical, even secondary, component of a rental building. Yet, it is one of its invisible pillars.

In our Québec context, where the climate can prove unforgiving, it represents much more than a covering: it is the first line of defence against leaks, energy loss, and costly deterioration



LUC DESCHENES,
Specialist in multi-unit
residential and commercial
roofing

At CORPIQ, we observe that losses related to water infiltration are among the most costly for landlords of rental buildings. For this feature, we spoke with Luc Deschenes of [Toitures Wally](#), a specialist in multi-unit residential and commercial roofing for more than 25 years, in order to offer you a concrete overview tailored to the reality of Québec plexes.

WHY THE ROOF IS AT THE HEART OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

In rental real estate, the roof not only ensures the protection of the building’s structure, but it also guarantees the safety and comfort of tenants. A well-maintained roof helps preserve the value of the building and avoid the costs associated with major losses. In a market where profitability is often tight, neglecting the roof can quickly turn a profitable asset into a financial sinkhole.

For a landlord of a duplex or triplex, a complete replacement can represent the equivalent of one year of net income. Anticipation therefore becomes an essential management tool.

The Québec climate adds to this already significant challenge. Heavy precipitation, increasingly unpredictable freeze-thaw cycles, snow accumulation, and torrential rains put roofing systems’ durability to the test. As extreme weather events increase, it becomes essential to choose an appropriate system and maintain it diligently.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

And what about conditions specific to the Québec climate? “Ten years ago, we would not have given the same answer because despite the very wide temperature swings of Québec’s seasons, temperatures and precipitation were much more predictable and gradual than what we have observed in recent years,” explains Mr. Deschenes.

We are experiencing more “extreme” situations than in the past when it comes to temperatures. During the warmer months, there are more and more torrential rains, and roof coverings must absorb dozens of millimetres of rain in a very short time. On a flat roof, it must be perfectly watertight to ensure the integrity of the building if the drain cannot keep up. When it is clogged, too small, or if the municipal sewer system to which it is connected can no longer keep up, the roof fills with water.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, frigid periods and the number of freeze-thaw cycles have multiplied. In winter, a thaw is enough to melt part of the snow on a roof, but since it does not melt completely, the water often struggles to drain properly. This water therefore remains trapped and forms a layer of ice with the next drop in temperature. Stringing together several episodes of this kind creates and amplifies real problems for roofs. The risks of infiltration increase, and the load borne by the roof becomes more significant due to ice accumulation, which raises the risk of collapse. For sloped roofs, it is the increase in ice dams that requires attention. This is in fact the main cause of infiltration on shingle roofs.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ROOFS

Landlords of rental buildings often have to deal with flat or low-slope roofs. It is very important to specify that all types of roofing, when properly installed, represent good options. The type of material used will mainly depend on the slope of the roof. It is then the deck, that is, what makes up the roof structure (whether wood, metal or concrete), that will determine whether the roofing system can be adhered or mechanically fastened.

Here is an overview of the most common options.



Asphalt shingles

This is the best known and most popular type of covering, which is not surprising, as shingles are an affordable and aesthetically versatile material. Recent installations are in fact guaranteed for 40 years by manufacturers. However, they must not be installed on slopes lower than 3/12.

Although they offer good resistance to bad weather, they are not completely watertight, hence the importance of installing a waterproofing membrane. With this additional underlayment combined with the natural slope of the roof, the surface acts “like a duck’s feathers” to shed water, as Luc Deschenes illustrates.

This is why attention must be paid to ice dams in winter, which can form on the roof and cause infiltration. Water running downward will not be able to pass under the shingles, but when ice dams form, they allow water to back up under the shingles and create infiltration.

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Metal roofs

Appreciated for their longevity and aesthetics, metal roofs are not suitable for low slopes. Steeper slopes are best suited for this type of covering, and they also allow for a better view of the metal, which is a significant advantage for those who appreciate this type of roofing.

Several types of metal roofing are available on the market, each with its own installation method and maintenance requirements. “If we choose a screwed metal roof, the rubber washers under the screws that ensure the watertightness of our roof will dry out in the sun over the years. Replacing the screws will then be necessary and can be quite costly given the constraints related to moving around on a metal roof to carry out the necessary repairs. Although the cost is higher for a model without exposed fasteners, this additional expense will save you maintenance costs in the years to come,” explains Mr. Deschenes.



