

ALOC NEWS

www.cumberlandlandlords.com

May 1, 2006

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

Vol. 12, Issue 5

Training Opportunities

The first session of Landlord Training will be held on Saturday May 6, 2006 from 1-4 PM (questions until 5 PM) and this will cover all of the basics of surviving as a Landlord. The second session will be held on May 27th with the same times and will cover in depth the various parts of Maryland's Landlord - Tenant Law, MDE Lead Paint Regulations, Cumberland and Frostburg Housing codes and other items. Depending on availability the National Tenant Network may be present to provide training for their various programs.

The cost for the courses will be 15.00 for either the Basic Session or the Advanced or \$ 25.00 for both. This is a per person cost. In addition a Landlord - Tenant handbook is available for \$ 15.00. A sign up sheet is attached and we encourage all members interested to sign up and remit their payment as soon as possible so that we can quickly get everything worked out. The courses will be held in the second floor conference room at TWR Communications.

Members having questions should contact Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379 (home) or by email jjhsr@hereintown.net.

National Tenant Network

Brian Haymaker with the NTN will be at our May 8th meeting to show us how to obtain credit reports and background checks online. All members should have received their subscription packets in the past week or so and or you can bring them along to the meeting to sign up for the services.

Please note that if you sign up online you will get a default rate package that will be later changed to coincide with the rate plan we have developed with the NTN. If you have any questions during the process give us a call and we will help you get it straight.

As we mentioned before we will eventually have an established link from our cumberlandlandlords.com site to the NTN to make account access easier.

FINAL DUES NOTICE

If you find a dues notice attached you will need to pay your dues for 2006 As Soon As Possible to avoid a membership lapse. We will delete all non paid members from our rolls within the couple of weeks so your prompt payment would be appreciated. Members having any questions about their dues can call Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379 evenings and weekends.

Westernport Housing Code

Yet another Allegany County municipality has entered the Housing Code arena with an onerous offering. One of our members, Roy Droll, talked with me on the phone about the code and forwarded a copy of it to me for my review and comments. After reading it I have to wonder where some of these code provisions come from. One provision calls for the complete separation of water taps so that each tenant has a separate water meter. While this would probably be desirable for many Landlords, it is a costly process with little prospect of recapturing the cost of the change from the tenant. I think all Landlords would have to agree that we cannot continue to be hit with unfunded mandates. These costs must be passed along – but can we find tenants who can afford these costs/prices?

Another odd provision is the requirement that each Landlord must report the names of each tenant and the units they reside in to the City at each turnover. We would hope that this information would be used for tenant notification of problems at their residence, such as grass or weed complaints, garbage and trash disposal, snow removal and other issues that directly relate to the occupant, but it is doubtful if that is the case.

As is always the case with these types of codes the argument for them is to reduce blight. However well intentioned this may seem reality is another matter. In Cumberland this was a big argument for a Housing Code, but yet we have seen no improvement. A simple drive along Baltimore Ave. will prove the point.

According to reports in the newspaper and from other sources Westernport has indicated that they wish to work with property owners to iron out these problems, hopefully this will happen.

If you own rentals in Westernport make sure you get involved and make your feelings known!

2006 Dues

Membership dues are \$ 50 for 2006 and prompt payment would be appreciated!

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

Carey Walker

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Maryland Property Owners Network

The Maryland Property Owners Network will meet on May 4th to review the status of real estate bills that passed or failed with the Legislature and to continue their efforts to establish a formal statewide group with officers and a Board of Directors. Bill Russell from Frostburg and Jeff Hutter from ALOC will attend along with other groups from around the state. A report on the meeting will be made at our May 8th meeting.

It appears that we made out OK this year, probably due in part to the preoccupation with partisan politics in the Legislature and because it is an election year. You can bet that next year many, many of these Bills will be come back, maybe with a vengeance! For details on these Bills contact Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379(evening) or visit the state website www.mlis.state.md.us/.

Please make sure that you keep up with your inspections and registrations as the MDE has decided to get tough on these matters. A number of members have reported that they have received MDE notices of violations with some pretty hefty fines. It also worthwhile to remember that any failure to comply with all Housing regulations can later prove disastrous. For instance letting a tenant move in without having all inspections and tests completed technically makes you non-compliant which can become an extreme bargaining chip for the tenant when you have to take them to court for failure to pay rent or for damages. Also allowing tenants to do some fix up work is also a no-no. Your rental must be fully up to code and inspected before the tenant moves in! NO EXCEPTIONS!

NEW PRICES FOR Leases and other Documents

Increased costs have forced us to raise the prices on some of our forms and the revised pricing is listed below that takes effect May 1, 2006.

ALOC has available leases, rental applications and tenant checklists for sale, at cost, to members. The cost for each item is as follows:

Large print regular or HUD Lease @ \$ 1.70

Rental Application @ \$ 0.50

Move in Checklist @ \$ 0.50

Lead Paint Brochures, both EPA & Maryland and document receipt@ \$3.50 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 115 Monday through Friday and you can talk to Pam, Kathy 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

Meeting Schedule

May 8, 2006

September 11, 2006

November 13, 2006

February 12, 2007

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

Thoughts for the Month

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity;
An optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

Sir Winston S. Churchill

“Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.”

Helen Keller

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

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