

ALOC NEWS

www.cumberlandlandlords.com

November 7, 2005

Associated Landlords of the Cumberland Area
ALOC Phone (301) 759-0530 P.O. Box 1867

Vol. 11, Issue 11

MDE Public Session

Allegany College of Maryland will sponsor a presentation by MDE officials regarding recent changes to MDE regulations on November 16, 2005. This will be held in Rooms CE12-13-14 in the Continuing Education Building. It is our understanding that a representative from the Attorney Generals Office that handles MDE affairs will be the speaker.

ACM will be directly mailing notices out to ALOC members and others in the area with details about this meeting with exact times and etc.

Miscellaneous

I recently received a call from a tenant regarding some repair problems with her Landlord (not an ALOC member). It seems she moved into her unit, received no copies of the inspection certificates and promises that substandard items (water leak damage, peeling and flaking paint just to mention a few) would be repaired promptly. The repairs have not been completed in spite of numerous letters and calls to her Landlord so she has elected to withhold payment of her rent. She wanted to know if she is within her rights and the answer is YES.

Under Maryland law (both Landlord Tenant and Consumer Protection laws) and probably most local housing codes it is not legal to rent residential housing unless it is completely up to code and inspected. Cutting deals with tenants to make repairs in lieu of rent and or promises to fix the items later are going to do nothing but cause trouble for the Landlord.

Under no circumstances should you rent a unit and let the tenant move in unless all of these things are taken care of first. Keep in mind that we are not referring to minor cosmetics, but you are best to avoid permitting any tenant to engage in repair work for you.

If this tenant's Landlord elects to take her to court for the rent he will probably find himself in trouble and will have his rent placed in escrow. Not a pleasant experience and with the judge shortage it could stretch out! Be careful!!

City Code Update

A number of different groups are meeting with the City of Cumberland to consider the revamping of the City Housing Code. One group is examining the actual standards for electrical, plumbing and other items while another group is looking at the administrative side. I believe these talks are proving to be very fruitful and we can expect to see some reasonable changes possibly taking effect in July 2006 if the Mayor and Council approve the changes.

We are hoping for very modest fee increases, a change in the inspection process, some training options for landlords and agents as well as changes to the registration process. The appeals process will probably also change to match up with the appeals board changes already being made by the City.

We hope to see some final versions completed before year end and possibly they will be turned over to the Mayor and Council for an early vote in 2006. We will keep you posted.

November Meeting

In November Darrel Lee Powell from the City of Cumberland will be our main speaker and he will give us a presentation about housing discrimination, fair housing and etc. Though Cumberland has had few complaints or problems in this area, it is very important that Landlords are familiar with these regulations to avoid potential legal entanglements. As we have said before you need to be consistent and keep copies of documents on file – just in case!

We will also have a representative from the YMCA about their housing program which is a supervised subsidized program for people needing assistance/guidance to get back into the mainstream. We had a similar presentation a year or two ago as they were getting the program started.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER!!

Your Business Advertisement can be displayed in this business card sized ad.

Contact Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379 in the evenings for details or email to jjhsr@hereintown.net

Carey Walker

Lead Inspections for Rental Housing
Visual Inspections and Dust Wipes

201 Massachusetts Ave.
Cumberland, MD 21502

301-722-8328

3-05

Chestnut Flats LLC Rental Property Management

www.chestnutflats.com

Telephone 301-729-1086 FAX 301-729-0608
3-30 / 9-30

Robert Saville

VISUAL INSPECTOR
MDE Inspections Lead Dust Wipes
LEAD PAINT SUPERVISOR
"Excellent Rates"

Telephone/FAX: 301-729-2994

1-05

Maryland Property Owners Network

The Maryland Property Owners Network met in Annapolis on November 4, 2005 to go over plans for formalizing the establishment of a statewide group with officers and a Board of Directors. This group will take on the expenses for operating the statewide organization including the fees for lobbyists who have helped us so much over the past 10 years. The major hurdle that all of the local groups have is how to come up with the funds to help operate this valuable organization. In the past Baltimore POA has picked up the tab for most of these expenses, however changing demographics have reduced their membership and income.

