



# EAST FAX

## RENTAL MARKET REPORT

### Medicine Hat

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

November 2003

### Vacancy Rates Rise in 2003

The total apartment vacancy rate in Medicine Hat climbed to a six-year high in 2003, according to results released today from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's annual Rental Market Survey. The vacancy rate rose from 1.6 per cent in October 2002 to 2.8 per cent in October 2003.

The rise in vacancies is attributable to a combination of factors including first-time buying and the addition of newly constructed units to the supply of rental accommodations. In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests that the Mad Cow crisis has resulted in some renters doubling up.

The largest increase in vacancies occurred in units with three bedrooms or more, where the vacancy rate rose from zero per cent in 2002 to 5.0 per cent in 2003. The vacancy rate in one- and two-bedroom apartments, which account for 93 per cent of the rental apartment universe in Medicine Hat, rose to 2.6 and 2.5 per cent, respectively, in 2003.

With the addition of new units, the number of rental apartments in Medicine Hat grew by more than 200 in 2003 for a total of 2,502 units. The new units, which typically command higher rents, contributed to an increase in the average rental rate. Overall average rent rose 2.6 per cent from \$505 per month in 2002 to \$518 per month in 2003. The average rent for one-bedroom apartments experienced a marginal, \$2 per month, increase, reaching \$451 per month. The majority of new units were two-bedroom. Thus, among bedroom types, two-bedroom apartments experienced the largest increase in monthly rental rates. The average two-bedroom rent increased 3.6 per cent to \$554 per month. Apartments with three or more bedrooms were the only category where average rent decreased, falling less than one per cent to \$643 per month.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation conducts the Rental Market Survey annually in October in all census metropolitan areas and urban centres of 10,000 population or more. To obtain information on other communities, please call 1-877-722-CMHC.

© Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Note: Data are on 2001 census area definitions

\*\* - Not Available, N/A - Not Applicable, NIU - Not in Universe

**Marni Plunkett (403) 515-3062**  
**CMHC - Market Analysis, Prairie, Nunavut and NWT**  
**mplunket@cmhc-schl.gc.ca**

Apartment Vacancy Rates (%)	2002	2003
Bachelor	**	**
1 Bedroom	1.9	2.6
2 Bedroom	1.3	2.5
3 Bedroom and +	0.0	5.0
Total	1.6	2.8

Average Apartment Rents (\$)	2002	2003
Bachelor	**	**
1 Bedroom	449	451
2 Bedroom	535	554
3 Bedroom and +	646	643
Total	505	518

Apartment Units (2003)	Vacant	Total
Bachelor	**	**
1 Bedroom	22	842
2 Bedroom	37	1,473
3 Bedroom and +	6	122
Total	70	2,502



Canada