**Best Practices for Managing Your Hornby Island Short Term Rental Sustainably**

Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association (HISTRA) supports a philosophy of mindful tourism. We invite travelers to share our homes, and it’s important to show them how they can be good guests. With this in mind, the Association has established a set of Best Practices that encourages short-term rental owners and property managers to:

* educate and inform guests about how to be respectful visitors
* work with neighbours to promote harmonious relationships
* be environmental stewards by ensuring the sustainable use of each property, by recognizing the limits of the existing septic system, ground water, road capacity and other community considerations
* share your property responsibly by ensuring guests are aware of Hornby Island rules that apply to their stay.
* These would include:
* Hornby Island Trust Short-Term Rental Bylaws
* Fire Requirements Bylaws
* Noise Requirements Bylaws
* Respecting the quality, and quantity, of water, as referenced on **hornbywater.org**

For real time data of Provincial groundwater monitoring on Hornby Island go to: https://governmentofbc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b53cb0bf3f6848e79d66ffd09b74f00d

In order to retain its idyllic rural character, Hornby Island has intentionally avoided commercial tourist development. Vacation Rentals are a way for Hornby Island to bring visitors to the Island and enable them to join local neighbourhoods and enjoy island life for the week or two they spend here. By adopting sustainable practices, we will lower energy use, conserve water and minimize waste.

**Links to click**

**OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICE ENVIRONMENTAL WATER CONSERVATION WASTE AND RECYCLING ECONOMIC**

**OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICE**

1. **Talk to your Neighbours**

Your home is part of a neighbourhood and your guests join that community for the time they stay. The most important thing you can do to ensure a successful rental is talk to your neighbours and ask how things are going with your rental. Ask if there are any concerns or positive feedback they would like to share. Communication with those around you is very important so that everyone feels part of the community and can share concerns if there are any.

1. **Rental Agreement**

Ensure you have an up to date rental agreement that requires your guests to adhere to the rules and bylaws as outlined in the agreement.

Ensure you know who will be using your short-term rental and you have checked their references.

1. **Smaller Footprints**

**You can ask your guests to leave a smaller footprint on Hornby. Bring their own linens and take them home to wash, take recycling and garbage off the island to their home systems. Wash and flush less often, reuse grey water from sinks in the garden, many visitors are happy to help to protect our home.**

1. **Liability Insurance**

If you are renting your property frequently for short term rentals you should report this to your insurance company. In many cases your household insurance will not cover short term rentals and you could find yourself without insurance if something were to go wrong.

1. **Report your income from the short-term rental to Revenue Canada**

It is the law in Canada to report this income in the year you earn it. Over a certain limit (in 2023 $30,000 of gross income) you are required to register for, charge and pay GST on your rental income.

1. **PST, MRDT and GST**

All short-term vacation rentals in British Columbia must register to collect and pay PST if they collect in excess of $2500 in gross rental income annually. This tax is 8% and is collected from your guests. You earn a small commission on the amount of PST you collect and remit (you remit 7%). This is not an optional tax, it is the law to charge, collect and remit it to the Provincial Government.

As of June 1, 2022, you are also required, by law, to charge 3% MRDT. This is commonly known as a "pillow tax" and is also payable to the Minister of Finance.

Funds from this tax are returned to the community, for approved uses. The Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation manages this program locally.

Registration and remittance are both easy and straightforward. Visit https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/sales-taxes/pst/register to learn more

In addition, if your rental earns in excess of $30,000 you are required to collect and remit GST. You can register at: https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/registering-yourbusiness/business-registration-online-overview.html

1. **Provide Your Guests with an Information Packet**

It is good for visitors and the community to provide guests with as much information as possible. That can take the form of an information packet left at your short-term rental and/or sent via email. Even better, provide your guests with an electronic welcome book with the information you would like to share with them and meet them when they get there and go over the important highlights from the package.

Ideas for the content of your package:

* + 1. Local Contact for Questions and Support
		2. Water Conservation and Septic use
		3. Parking
		4. Garbage, Compost and Recycling
		5. Noise, Quiet Times and Neighbourly Considerations
		6. Parks, Trails and Beaches
		7. Health and Emergency Information
		8. Fire Information
		9. Environmental and Ecological Considerations
		10. Pets and Pet Etiquette
		11. Hornby Bus
		12. Island Events, Businesses and other activities
		13. The Annual Visitors Guide
1. **Septic Systems**

Ensuring that the septic system is properly maintained is very important. Some septic systems were approved at the time the property was originally developed. These systems were usually gravity type systems. They require pumping and/or having the field flushed out regularly. New systems on Hornby are usually engineered systems that produce little to no effluent into the ground water. However, these systems are required to be maintained annually or bi-annually by someone certified to ensure they operate as intended.

