

Guide for setting up and Accompanying Vigilance Teams



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Office municipal
d'habitation
de Montréal

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Annexed

Tool box for the vigilant volunteer team

- Registration form
- Vigilant volunteer commitment form
- The functioning of the vigilance program
- Procedure for situations of concern
- Call to the emergency services
- Table of rounds for the vigilant volunteers

The Guide for setting up and Accompanying Vigilance Teams is published by the OMHM's communications team and the module of community and social development.



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INTRODUCTION

This guide was devised for the vigilance teams. It is meant to be a flexible and user-friendly tool, with simple and practical instruments for setting up teams of vigilant volunteers.

Certain parts of the guide were inspired by the consultations that were made with vigilance teams that already existed in 2008. In fact, you will find many of their interesting ideas in this guide.

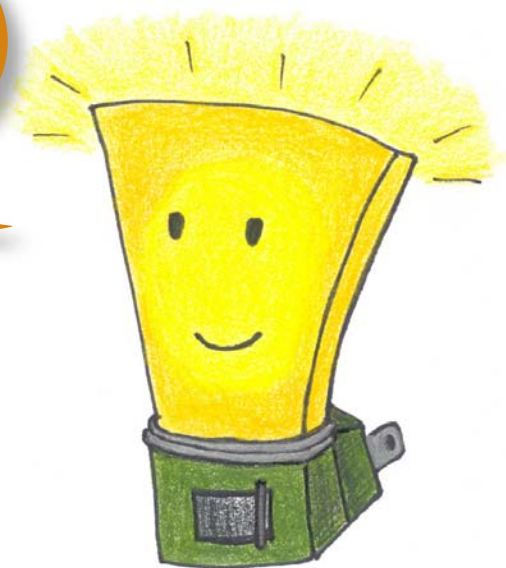
We would like to thank, among others, the vigilance teams of the following residences: Domaine des Rapides, Côte-Des-Neiges, Verdun III, Boyer, Émile-Nelligan, Adélarde-Langevin and De Rouen for their precious collaboration.

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The role of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal towards the vigilance teams

- Providing the setting up and accompanying guide as well as the tool box to the vigilance teams.
- Providing door hangers to the vigilance teams that will ask for them.
- Promoting the vigilance program.

Good neighbourhood relations greatly impact on the quality of life that everyone wishes to have in their building and these relations are the result of everyone's good will



THE STEPS FOR SETTING UP A VIGILANCE TEAM

STEP 1	You organise a meeting to present the program to all the tenants.
STEP 2	You form a team of vigilant volunteers.
STEP 3	You register the participants.
STEP 4	The team members share the responsibilities among themselves.
STEP 5	The vigilant volunteers make their rounds.
STEP 6	The vigilance team meets every three months to do a follow-up on the program.

STEP 1

YOU ORGANISE A MEETING TO PRESENT THE PROGRAM TO ALL THE TENANTS OF YOUR BUILDING.

A. YOU PRESENT THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE PROGRAM IS SET UP AS WELL AS ITS OBJECTIVES.

The vigilance program draws its inspiration from an initiative put forward by Mrs Pauline Rousseau of Le Domaine des Rapides seniors' social housing project. In fact, several tenants and workers know the program as *toc- toc la mitaine*.

Over the past ten years, thanks to this initiative, 8 people have been rescued in this building.

The program, therefore, aims at increasing the sense of security among the tenants, encouraging mutual aid, good neighbourliness and vigilance among themselves.

The vigilance program is set up **for prevention** purposes to help anyone who might be in difficulty, but does not **in any way replace the emergency services**.

B. YOU GIVE A PRESENTATION ON HOW THE PROGRAM WILL WORK

The way it functions is simple:

1. The tenants must register.
2. You distribute door hangers to the participants.

THE FUNCTIONING OF THE PROGRAM IN PICTURES



3. Every evening, the participants hang the door hangers on the exterior door handle of their apartment.



4. Every morning, the participants remove the door hangers before it is time for the vigilant volunteers to make their rounds.



5. The vigilant volunteers go through each floor everyday to make sure no door hangers are still on the doors. This way, they are sure that the program participants are not in distress and are doing fine.