All present including representatives from Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore indicated that their current dues structure and expenses do not allow them to come up with any substantial funds to cover such costs. We all agreed that we cannot participate in the legislature without having a professional lobbyist to help us and Bob Enten has done a great job supporting us all with everything from lead paint to Maryland Landlord Tenant Law changes.

We determined that most of our local Landlord groups are operating at very low budget levels with little left to help cover the cost of such a statewide group. The general consensus was that the dues charged for local groups would have to be gradually increased over the next few years to allow us to fund this necessary service.

With that in mind we will have a discussion of a proposed dues increase from \$ 40.00 per year to \$ 45.00 for 2006 to help us contribute to the cost of operating a formal state group. In all likelihood this may have to be increased in \$ 5.00 yearly increments over the next couple of years as we see where the costs go. Keep in mind that our dues were at the \$ 50 per year level in previous years and it seems likely that it may not be necessary to rise above this level.

Leases and other Documents

ALOC has available leases, rental applications and tenant checklists for sale, at cost, to members. The cost for each item is as follows: Small print Lease @ \$ 0.50- Large print regular or HUD Lease @ \$ 1.25- Rental Application @ \$ 0.50 - Move in Checklist @ \$ 0.50 - Lead Paint Brochures, both EPA & Maryland and document receipt@ \$2.50 for the set - Document Receipt for MDE & EPA brochures (disclosure) @ \$ 0.25

These forms are kept at Jeff Hutter's office, TWR Comm. at 549 N. Centre Street. Any paid member can stop by and pick up whatever they need. If you need more than 5 of each item please call at least 24 hours in advance so that we can make sure we have plenty on hand. Call 777-2692 ext 113 Monday through Friday and you can talk to Pam or Gary. Please note: We do not keep MDE or City Housing registration forms on hand.

ALOC Officers

J. Jeffrey Hutter President
Carey Walker Vice President
Stephanie Wharton Secretary
J. Jeffrey Hutter Treasurer

Board of Directors

Clarence Anderson
Steve Jenkins
Bob Saville

Want to save \$\$\$ Money?

Kitchens, bathrooms and etc.

You could save hundreds on your Tub, Tile and Countertop repairs.

If it has a finish, let Copman's refinish it!

Copman's Refinishing

Because the job is not complete, until it's been finished

A division of Copman's Home Works...MHIC #74778 301-722-3697 10/05

Meeting Schedule

November 14, 2005

February 13, 2006

May 8, 2006

September 11, 2006

**Meetings are held at the
South Cumberland Library
on Race and Seymour St.
at 6:30 PM**

Thought for the Month

Treat your friends as you do your pictures, and place them in their best light.

Jennie Jerome Churchill
Mother of Winston S. Churchill

TWR Communications 301-777-2692 9-30-06

TWR supplies quality high speed Internet Access, both dialup and Wireless in the Tri-state area. TWR provides other computer services including training, computer repairs, networking and website hosting. If you have need of storage space check out our self-storage facilities on Necessity St. TWR is an agent for Cellular One, operates a wide area network with wide area paging and mobile 2-way radio. Check us out at twr@hereintown.net

Marsh Neilson & Sons General Contractors

Replacement windows, doors, painting, trained in Lead Abatement, Also roofing, porches and decks, plumbing and electrical work.
Lets us take care of your lead problems!
For more information call

A-1 Inspections, Inc.

PRE-PURCHASE/PRE-SETTLEMENT
INSPECTIONS RESIDENTIAL AND
COMMERCIAL LEAD INSPECTIONS

PHONE 301-724-LEAD

301-724-5323 6-05

MDE Registration Reminder

Registration papers from the MDE will probably be mailed in November-December for Landlords to fill out and send in by December 31st. Be prepared with your turnover information and make sure you get it in on time!!