

RHA Update ***2024***



Rent is due: January 5th

A 5% late fee will be added to any payments made after this date. If you are not able to pay your rent on time, please call y Koutrakos, Property Manager to make payment arrangements:
802-775-2926 Ext. 1

**Rutland Housing Authority
Will be closed
Monday, January 1st 2024
Monday, January 15th 2024**

**This year you will
see issues of
RHA Update in:
January
March
May
July
September
November**

***FROM THE DESK OF THE
Chief Executive Officer***

Greetings and Happy New Year. I hope that everyone enjoyed the holidays and that you were able to spend time with family and friends. As you may know, much of our staff was hit with COVID last week requiring us to shut the office down to outside visitors. We deeply regret any inconvenience and are most appreciative for your patience. What we learned from this experience is that COVID is still with us and that we must act accordingly. Here are a few items for your consideration.

Hickory Street Upcoming Projects

There are a couple of upcoming projects that I want to bring to your attention. The first is the installation of new security cameras in buildings 5 and 6 at Juneberry Lane. When Hickory Street was built we made a conscious decision to exclude cameras, but with the growing criminal issues that Rutland is faced with we have made the decision to, over time, install cameras in each of our buildings. Our contractor is awaiting the arrival of the equipment and will start the installation once it has been received. We do not anticipate needing to enter individual units in order to complete the project. If this should change, we will of course contact you.

The second project involves the duplexes on the north side of Hickory Street. Specifically, we will be installing new lighting to better cover the driveways between the buildings. These will be motion censored lights that will hopefully cut down on the amount of light pollution while still illuminating the space. Here again, we are awaiting the arrival of the fixtures so that the contractor can perform the installation. They do not anticipate needing to enter apartments to complete this work, but if this should change we will provide sufficient notice.

Community Resource Fair and Coffeehouse

The Rutland City School District will be hosting a community resources fair on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 from 5:30-8:00pm at the Rutland Middle School. For more information, contact brian.elliott@rcpsvt.org.

CONTINUED...

8 Scams That Senior Medicare Patrols Are Seeing Now

The following article by Kimberly Lankford is reprinted from the AARP newsletter. [Senior Medicare Patrol volunteers](#) are often the first to identify new Medicare scams because they meet one-on-one with Medicare beneficiaries. Here are some of the top scams they're seeing and what you can do to protect yourself:

1. A new round of COVID fraud

During the height of COVID-19, criminals offered free coronavirus tests as a way to gather people's Medicare numbers and other personal information and file fake claims in their name.

"Somebody calls unsolicited, offering to send a COVID test," says Tiffany Erhard, New York state Senior Medicare Patrol director. "They aren't sending real tests, but they're billing as if they are, and they're taking the person's information to use it unscrupulously or sell it."

After a major investigation, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General charged 18 defendants in nine federal districts across the U.S. for making more than \$490 million in COVID-related false billings.

The scam died down but resurfaced near the end of the public health emergency, which officially expired May 11, 2023. Senior Medicare Patrols reported seven COVID complaints in January 2023, then suddenly had 72 in April.

"They're using the end of the public health emergency to try to get personal information and Medicare numbers," says Director Rebecca Kinney of the Administration for Community Living's office of health care information and counseling.

Her division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) finances the Senior Medicare Patrol program.

2. Bills for diabetes supplies

Volunteers in the Lone Star State report an increase in diabetes supply scams, says Diane Nguyen, program director for the Texas Senior Medicare Patrol. Claims for [continuous glucose monitoring devices](#) are showing up on [Medicare summary notices](#) for people who don't have diabetes and didn't receive the device, she says. The scammers charge Medicare. "The only reason we are seeing these cases is that people are checking their Medicare summary notices," Nguyen says.

3. Flimsy medical equipment

This is a long-standing Medicare problem.

Con artists offer you a knee brace or other [medical equipment](#) if you give them your Medicare number. You'll get a cheap brace in the mail that you could have purchased at a drugstore, or you might receive no brace at all.

The criminals charge Medicare for an expensive brace and make other unauthorized charges with your number. In 2019, Senior Medicare Patrol volunteers helped uncover an international fraud ring that had charged Medicare \$1.2 billion in false durable medical equipment claims.

4. Bogus genetic testing

Even though the Senior Medicare Patrol helped uncover a \$2.1 billion genetic testing scam, phony pitches are still an issue.

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Skin Care Tips for Cold Weather

According to Kim Taylor, an editor with healthgrades.com, cold weather can make your skin dry, tight and rough. But she offers some tips on how to treat or prevent these skin issues.

Moisturize – regularly with a lotion that contains one of the following: petrolatum, shea butter, lactic or hyaluronic acid, glycerin or mineral oil.