6. If a door hanger is still on the door handle when the rounds are being made, the vigilant volunteer will knock on the tenant's door to make sure that everything is okay.

7. If there is no answer:

- 7.1 The vigilant volunteer comes back later.
- 7.2 If the participant still does not answer, the vigilant volunteer refers the case to the team leader who has all the necessary information about the tenant in question and who will then follow the procedure that has been put in place for situations where there is cause for concern.



8. Procedure to be followed in situations where there is cause for concern:

- 8.1 The team leader makes a phone call to the participant a bit later.
- 8.2 The team leader calls the participant's contact person.
- 8.3 Accompanied by another person, the team leader tries to do a visual check
- 8.4 He calls 911 if it is impossible to find out if the participant is okay.
- 8.5 He notifies the OMHM call centre that he has communicated with the emergency services.

In the tool box, you will find a chart on how the program functions and the procedure to be followed in situations where there is cause for concern. You can leave a copy with the tenants during your presentation meeting.

You could also use the chart during your door to door tour to explain the program to the tenants and leave each of them a copy.

You will find a call chart in the tool box which will help you to gather all the necessary and relevant information that you will need to give to the emergency services.

C. YOU GATHER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS AND YOU ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS.

You might have to use different methods in order to better adapt to everybody's needs as well as to the availability of the volunteers.

For example, if for one reason or another a participant is unable to remove his door hanger during the rounds, the vigilant volunteer on this floor knowing this, could, after reaching an agreement with the participant, come back later that morning or in the early afternoon to verify that the door hanger has been removed.

In the early stages of the program, it is possible that some people will frequently forget to remove the hangers in the morning. It will take some time before it becomes a habit. Share with your friends the various tricks that help you to remember.

THE DOOR HANGER, CREATE YOUR OWN

At this stage, the tenants can suggest different door hanger models.



Habitations Verdun III



Habitations Boyer

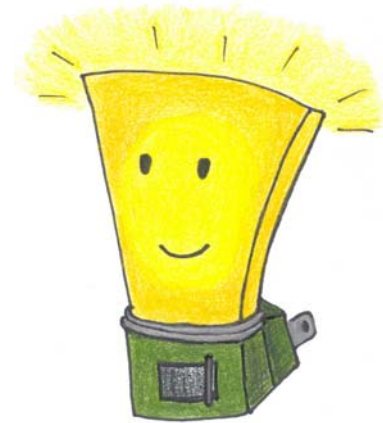


Habitations de Rouen

STEP 2

YOU FORM A TEAM OF VIGILANT VOLUNTEERS.

A vigilant volunteer is a good neighbour who cares about the well-being of others, and who by taking part in vigilance rounds contributes toward the improvement of everyone's quality of life.



You will probably find it easier to recruit or choose a member of your tenant committee as the leader of your vigilance team before the information meeting. However, you are not obliged to do so. It is quite possible that a volunteer would want to take the responsibility for the vigilance team without necessarily wanting to be part of the tenant committee.

IMPORTANT:

The leader of the team of vigilant volunteers must be in regular contact with the tenant committee.

You could insist on the fact that the commitment needed for this program entails little work.

It is important to try to recruit as many volunteers as possible, most ideally people who are not part of the tenant committee. In this way, continuity of the program will be guaranteed even if there are elections and changes in the tenant committee.

If you do not have enough volunteers after the program presentation session, you can use your acquaintances or tenants you know that are already practicing mutual aid with their neighbours.

All the volunteers that are recruited must fill the commitment form (see the tool box).

By the way:

- Cultivating a good cooperative spirit among the volunteers will have a direct influence on the mood of the group.
- A « thank you » is worth a thousand words. 😊

STEP 3

YOU REGISTER THE PARTICIPANTS.

The registration is voluntary. A tenant can refuse to participate in the program.

Everyone who wants to use the door hanger must register. On the registration form, you will find the name of the contact person and his relationship with the tenant. Ideally, the contact person should have a copy of the apartment key.

Registrations can take place during the information meeting or by going door to door in the residence. You can also post the notice about how the program functions as well as important information about the group leader in various spots in the building.