1. **Water Management**

There is considerable research available on the Hornby Water website (www.hornbywater.org) on the fragility of the ground water on Hornby Island and ways to conserve water. Even small changes will help reduce water consumption. There is a separate section of our best practices filled with ideas that will have a positive impact on the Hornby Island underground aquifer, consider implementing as many as you can.

1. **Transportation**

Reducing the amount that vehicles are used by your guests will have a direct impact on the carbon footprint on Hornby Island. The following are a few ideas:

* 1. **Vehicles**– Limit the number of vehicles in your short-term rental to one per allowable bedroom. Provide adequate parking to ensure all vehicles are parked on your property and not on the road.
	2. **Bikes**– Encourage the use of bikes and consider providing secure bike storage at your short-term rental.
	3. **Community Bus**– Ensure your guests are aware of the Summer Bus and supply them with the bus schedule. This is a great way to limit the number of vehicles on the road and help the environment. www.Hornbybus.com
	4. **Roads**– Provide information about sharing the road and thinking about what is needed before driving. Many people drive to the co-op two and 3 three times a day. Consider walking or biking there instead.
	5. **Parking**- Parking is at a premium at the on Hornby Island. Ask you guests to park close (3 feet) from another vehicle at in all parking lots, especially at the Co-op and in the Parks, as there are no painted parking stalls.
	6. **Ferries**– the ferries are in high demand during peak seasons, however there are times that are not as busy during the week/day. Consider assisting your guests in learning about those times and switching their arrival and departure times accordingly. This may mean your check in check out days would change. If your guests are in a line up ensure that they are respectful of the neighbours and do not run their vehicles unnecessarily.
	7. **Walking**– Consider providing your guests with all the places they can walk to in the vicinity of your home. Although many guests may come to the island to walk or ride their bike, they may not know of many of the areas available. Ensure road safety information is provided to guests so they understand sharing the road rules on Hornby Island.
1. **Fire Prevention**

Fire is a very important consideration on Hornby Island. It is very important that all guests understand the susceptibility of the Island to fire.

* 1. Install a certified fire extinguisher outside near your BBQ area and inside in the kitchen and near the fireplace (if there is one).
	2. Also ensure there are outside working hoses, in an easily accessible area
	3. Ensure your guests limit fires to a proper fire pit and let them know if fires are permitted at all on the island.
	4. Discuss the concerns about beach fires with your guests.
	5. If you do any lawn maintenance remember to check to make sure equipment that can shed sparks (lawnmowers, weed-eaters chain saws etc.) are permitted before you start on the lawn or cutting wood.
1. **Parks**

There are many beautiful parks on Hornby Island, and they have different rules depending on the area. In addition, some parks like Tribune Bay Provincial Park have challenges with parking, illegal fires, alcohol consumption and dogs. Ensuring your guests understand the challenges and the rules will benefit everyone.

1. **Inform guests about local projects on Hornby Island**

If there is a local project of any kind, make it known to your guests as they may be willing to take part, too. If guests know can do some good for the local community it help enhance their overall stay, it can also influence them to share stories of their sustainable travel experience when they get back home. This could be anything from a beach clean-up to supporting busking musicians.

1. **Join the Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association (HISTRA)**

The Association is here to help you. We are a group of volunteers who own and/or manage short term rentals on Hornby Island. We can assist you in keeping you in the loop about best practices for short term rentals and provide you with assistance or suggestions to meet the bylaws and legal requirements related to your short-term rental. It is important that we respect the bylaws and other rules that cover all aspects of our island community. The email for the Association is hornbyshortterm@gmail.com.

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

**Most Island travelers have a strong connection with nature, and want to contribute to the sustainability of our island and the planet, let’s help them with some local information.**

1. **Energy conservation**

Energy use accounts for approximately 60% of a property’s carbon footprint. Luckily, there are some easy, actionable tips you can put into practice to transform your short-term rental into an eco-friendly home.

