

Calgary renters struggle as prices, demand rise



Woman's hand showing keys from new apartment. (Photo: iStock)

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Calgary's rental market is red hot, and prices are climbing and you can spend days, weeks or months scrolling through all the listings.

But for some, finding an affordable place is out of reach.

"I'm having a hard time even getting past messenger messages right now," said Erin Huppy, a Calgary resident.

Erin moved to Calgary three months ago to start school here, in hopes to start fresh with her daughter Eliana.

But it's come to an unfortunate conclusion.

"I've decided to go back to Edmonton. Rentals are cheaper out there and then I also don't know many people in Calgary. So if need be with the roommate situation I have people I trust out there that I can room with," said Huppy.

But that decision didn't come before months of searching.

With high demand landlords can be extremely picky.

Erin is on income support because she's a new mom, and she had two cats.

"And I got rid of one in hopes that it would make it easier because people weren't even considering two cats so yeah I have one cat now."

"According to rental site Zumper.com – average rental prices in Calgary are skyrocketing just in the last few months – it could now cost you over \$1,400 for one bedroom, and \$1,700 for two. They've jumped 28 per cent since last year.

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Calgary resident, Jennifer Ramsay, is searching for a rental.

"Right now we're staying in a family member's basement."

Erin's family member Jennifer is also in a bind – she's looking for a three bedroom place for her and her family, now just staying in a basement with no separated rooms.

"We have a little guy and we also have dogs and everywhere we've looked even for the upstairs is \$2,200 a month and it's too much for us to afford. Sorry I'm going to cry," said Ramsay.

"One gal that was almost in tears because I had already rented it out," said one Calgary rental property owner, Ken Wilson.

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