The registration forms of the participants in the vigilance program must be kept by the leader of the vigilant volunteer team.



All the information gathered from the registration forms is used only within the framework of the vigilance program.

STEP 4

THE VIGILANCE TEAM MEMBERS SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG THEMSELVES.

A. The role of the team of vigilant volunteers:

- Collaborate in increasing the feeling of security in the residences.
- Do the necessary follow-up to ensure the smooth functioning of the program.
- Encourage mutual aid and good neighbourliness.

B. The role of the vigilance team leader:

He must participate in the meetings that are held every three months in order to report on the developments to the tenant committee.

He is the one that the volunteers must inform if there are any changes in their availability or ability to make the rounds.

He is the one who has to make sure that the procedure is followed if there is any cause for concern regarding a tenant.

C. The job of the committee:

- Update the list of participants.
- Inform the tenants about the vigilance program.

Some tenant associations have established courtesy visits for new tenants so as to inform them about the activities taking place in the residence. They can take advantage of these visits to present the vigilance program to the new tenants and invite them to register.

- Update the list of volunteers.

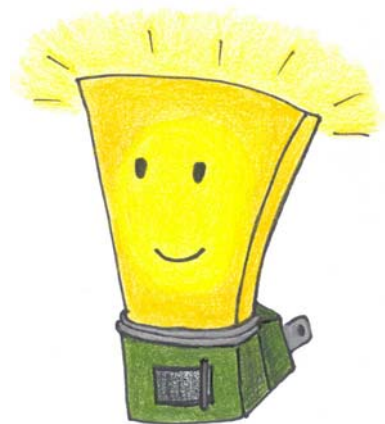
It will be practical to foresee a substitute for each volunteer who can replace the latter when he is absent or on vacation.

- Distribute the stairs between the vigilant volunteers.

It is possible to share the days that rounds are made between several volunteers.

It is important to be as flexible as possible when organising the rounds in order to avoid unnecessarily overloading one vigilant volunteer

The feeling of belonging to a dynamic team which recognises our contribution is an excellent remedy for discouragement and self-worth.



STEP 5

THE VIGILANT VOLUNTEERS MAKE THEIR ROUNDS.

DELEGATE IN ORDER TO LIGHTEN YOUR TASK

The table below can help you in dividing the rounds on the same floor among several vigilant volunteers or getting organised when a volunteer is on holiday or absent.



Month of: _____							
Floor: _____							
Name	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

You will find this chart in the tool box.

STEP 6

THE VIGILANCE TEAM MEETS EVERY THREE MONTHS.

The vigilance team meets once every three months. The follow-up meetings serve mainly to update information about the rounds and participants' files. They also make it possible to inform each other about the changes that have occurred and to talk about the problems that the volunteers are encountering.

The first meeting will essentially be to distribute the rounds as well as a few tasks.

It is also an ideal moment to share the success stories with the other members of the team.



OF THE VIGILANT VOLUNTEERS

The vigilant volunteers agree to make vigilance rounds on the floors determined by the team and to participate in one follow-up meeting every three months or when necessary.

The vigilant volunteers agree to advise their leader when they are not able to make their rounds.

They agree to respect the confidentiality, intimacy and privacy of the participants.

The team leader of the vigilant volunteer undertakes to keep the participants' files in a locked area which is accessible exclusively to him.

OF THE PARTICIPANTS

If he must be absent, the participant undertakes to communicate with the volunteer assigned to his floor or to inform the vigilance team leader.

The participant is aware that failing to remove his door hanger before the agreed time for the round will lead to a certain number of checks being made (see the procedure).

If his phone line is constantly busy within the time that the call is supposed to be made, the participant authorises the vigilance team leader to communicate with the telephone provider to verify if there is a conversation in progress on this line. The fact that the line is constantly busy could be a sign that the participant has fallen and displaced the telephone out of his reach. By checking with the telephone provider, we can be able to eliminate this possibility.

If this verification does not clarify the situation regarding the fact that the phone is not being answered, the participant authorises the competent individuals to go into the apartment and do a visual verification or to provide help if necessary.