Metal shingles

Offering the appearance of asphalt shingles with the longevity of metal, this hybrid material is an excellent choice for landlords seeking a solution requiring a low level of maintenance. By comparison, this type of covering is more expensive than asphalt shingles, with prices approaching those of metal roofs without exposed fasteners and without additional maintenance required. It should be noted that this covering is not recommended for low-slope roofs.



Asphalte et gravier

Having long been the standard for flat roofs, this multi-layer system protects the surface it covers through a layering of tar and felt, topped with gravel. It is in fact these numerous layers of material that are the source of its watertightness. The gravel added on the surface serves to protect the underlying layers from the sun.

When a roof of this type reaches the end of its life, cracks can form in the system and cause infiltration. Despite a somewhat shorter lifespan than membrane roofs, this type of covering is less expensive and has largely proven itself over time.



Elastomeric membrane

This is a two-ply system made of modified bitumen and polymer. A base sheet is mechanically fastened and then a finishing membrane is heat-welded over it. Highly flexible and durable, it is currently the most resistant type of roofing on the market. However, it is also the most expensive solution. Since this covering is installed with a torch, it is essential to choose your contractor carefully and ensure that they carry adequate insurance.

Elastomeric membrane is the best solution for single-family homes with slopes of less than 4/12. It is a covering that is durable, completely watertight, and aesthetically pleasing.



TPO membrane

This roofing system is increasingly sold in Québec due to its ease of installation and affordable price. It is highly resistant to UV rays and algae. A notable advantage of this type of covering is that it can be recycled when it reaches the end of its useful life, making it the most environmentally friendly option. However, since it is a single-ply system, the membrane is more fragile than bitumen roofs. This fragility also leaves no room for error during installation.

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO FLAT ROOFS

The main challenge of a flat roof is water drainage. Drains must be functional and clear; otherwise, accumulation can cause infiltration, even if the system is designed to withstand a certain amount of ponding.

Inspection and maintenance: habits to adopt

Preventive maintenance is the best way to avoid premature and costly replacements. Two inspections per year are recommended: one in the fall and another in the spring.

ITEMS TO INSPECT DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF ROOF:

- **Shingles:** crumbling, curled edges.
- **Asphalt and gravel:** blistering, lack of gravel.
- **Elastomeric membrane:** loss of granules.
- **Flat roofs:** clogged drains, damaged flashings, worn sealant joints.

ESSENTIAL SEASONAL MAINTENANCE:

- Cleaning of gutters (sloped roof) or drains (flat roof);
- Checking caulking and ventilation;
- Partial snow removal in winter (leave a thin layer of ice to avoid damaging the membrane)*.

* “The most common mistake is that people want to remove all the snow and they damage the roof. Shovel blows to roofs are a frequent source of water infiltration. During snow removal, we therefore advise our clients to leave the thin layer of ice that is directly on the roof and remove only the snow on top,” recommends Mr. Deschenes.

SIMPLE INSPECTION TO CARRY OUT YOURSELF:

- Remove visible debris;
- Visually check the overall condition;
- Inspect the attic for signs of water.

In all cases, accessing your roof should always be done safely. If you do not have the necessary equipment or skills, call on the services of experts in the field.

REPAIR OR REPLACE: HOW TO DECIDE?

Although manufacturers announce an indicative lifespan (e.g.: shingles 40 years, metal 50–70 years, elastomeric membrane 25–30 years), several factors can shorten this period: poor installation, neglected maintenance, exposure to bad weather.

Signs that the roof must be replaced:

- Repeated repairs over a short period;
- Widespread deterioration of the covering;
- Presence of infiltration despite isolated interventions.

At this stage, it is better to invest in a complete replacement than to continue patching breaches. It is an economically sound choice in the long term.

Before signing a contract, it is essential to:

- Verify that the contractor holds a valid RBQ licence;
- Confirm that they carry civil liability insurance;
- Ensure that they specialize in the type of roofing in question (a shingle roofer does not necessarily have the same experience and skills as a roofer specializing in flat roofs, and vice versa).

WHAT THE LAW SAYS ABOUT ROOFS

Under the Civil Code of Québec (articles 1854 and 1910), the landlord has the obligation to keep their building in good condition. A defective roof could engage their civil liability in the event of damage to a tenant or to the tenant's property.