Use Gentle Cleaners – use fragrance free cleaners and avoids those which contain: retinoid, alcohol, or alpha-hydroxy acid.

Don't Scrub Your Skin – be gentle to avoid irritating your skin.

Take Short, Lukewarm Showers – showers should be warm and less than 15 minutes.



Protect Your Skin from the Sun – a broad-spectrum sunscreen of 30 SPF should be use when outdoors during the day, year round.



Hydrate – it is best to choose water, and drink plenty of it to impact your skin.

Use a Humidifier – low temperatures often bring low humidity, add that to the heat in your home and it is a perfect condition for drying out your skin.



Your Health. Our Mission

Alzheimer's Support Group Meets Jan 9th at 4pm at Community Health

An Alzheimer's support group meets the second Tuesday of each month at Community Health in Rutland. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 9 at 4pm at Community Health Allen Pond, 71 Allen Street, Rutland, Suite 403.

The support group is a safe environment where caregivers and family members can share feelings, thoughts and experiences.

Mark the date -Tuesday, January 9, at 4pm at Community Health Allen Pond, 71 Allen Street, Rutland, Suite 403.

For more information about the Community Health support group contact Kelsey Bathalon at kbathalon@chcrr.org or 802-855-2255. Or call the Alzheimer's Helpline at 800-272-3900.

Use anytime:

Community Health Tip - Winter Wellness

Viruses pass more easily from person to person indoors, and cold, dry air can weaken resistance. Colds, flu, Covid and RSV are prevalent this year. These types of illnesses can be treated by a primary care provider, unless the symptoms are life threatening.

What you should know about RSV

Almost all children are exposed to RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) before age 2. For most, it's like having a cold. But some children, especially the very young, can become dangerously sick. If your infant or toddler is having difficulty breathing, an increased rate of breathing or coughing fits that won't stop, these could be signs of RSV.

Prevention is the key

At Community Health, we offer the nirsevimab RSV immunization to all well children under 6 months of age. Check with your provider or pediatrician at Community Health. During an office visit providers can check for symptoms of RSV and other viruses. Contact us at 802-779-9169. If it's a medical emergency, please dial [911](tel:911).

Know Where to Go For Healthcare

Major winter storms can make transportation more difficult due to icy roads. So, plan ahead and knowing the right place to go when illness or injury occurs is important.

- **Community Health Primary Care** <https://www.chcrr.org> is for illness, injury, wellness visits, monitoring chronic health conditions and following up from hospital visits.
- **Community Health Express Care** (<https://www.chcrr.org/services/#express-care>) offers primary care for minor injuries or illnesses after hours or on weekends when your primary care provider is unavailable. Express Care Castleton and Rutland are open 8am-8pm daily.
- **Emergency Department** is the best place to go when illnesses or injuries are more severe or life threatening.

Learn more about Community Health on our website <https://www.chcrr.org>

From the Desk of CEO CONTINUED...

Someone at a health fair might offer to swab your cheek and test the sample to determine whether you have a genetic propensity for cancer. You need to give your Medicare number to cover the test, the con artist says.

In reality, Medicare rarely covers genetic testing. Scammers use the ploy to get your Medicare number and make all sorts of fraudulent charges in your name.

“Many times, they would not get the test [results] at all,” Maria Alvarez, executive director of New York Statewide Senior Action Council, says of Medicare beneficiaries. The nonprofit runs New York’s Senior Medicare Patrol program. “They [the scammers] would just discard the swabs and use the Medicare number.”

6. Medicaid ‘unwinding’

During the COVID public health emergency, beneficiaries of Medicaid, the federal-state health [insurance for low-income Americans](#), didn’t need to recertify eligibility based on their income. When the emergency ended in May, states began to ask Medicaid recipients for recertification.

“Scammers are using that as a way to get to people,” Kinney says. “We’ve heard cases of scammers calling Medicaid beneficiaries and telling them they need to pay them, so they don’t lose Medicaid. Or they’re using it to get [beneficiaries’] personal information

7. Next generation Medicare cards

Medicare saw a [big increase in card scams](#) in 2018 when the government sent every beneficiary new cards that didn’t include Social Security numbers. Senior Medicare Patrol volunteers are seeing some card scams resurfacing.

From the Desk of CEO CONTINUED...

“We had an influx of people reporting to the SMP volunteers that they were receiving unsolicited calls from people who were falsely claiming to be a Medicare representative and offering a new card, maybe a plastic card with a chip,” Erhard says.

The scammers ask for money for the new card or ask for your Medicare number. Medicare won’t call you to offer a new card, its cards are paper stock and you can print an official card from your online Medicare account anytime.

What’s more, Medicare won’t ever call you without scheduling an appointment ahead of time.

