

Welfare paying to rent properties sight unseen

September 9 2011 | [Lindor Reynolds WFP](#)

Last month, I told you about Chelsea Waite and her family. They were renting a house on Burrows Avenue. It would have needed upgrading to qualify as a dump. The toilets didn't work, the floors were buckling and a long-standing basement leak had covered the lower level in black mould.

City inspectors came in and declared the house uninhabitable. Waite and her four kids had to quickly find another place to live. She found another house, this time on Manitoba Avenue. It's no prize, either.

The second-floor windows are broken. Insulation is missing in parts of the basement. The main-floor windows are covered in wood lattice. It was filthy when she moved in.

The rent is \$895 plus utilities. Welfare pays the \$895 plus \$120 for utilities. There's a catch. Welfare allows \$331 for rent. They give Waite \$864 for food every month. In order to cover the rent, Waite takes money from her food allowance. She gives up \$564 of her food allowance in order to make her rent.

That leaves her \$300 a month to feed a family of five.

Waite took the house because the owner would accept a tenant on welfare. She took it because she didn't want to live at the Sally Ann with her children. She took it because social assistance said they'd pay for it sight unseen, no questions asked.

That's the part that makes me shake my head. I called around to make sure I hadn't misunderstood. Are large cheques really written to strangers without anyone overseeing the real estate?

In a word, yes.

For full story, [click here](#).

Posted on [WinnipegRentNet.ca](#)