Certain municipal by-laws also impose maintenance or material standards. It is also important not to forget to inform your insurer of any replacement or major repair carried out on one of your properties. An omission may result in a denial of coverage in the event of a loss.

CONCLUSION: INVESTING IN THE ROOF MEANS PROTECTING YOUR ASSETS

A roof in good condition improves the value of your building, ensures tenants' comfort, reduces rental interruptions and decreases the risk of disputes. It is a strategic investment that will save you many unnecessary expenses.

For landlords in rental real estate, adopting a proactive approach to roof maintenance, choosing the right materials and working with qualified professionals are prudent steps that also have positive impacts on your profitability.

And remember, in real estate as elsewhere, prevention always costs less than repair!

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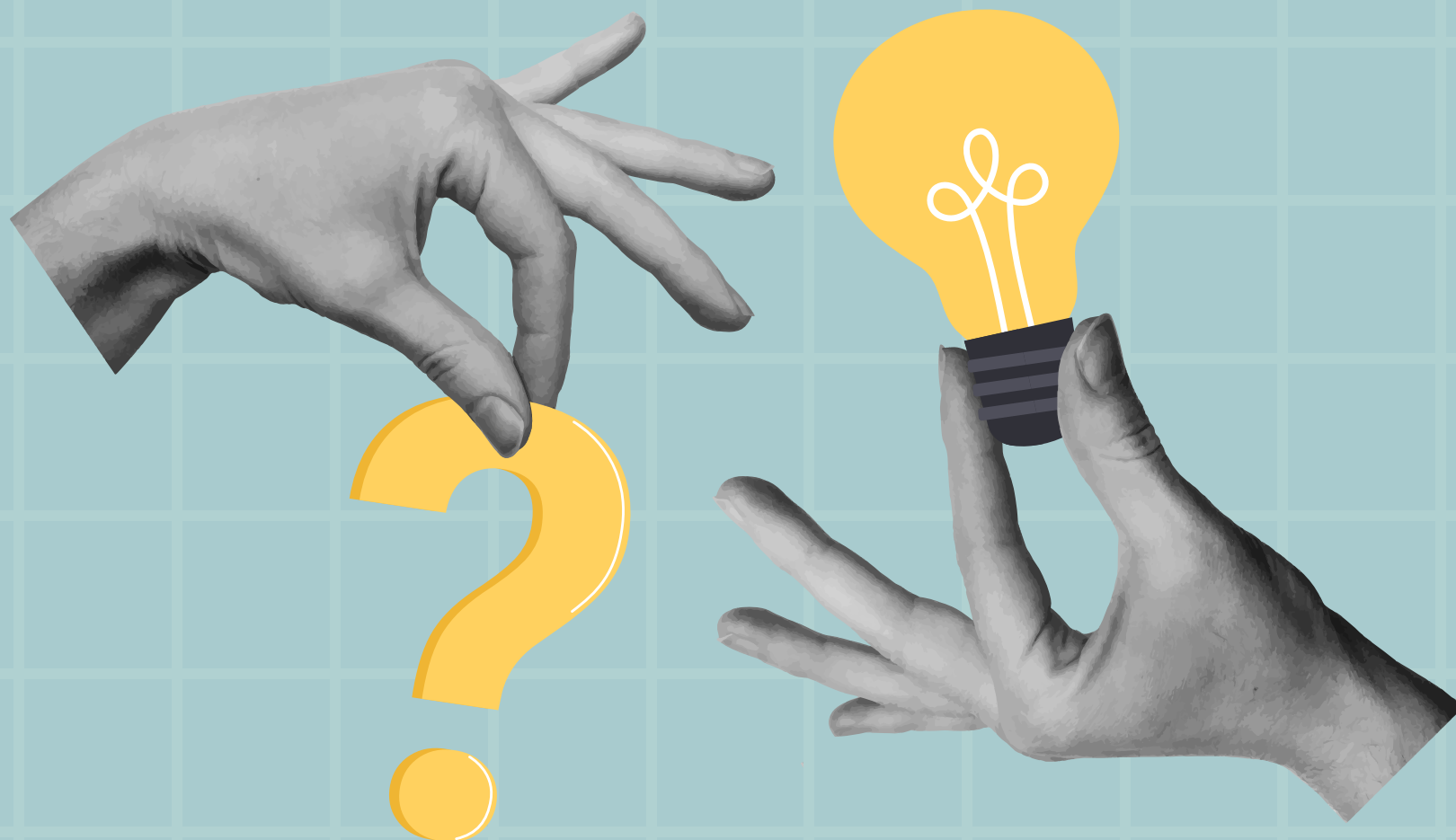
BILLBOARD

Member's questions

Thank you to everyone who wrote over the past few weeks to share their questions. Some of them have been selected by our teams and answered in this edition.

