

88 CHEYENNE AVE.

It's the last straw for flooded tenant



George Blumson/The London Free Press
 Mark Haggith was awakened by water dripping through cracks in his bedroom and bathroom ceilings.

Mark Haggith says the same thing's happened three times since he moved into his unit in December.

By Tony Hodgkinson
The London Free Press

It never rains but what it pours for the people at an apartment complex on Cheyenne Avenue in northeast London.

Two weeks after an ice storm sent gallons of water leaking through a roof that was under repair, the rain came again Monday as a wet reminder of a troubled building.

For Mark Haggith, it was the last straw.

Since moving into Apt. 102 at 88 Cheyenne last December, he's been flooded three times, he said, water dripping through the ceiling of his ground-floor bathroom and bedroom.

WITHHOLDS RENT: Haggith has refused to pay his rent this month because of damage to his personal belongings two weeks ago — including a color television. The latest incident soaked clothing in a closet.

"If they (the owners) don't come up with a solution, I'm going to have to get a lawyer up here."

An unknown number of apartments were waterlogged Monday. They included at least one of about 23 apartments vacated on the March 18-19 weekend.

Douglas Dawe, who with his wife, Marie, manage the three-building complex, said Monday morning he hadn't been made aware of the latest flooding, although an assistant superintendent from another building was touring 88 Cheyenne offering tenants other accommodation and asking them to sign a form if they refused.

The assistant refused to comment.

A spokesman for Property Consultants and Management Services in London, which overseas

the buildings for the Toronto area owners, also declined to speak to a reporter, other than to say: "We are looking after everything. It's being taken care of."

Peter Parkhouse of the inspection branch at the Middlesex-London district health unit said Monday's flooding would be investigated and the findings included in a report on the 54-unit building that is to be sent to the city's building standards officer this week.

He said having to move "is an inconvenience, but it's the best offer (tenants) have got right now." The cost, including telephone hookup, would be paid for by the owners.

However, Haggith said he did not want to move because "the other apartments are as bad. They're filthy. I'm not moving until the damage is paid for."

WILL STAY EMPTY: Most of the units damaged two weeks ago were unoccupied, but 13 people were moved to unoccupied units in one of the two other buildings. All the water-damaged apartments will remain empty until they are renovated — but that won't be until after the roof is fixed, Parkhouse said.

He added that the property management company told him three-quarters of the flat roof had been repaired.

A Toronto roofing firm which has an \$80,000-plus contract to insulate and tar two of the three buildings could not be reached for comment. A small work crew remained on the job during Monday morning's rain, using a small electric pump to drain water off the roof.

With rain in the forecast for this week, Parkhouse said the Cheyenne situation "is not going to get any better."

Aldermen impatient for Cheyenne report

A health unit report on the apartment building is to be ready next Monday.

Some members of city council expressed impatience with the Middlesex-London district health unit Monday night over the preparation of an inspection report on an apartment building at 88 Cheyenne Ave.

Aldermen Bernie MacDonald

and Pat O'Brien told council they have misgivings about the time being taken to complete the health report, particularly since they said they learned from some tenants that heat was cut off to the building last Thursday.

The northeast London building,



in the news from time to time, was evacuated by several tenants two weeks ago when rain soaked into their units from a leaking roof.

The health unit report is documenting deficiencies in the structure, which will then be sent to the

city's building standards officer for action.

The two aldermen were advised the report will likely appear in time for next Monday's meeting of council's community and protective services committee.

A health unit spokesman said last week inspectors had examined nearly all the building's 54 units and the report would likely be ready by the middle of this week.