

## What is a Public Health Hazard?

The Public Health Act of Manitoba permits any person to report a *health hazard*, defined as:

- a) a condition of a place or premises;
- b) a plant, animal or other organism;
- c) a substance or thing;
- d) a solid, liquid or gas, or any combination of them or
- e) an activity, condition or process that presents or might present a threat to public health.

### Points to Remember...

- The health hazard must pose a threat to the public health (e.g., risk of fire that may spread to neighbours, vermin outside of the home affecting the neighbourhood, risk of explosion that may affect neighbours).
- If the residence is tenant-occupied there may be greater scope to address the public health hazard than in an owner-occupied situation. A hazard to the owner only is not considered a public health hazard.
- If the residence is owner-occupied the risk needs to affect people other than the occupants to be considered a Public Health Hazard.
- If the risk is serious and immediate you may call 911.
- The Personal Health Information Act allows disclosure without consent if the risk is serious and immediate and there is a risk to the public.

Example: risk of explosion due to storing gasoline in an unapproved container in a room with an open flame such as a gas water heater, and where the potential fire may immediately put people other than the client at risk.