Are you a CORPIQ member with a question about rental management, landlords' rights, or any other topic related to rental real estate? Stay tuned, we will send you an email to collect your questions for the next issue!

The answers provided in this bulletin board are based on residential tenancy legislation in force in Quebec. However, they do not constitute legal advice. For legal advice, please consult a lawyer.



Chenet. F

QUESTION

I have a tenant who has not paid their rent since January 1. They had mentioned being on a trip and having encountered a banking issue (card blocked), promising to regularize the situation upon their return. However, I still have not received payment and, despite my attempts to reach them, I remain without news. May I go directly to their unit or is it preferable to communicate only by email? What steps should I take in this type of situation?

ANSWER

It is possible to send a [24-hour notice](#) to the tenant in order to verify whether they are still occupying the dwelling and, if so, to follow up directly with them. A tenant may indeed be going through a difficult situation, but they remain required to communicate with you proactively to reassure you regarding payment of the rent.

If the non-payment and lack of communication persist, be aware that after more than three weeks of delay, you may [file an application](#) with the Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) regarding non-payment of rent. This step allows you to claim the unpaid rent and request the termination of the lease.

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Sylvie. T

QUESTION

Are expenses related to a monitoring centre, notably for a fire alarm system, admissible in the TAL calculation for rent setting?

ANSWER

Article 1, paragraph 6 of [Schedule I of the Regulation respecting the criteria for the fixing of rent](#) (this regulation is available in French only at the moment) indicates that work aimed at the “Upgrading of safety systems, including sprinklers, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers or emergency staircases” is admissible.

Accordingly, certain expenses related to a fire alarm system or its monitoring may be considered admissible in the rent-setting calculation, to the extent that they are intended to improve or maintain the building's safety. Please note that in the event of a challenge by your tenant, it will be up to you to file an [application for modification of the lease](#), and the tribunal will render a decision.

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Linda. F

QUESTION

A tenant has been deceased for several months and we have no information regarding her family or heirs. We have only been in contact with a friend, who indicated that he does not wish to be involved in the matter.

The tenant's personal belongings are still in the dwelling and we continue to receive their mail. More than six months have passed since the death. Following verification, Revenu Québec informed us that a will search must be carried out.

Is it really the landlord's responsibility to undertake these steps in addition to assuming the costs and responsibilities?

ANSWER

We invite you to consult our [article](#) published in the December 2025 edition of our magazine, which outlines the steps to take in the event of a tenant's death. This article will guide you through the options available to you in order to help you limit, as much as possible, rental losses in this type of situation.

If necessary, do not hesitate to contact CORPIQ [advisory services](#), who can assist you according to the particularities of your file.