Telemedicine sessions

“You may get a call from somebody who is trying to sell you something, and then you’ll get billed for a telehealth consult,” says [Jean Stone](#), a 40-year Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services employee who in retirement is a New York Senior Medicare Patrol volunteer.

Sometimes the fraud is tied to fake genetic testing or flimsy medical equipment, and the criminals will add a telemedicine appointment to the Medicare bill.

Kimberly Lankford is a contributing writer who covers Medicare and personal finance. She wrote about insurance, Medicare, retirement and taxes for more than 20 years at Kiplinger’s Personal Finance and has written for The Washington Post and Boston Globe. She received the personal finance Best in Business award from the Society of American Business Editors and Writers and the New York State Society of CPAs’ excellence in financial journalism award for her guide to Medicare.

That’s it for this month. As always, please feel free to contact the office at (802) 775-2926 if you have any questions

Happy New Year,

Kevin

**From the Desk of from the Desk Nancy
Koutrakos, Property Manager**

A few reminders ...

***Recertification packets will be coming
shortly!***

***JANUARY for Templewood Court
FEBRUARY Sheldon Towers will be
receiving recertification packets***

***The 2024 increase in social security will
have an impact on your rent, please do
not be surprised by the increase in rent***

***DO NOT stop maintenance for a work
order-CALL a work order into the main
office! Please do not let things go until
they are a major problem, notify us of
any needed work orders.***

***No visiting pets –please tell your
family/friends that you are not allowed
to have visiting pets in your apartment!***

Please pick up after your own pets.



***Finally, Wishing you all a Happy &
Healthy 2024!***



RHA COMMUNITY CORNER



By Pat Embree

Another year is upon us and the more problems the world faces the more I look back, but then part of it might be due to the number of my yesterday's gone by.

I cannot watch ice skating without the memory of how it felt to so freely glide across the ice. At the ice rinks the boys would hog the space to play hockey. So after school I would grab my skates and skate up and down Moon's brook. I could practice my jumps without judging eyes while thinking that through my eyes they were pretty good when likely they were not. Fortunately, there were no cards being held up giving a score of one and a half or a very generous two.

What good memories of sledding on a moonlit night after a snowstorm where the moon shone down giving the snow a blue hue and the snow clung to the tree branches looking every bit like a winter wonderland. Laughter rang out when we were four on a toboggan and usually spilled out one by one as we went down the hill. Perhaps our laughter made Mother Nature smile at the purity of the night she had given us.

When younger we came into the warmth of the kitchen with red, rosy cheeks and tiny snowballs hanging from our mittens and circled around the top of our boots. We hung our clothes on a wooden rack with newspaper under it to soak up the melting snow.

When the temperature drops and the snow falls look back to a time when we loved the snow and paid no mind to cold.

NAME:

DATE:

January Word Search

Z P I S K B T R N F R O S T Y P R A
B L A N K E T K A T A D H I D L D A
C A W I X U N E W Y E A R V G O M M
H N I F H B L I Z Z A R D I H S V F
I Z N F S T O Z L N E A N S J P G R
M Y T L Z J M D Q S H O O D I E L E
N M E E H I B E R N A T E L E N O E
E Q R C Q P T T U O C K A C Z G V Z
Y Z M O M I T T E N S R D O O U E E
J C O L D A O B J G V G U A X I S D
W S Q D M K S W E A T E R T Y N W L
U U S S N O W F A L L P S K A T E W

Winter
Cold
New year
Gloves
Chimney

Sweater
Skate
Hoodie
Blanket



Blizzard
Coat
Snowfall
Mittens

Freeze
Penguin
Hibernate
Sniffle
Frosty



MEDICAL • DENTAL • BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Alzheimer's Support Group Meets Jan 10 at 4p.m. at Community Health

A new Alzheimer's support group will be meeting the second Tuesday of each month at Community Health in Rutland. In January, the group meets on Tuesday, Jan. 10th. Meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 4pm at Community Health Allen Pond, 71 Allen St. Rutland, Suite 403.

The support group creates a safe environment where caregivers and family members can share feelings, thoughts and experiences.

For more information, email kbathalon@chcrr.org or check our Community Health [website](#).

Whenever you have questions or concerns about Alzheimer's or dementia, use these available resources:

- [Alzheimer's Helpline](#) **800-272-3900** (a unique resource for caregivers, family members and anyone who needs information about Alzheimer's disease or dementia, 24/7)
- [Caregivers Forum](#) is a discussion board for caregivers.
- [Community Resource Finder](#) lists support groups and community resources

Community Health Tip: Know these helplines

- **911** for life threatening situations
- **988** for suicide or mental health crisis
- **800-272-3900** Alzheimer's Helpline

Quote of the month...

**Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. –
... Dr. Martin Luther King Jr**



