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Minneapolis Public Housing Authority pilots proactive maintenance initiative at two properties

MINNEAPOLIS—What if it were possible to address maintenance calls before they happen? That’s the idea behind the new Quality Maintenance Program (QMP) underway at two Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) properties.

QMP uses a proactive approach that other large institutions, such as hospitals and universities, have adopted to identify common maintenance issues and stop problems before they start—saving money and improving conditions. MPHA’s program combines a careful analysis of maintenance data with customized inspections and resident feedback.

“We held several focus group meetings with site staff and residents to gain input on the process and tasks,” said Anne Moser, who has been assisting MPHA in getting the QMP started. “We listened to stories about common issues and frustrations with the units and wishlist items. From that feedback, we examined work order data to support the anecdotal data and prioritized the findings based on operational savings and feasibility.”

In the first rounds of 42 units at the Horn Tower highrises in South Minneapolis, a dedicated team of MPHA staff and specialists completed a laundry list of items in each unit, including, but not limited to cleaning vents, replacing filters, fixing leaks, and changing light fixtures. Through these general fixes and other more specific identified issues, the team was able to remedy over 150 potential work orders in those initial units. An average of \$986 was spent per unit and is expected to save a much greater amount over the long-term.

Horn Towers Property Manager Joyce Farley said residents provided positive feedback for everything from the new curtain rods and shower hoses to the “unseen” cleaning details in ductwork and behind appliances. The latter work helping to improve health and wellness and a factor in keeping down pest issues.

“A real favorite for residents was that the QMP replaced and upgraded the plumbing shut-off valves in all the units, so now when there is a leaky faucet or plumbing repair, maintenance can turn off the water in the apartment and don’t have to shut off the entire ‘stack’ for every repair,” said Farley.

Glendale Townhomes in the Prospect Park neighborhood just began their pilot phase of eight units at the end of April. While the QMP team has an initial idea for the maintenance issues

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they'd like to address at the townhomes, they will also take time to reassess their strategy following pilot completion, as they did at Horn Towers.

“We wanted to ensure that the impact to the residents, process, team make-up, and materials were all in alignment with our goals for the project before getting too far along in the process,” said Moser. They were able to identify elements that would improve their outcomes, such as alterations in resident communication, material changes to improve quality, and revised task planning based on the amount of savings vs. feasibility.

Follow-up resident focus groups expressed appreciation for the amount of work accomplished with only a small disturbance to daily lives, as the team is usually able to complete their tasks within a single working day. Information learned from the pilots will guide a wider roll-out of QMP across the entire MPHA portfolio.

Example of learning from data:

Field staff at Horn Towers identified leaking valves as one of the biggest maintenance issues they faced. The recurring problem required an entire stack of apartments to have their water shut off for at least 4 hours with a 24-hour notice, which meant the leak couldn't be fixed for an additional 24 hours. Work order data supported this theory and showed that the second highest number of calls over the last two years—1,294 total—at the buildings were for plumbing tasks and residents also spoke of the inconvenience caused by the problems. The QMP team remedied this by fixing any leaks and installing shut off valves in each individual unit.

(Please see attached data and graphics)

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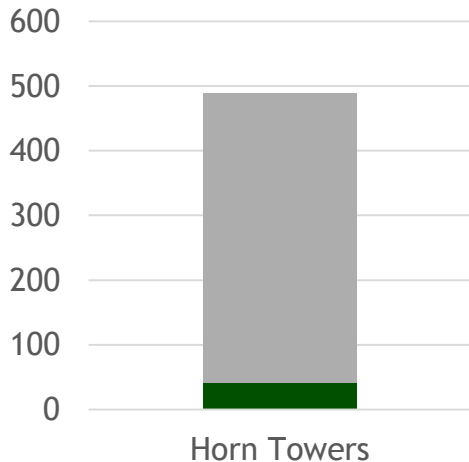
Horn QMP Progress

\$986
Horn Average Spend per Unit*

over
158
Potential WOs Discovered and Remedied

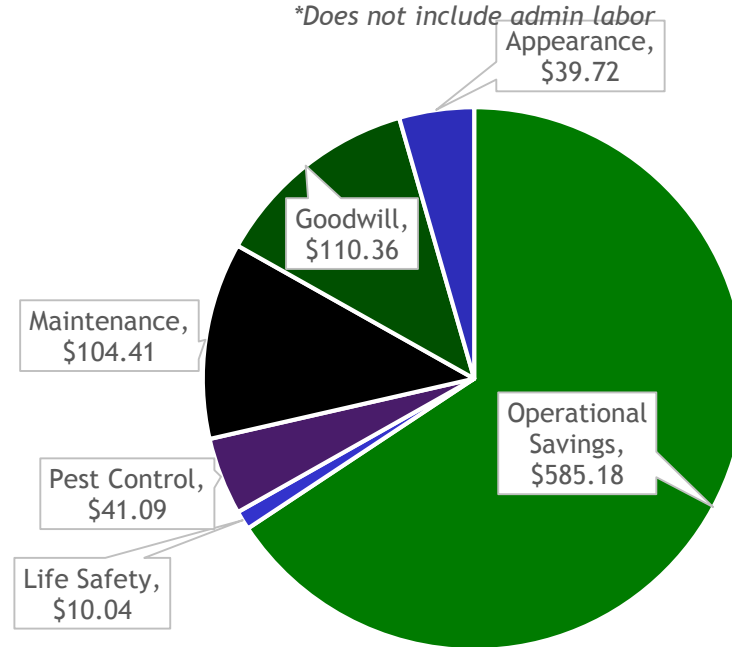
*Labor (\$293), Materials (\$220) and contractor (\$473) costs including estimated LED retrofit quote. Does not include start-up costs

Horn QMP



- Total Horn Units (489)
- Inspection Completed (41)
- QMP Complete (41)

Avg Unit Execution Cost by Benefit



3110 '07 & '08 Stack Complete
'01 Stack Scheduled for 5/13
Next up: '02, '03, '04, '05, and then '06

Approx.
\$40,000
Total Spend on 41 Units



Tasks Completed in More than 6 Units At Horn (lighting upgrades are planned but not complete)

No. of Units	Task	Benefit
41	Replace smoke detector batteries	Life Safety
41	Clean out or replace aerators	Operational Savings
41	Replace Constant Air-Flow Regulators	Operational Savings
41	Replace shut off valves in shower, sinks, and toilet	Operational Savings
41	Replace lighting with LED fixtures (planned)	Operational Savings/Goodwill
41	Clean fin tube radiation without removing covers	Operational Savings
41	Clean under and behind fridge and oven	Pest Control
41	Replace hood range filters	Operational Savings
41	Replace caulking around windows, countertop, cabinet base, fridge bottom inside, shower, toilet, and sinks	Pest Control/Maintenance
41	Install kickplates on front door	Operational Savings
41	Install curtain rods (2 rooms)	Goodwill
41	Replace showerheads	Operational Savings/Goodwill
19	Add escutcheon plates to pipe openings	Pest Control
15	Tighten cabinet handles	Operational Savings
14	Provide and/or install AC insulated cover (new covers on order)	Operational Savings
13	Reglue cove base	Appearance
10	Replace shades	Appearance
9	Tighten towel bar or toilet paper holder	Maintenance
9	Install anti-tip on stove	Life Safety
8	Repair window	Maintenance
8	Replace missing/loose tiles	Maintenance
8	Repair/replace drawer glides in cabinets	Operational Savings
7	Fix leaking toilet	Maintenance