1. **Light Blubs**

LED lights are environmentally friendly and are up to 80% more efficient than traditional lighting. Incandescent bulbs or compact fluorescent bulbs contain toxic elements. Making the switch is easy and has major long-term benefits.

1. **Motion Sensor Switches or Lights**

Installing motion activated lighting sensors that turn on and stay on when they detect a presence and turn off in the absence movement will save a bit on energy bills, and there will be less to worry about guests wasting energy by leaving lights on.

1. **Energy Efficient Appliances**

Use of energy efficient appliances minimizes the exploitation of natural resources. These resources include natural gas, oil, coal, and water. Energy efficiency enhances conservation of these sources as a way to achieve sustainable development.

1. **Smart Thermostats**
Heating and cooling account for nearly half of your home’s energy costs**.** A smart thermostat offers both automation and greater control over your home’s temperature and climate – control that could save you a bundle on your energy bill.
2. **Outdoor Clothes Line**

Since the invention of the electric clothes dryer, the number of households that rely on clotheslines to dry clothes has steadily decreased over the years. Hanging your clothes up to dry is easier on the environment and your wallet because it saves you money on energy costs. Even if it’s not practical for you to hang the wash on turnover days, providing the line will allow your guests to have fresh-air laundry.

1. **Get Unplugged**

Electronic appliances, including TVs, computers, and CD/DVD players can consume almost as much energy when in standby mode as they do during the relatively small amount of time they're being used. Ensure when you or your guests are not in the home that all additional appliances are unplugged.

1. **Temperature of Hot Water**

Consider reducing the temperature of the hot water tank to 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius).

1. **Change the Hot Water Tank to a Hot Water on Demand System**

These systems virtually eliminate standby losses - energy wasted when hot water cools down in long pipe runs or while it's sitting in the storage tank. By providing hot water immediately where it's used, tankless water heaters also waste less water.

1. **Alternative Renewable Power Sources**
2. **Solar Panels**

The decrease in the cost of solar panels serves as a great example of why there should be an increase in the use of solar energy. Traditional electricity relies heavily on fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas. Solar electricity boosts your electricity independence.

1. **Wind Power**

Wind energy is a renewable energy option with near zero greenhouse gas emissions. The use of wind turbines to produce energy has been actively implemented in Europe and California and is growing quickly in Canada**.** At the micro scale, small wind turbines for individual use are becoming more readily available to consumers. Small wind turbines present opportunities for wind energy to be integrated as an electricity source at the individual building level.

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning**

Cleaning the refrigerator coils can extend the life of the refrigerator while making it more efficient. Cleaning lint out of dryer hoses helps dryer efficiency and reduces the potential for fire. Make sure ceiling fans are going in the right direction. Cleaning out the screens in water filters, pumps, shower heads, water taps and toilet flush mechanisms assists with the flow of the water but also with the efficiency of the equipment that runs them.

1. **Natural Cleaning Products**

Instead of buying traditional cleaning products, stock your short-term rental with more Natural solutions.  Many products say bio-degradable. This only means they break down to the chemical they were formatted with and are not necessarily environmentally good products. Natural cleaning products include:

* 1. hydrogen peroxide based products
	2. 20 mule team borax
	3. vinegar
	4. baking soda
1. **Changing Your Wood-stove to an Alternative Source of Heat (e.g. Propane/heat pumps)**

The burning of wood has a direct impact on the environment and the neighbours. Consider switching to an alternative source of heat such as propane or a heat pump system. Also ensure that the chimney of the wood stove is cleaned once or twice a year and the wood stove is an energy efficient one that meets current requirements. Ensure that you check your insurance to ensure that your guests can use the woodstove.

1. **Other Ways**
There are many other green practices to make sure your short-term rental is more sustainable. Some may take more effort or a contractor to install, such as energy-efficient windows and others, such as providing cloth shopping bags, or reusable water bottles are easy and have a positive impact on our environment.

**WATER CONSERVATION**

There is considerable research available on the Hornby Water website (www.hornbywater.org) on ways to conserve water and the fragility of the ground water on Hornby Island. Even small changes will help reduce water consumption. Some of the following ideas will definitely have a positive impact on the Hornby Island underground aquifer.