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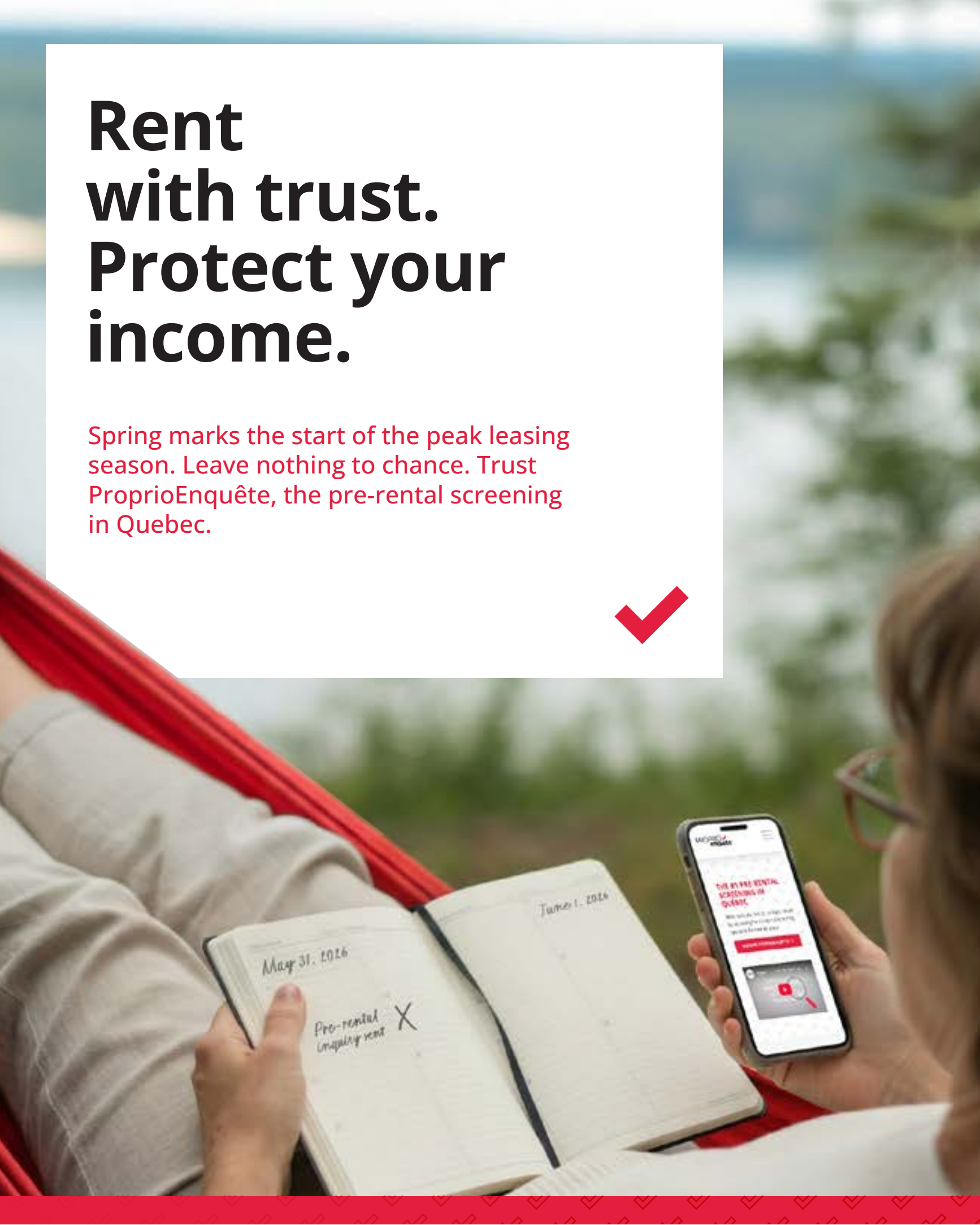
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Dominic. P

QUESTION

What is the procedure for a landlord when a tenant presents a compulsive hoarding disorder and clutters their dwelling to the point where the situation appears unsafe?

I understand that there may be risks related to safety and sanitation, but I hesitate to call emergency services, such as the fire department, for fear of the responsibilities this could entail. Concretely, where do my obligations and responsibilities lie in such a situation?

ANSWER

As a landlord, it is important to intervene in order to ensure the sanitation and safety of the building, the other occupants and the tenant themselves.

It is generally recommended to begin by sending a formal written notice requesting that the tenant declutter the dwelling within a reasonable timeframe, specifying that additional steps may be taken in the event of non-compliance.

If the situation presents a real safety risk (e.g. fire hazard), it is appropriate to contact the fire department in order to obtain an objective assessment. You will then have in hand a neutral report on the condition of the dwelling.

This type of documentation may then be used to support an application to the TAL, notably to order the tenant to declutter their unit or, in more serious cases, to request termination of the lease.

Johanne. M

QUESTION

Is it normal that major repairs or work totalling \$20,000 would result in an increase of only about \$25 per month for a four-unit building, according to the 2026 rent adjustment calculation?

ANSWER

Yes, this is a possible situation. It is important to know that, for this portion of the calculation, 5% of the cost of the work is taken into consideration (amortization over 20 years). This amount is then spread over 12 months and allocated among the units according to their respective shares, calculated on a pro rata basis of the building's total income.

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