

ALOC NEWS

www.cumberlandlandlords.com

October 5, 2006

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

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Leases

Many Landlords want to include special conditions within their lease and this is certainly acceptable – so long as the items added do not violate any applicable laws or regulations. Unfortunately this is where it gets tricky!

With the advent of the Lead Program in Maryland and the Housing Code in Cumberland many Landlords would like to pass on the cost of registration or inspections to their Tenants and there is nothing present in the law to prevent this. On the other hand I suspect many judges would have some difficulties letting a Landlord deduct these costs from the Security Deposit at the end of the Tenancy. Trying to charge upfront for these fees as part of some deposit scheme is not advisable.

One area that can be concentrated on is the condition of the rental unit and how the Tenant is to leave it when they move out. For instance many of us have our carpets cleaned at the end of each Tenancy so that the new Tenant moving in has a clean unit. We should all give thought to adding a special condition that the Tenants pay to have the carpets cleaned when they move out or we will deduct the charges from the Security Deposit. One important point here, make sure that you specify that the carpets be cleaned by a professional licensed cleaning firm. Many Tenants would certainly rush out to rent a carpet cleaner and clean the carpets hoping to save money with the probable result being a slip-shod job!

In many states it is legal to have a special condition that allows the Landlord to raise the rent and or security deposit if another person (roommate) moves into the rental unit.

These are just a few examples of special conditions that may occur and there will certainly be more that may apply with individual Landlord situations.

Maryland Tenant Groups Organizing

In the next newsletter we will inform you about the movement to establish a statewide Tenant group to lobby the Legislature. Their goals run from lead paint to evictions to security deposits and etc. This will require us to have a fully established statewide group with a good lobbyist! More details in November!

Landlord Training in October

Allegheny College will be running Landlord Survival Training on October 10, 2006 from 5:00-9:30 PM and the course will be modified from previous offerings to concentrate on the more difficult aspects of being a Landlord. A lot of the basics covered in past courses will not be covered. The course number is PRO027 and you can register for the course by calling ACM at 301-784-5341 and you can fax registration forms to 301-784-5023.

Speaker for the November Meeting

Beginning with the November meeting we will have speakers scheduled. Our first speaker in November will be Daryl Smith with Allstate Insurance in LaVale. Daryl contacted me recently regarding Renter's Insurance and I thought that it was a good subject for one of our meetings. While our lease clearly indicates that we are not responsible for the tenant's property it is appropriate that we know more about Renter's Insurance and mention it to our tenants when they move in.

Hagerstown considering Landlord fines

In a recent newspaper article the Hagerstown Police are looking at leveling fines against property owners if their residential or commercial Tenants require too many Police visits! Once again we find ourselves mystified by the absolute naivety of government officials. Laws were designed to hold the perpetrator responsible for his actions not his mother or father, his employer and certainly not his Landlord.

Quoting Alan Johnson from Washington County (LPOAWC) in their recent newsletter, "My concern is that if the police have to come to my property, I want to know about it immediately so that I can address the problem immediately before it escalates. My question is why landlords and business owners are responsible for the behavior of adults?"

Take heed and be a little nosy with your Tenants. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

National Tenant Network

Brian D. Haymaker
President
15 East Boscawen St. 2nd floor
Winchester, VA 22601
866-387-6320
www.ntnnet.com

Carey Walker

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(MBRG) Maryland Business for Responsive Government Report for 2006

Each year the MBRG issues a report on the business voting records of all members of the State and Federal governments. With the elections coming in November we need to have this information so that we can vote more effectively.

Looking at the Federal side first we find Congressman Roscoe Bartlett with a Composite Business Rating of 85 %, Congressman Cardin (now running for the Senate) 19 %. Senator Mikulski is at 17 % and Senator Sarbanes is 14 %. These numbers are derived from those provided by the NFIB (National Federation of Independent Business), BIPAC (Business-Industry Political Action Committee), NAM (National Association of Manufacturers) and the USC (U.S. Chamber of Commerce). Lt. Governor Michael Steele, who is running for the Senate against Cardin has no rating but we could probably assume that his support for business would certainly be better than Cardin.

On the Maryland side of things Senator John Hafer, who finishes his term this year, had a 2006 MBRG rating of 92 %. Delegate George Edwards, who is running for Senator Hafer's seat had a 100% 2006 rating. Delegate Kevin Kelly is at 83 % with Delegate Leroy Myers at 89 %. This places all of our local Delegation in the top 20 % of the House voting business friendly.

Some of the new candidates running for election this year obviously do not have any established business voting record for us to examine, however you at least know where the incumbents stand.

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:

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.

TWR has limited Saturday hours from 9am-1pm most Saturdays (closed some Holiday weekends)

Please note: We do not keep MDE or City Housing registration forms on hand.

ALOC Officers

J. Jeffrey Hutter President

Carey Walker Vice President

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Board of Directors

Clarence Anderson

Steve Jenkins

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Meeting Schedule

November 13, 2006

February 12, 2007

May 14, 2007

September 10, 2007

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

Thoughts for the Month

"For all sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

—John Greenleaf Whittier

"The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon, but that we wait so long to begin it."

—W. M. Lewis

TWR Communications 301-777-2692 9-30-07

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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