1. **Rainwater Collection**

Installing a rainwater collection system will have a direct, positive impact on the Hornby Island ground water aquifer.

Rainwater harvesting is an alternative water supply to wells that does not use the ground water. Using well water directly depletes ground water supply and using a rainwater collection system can replace or augment a drilled or surface well.

The Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Association has an interest free loan program to assist in making the transition to Rainwater Harvested water systems. You can reach out to office@hirra.ca for more information

1. **Residential Water Meter**

You can install a residential water meter on your water line and conduct a water audit to investigate where you’re consuming the most water and repair any leaks or drips.

Water meters come in simple clamp on styles for copper or plastic pipe and can be monitored with an app on your cellphone. There are also the more traditional ones that are installed by a plumber in line and have a gauge on them.

They range in price from $50 to $400 depending on the style.

1. **Shower Timer**

To reduce the temptation to have longer showers, you can install a shower timer to restrict the amount of time a person showers. These can be purchased from $30 to $400 can be set at various times and are very user friendly.

1. **Low-flow Water Fixtures**
Low-flow technology is commonly found in toilets and shower-heads. Installing a low-flow toilet can substantially reduce your water consumption as flushing toilets account for 30% of total indoor water use. Installing a low-flow shower-head can save a family of four 160,000 litres of water annually.
2. **Laundry Use**

In terms of promoting sustainable tourism to your guests, you can ask them to reuse their towels, to only run the dishwasher or washing machine when full and to ensure they switch all faucets off after use.

Another way to reduce water use is to ask your guests to bring their own sheets and towels and to limit access to the washing machine during their stay.

1. **Landscaping & Xeriscaping**

Choose native and local plant life for gardens and landscaping. Native plants are hardy because they have adapted to the local conditions. Once established, native plants do not need pesticides, fertilizers, or watering. Not only is this good for the environment, it saves time and money. Landscaping with native wildflowers and grasses helps return the area to a healthy ecosystem.

**WASTE AND RECYCLING**

Providing recycling containers for your guests is the first step in the right direction to reducing overall waste. Place clearly marked containers for organics, plastic, paper/cardboard glass/tin, refundable beverage containers and actual garbage on your property. Educate your guests on how to use them effectively when they arrive. Provide easy directions for how and what to recycle.

1. **Recycling depot**

A lot of visitors enjoy a visit to the Recycling Depot, as repeat clients often bring free store donations, and, if they’re new to the Island, they will have a unique experience. If your guests are taking products to the Depot, ensure they understand the process at the recycling depot and the hours of operation – you can find all the information at: www.hirra.ca/recycle

You can also ask your visitors to Drop off REFUNDABLE beverage containers at the preschool – refundable beverage containers assist financially and directly impacts the lives of the children on the island. For more information go to: www.hornbyislanddaycaresociety.org

1. **Compost**

You can install an organic waste system that does not encourage rats – there are simple, cost effective organic waste systems that have a hard-plastic drum that rotates and is rat and rodent proof. These run around $100 and are available at Canadian Tire, Lee Valley and many other stores. They are minimum work to maintain and make excellent dirt for the garden.

**ECONOMICS**

1. **Give back to the local community**

Investing profits back into your local community can help preserve and protect the area your guests are visiting. This could be anything from shopping locally, to using local contractors and labourers, to volunteering on one of the many committees, or donating money to a local cause.

1. **Hire local staff**

Besides investing money into the community, your rental can also be a source of income for local people. At some point or another, you’re likely to need cleaners, a gardener, plumber, general contractor. So, before going to some outside of Hornby Island, search to see if there are any locals who can do the work for you.

1. **Source local supplies**

Buying local helps the local economy on Hornby Island. When you buy local more jobs will be created on the island and people will be more connected to their own community. Your money helps local businesses and your neighbours.

Sourcing items for your home is another way to support the economy of the island. Whether it’s handcrafted furniture, reused items from the free store or fresh fruit and delicacies for your guest welcome basket – you can source these supplies locally. In addition, leave information about where these items come from – so your guests can check them out as they seek out artists, artisans and creators around the island.

1. **Share information**

Be sure to have the annual Hornby/Denman Visitor Guide in the house. There’s a good map, and it helps direct visitors to our many home-based businesses, restaurants, artist studios, recreational options, wineries, etc. Most guests are very appreciative to be told where, and when, music events and “happenings” are going on.