

# Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance

## Projecting the Housing Needs of Aging Atlantic Canadians

### About ASHRA



The Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance (ASHRA) is an alliance with representatives from universities, seniors' organizations, government departments, housing developers and service providers from the Atlantic Provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. The project was designed to build a detailed picture of aging Atlantic Canadians and their potential living arrangement needs over the next 20 years, and examine emerging options in housing choices, support services, and policies that can effectively meet them. Three key research products have emerged from the ASHRA project, including the **Report on the Atlantic Seniors' Housing and Support Services Survey (2007)**; **Focus Group Report (2008)**; and **Case Studies (2008)**. This information sheet is one in a series providing information on the key messages that have been extracted from the project results. The focus of this fact sheet is to highlight the ASHRA Survey and Focus Group findings in relation to seniors home repair needs. For more information about the ASHRA project and its research activities, visit [www.ashra.ca](http://www.ashra.ca).

## Seniors Have Home Repair Needs

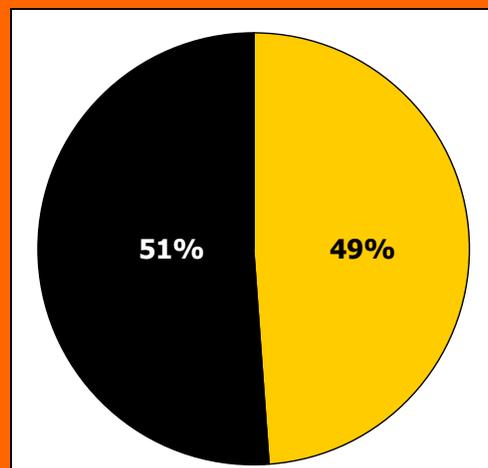
### Facts about Seniors' Home Repair Needs



Results from ASHRA's survey of more than 1700 Atlantic Canadian seniors strongly suggest that most seniors have home repair needs. Seniors living in older homes more commonly report that their home needs major repairs.

- Over half of seniors' homes need some form of repair.
- 32% of seniors' homes built before 1946 have major repair needs.
- 21% of seniors' homes need repairs related to corroded pipes, damaged electrical wiring, and crumbling foundations.
- Many seniors have concerns with safety and accessibility, such as windows (76%), entrance areas (82%), and storage spaces (84%).

### Home Repair Needs



Seniors with home repair needs  
 Seniors with no home repair needs

# Concerns for Energy Efficiency

Over 48% of seniors report that they need to make some sort of improvement to the energy efficiency of their home. These concerns are particularly important in light of the rising costs of home heating fuel and electricity, and increasing pressure to conserve energy.

- **69%** need to make **minor** energy efficiency repairs, such as adding insulation or blocking drafts.
- **48%** need to make **major** energy efficiency improvements, such as replacing windows or heating systems.



## Voices of Specific Populations

In 2007, ASHRA researchers conducted 15 focus groups with specific populations, including Francophone, Rural/Remote, Aboriginal, Disabled, and Multicultural seniors. Participants, both homeowners and renters, discussed the difficulties they encountered in maintaining their homes. They spoke of financial concerns related to home maintenance, issues related to finding hired help, and difficulties with landlords.

**"There is no one to paint your porch. There is no one who will repair the broken ramp. There is no one who will shovel the snow off your entrance"**

Francophone Senior

Disabled Senior

**"...I know I'm not going to be there for too much longer because I just, I can't afford to keep up with grass cutting, with snow removal, with the taxes the way they're going. It's just getting ridiculous."**

**"It's the same with the raking and mowing and any of the housework...There are a lot of added costs to aging that I don't think are always taken into consideration as we try to stay in our own homes."**

Disabled Senior

Aboriginal Senior

**"I am intimidated to stand up to the authorities, but they should guarantee that they will upkeep small things in the housing units..."**

**"...my place is very dark, and I wanted a light on the pole, and they told me that I would have to pay \$50 a month to get a light on that pole."**

Multicultural Senior



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

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