

ALOC NEWS

www.cumberlandlandlords.com

February 6, 2007

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

Vol. 13, Issue 2

Cumberland Housing Code

The revised City Housing Code that has been proposed continues to linger and we still expect to see a vote in the very near future with acceptance of the changes. If you listened to the Mayor talking on the radio recently he wants to concentrate on the out of town property owners who have no one representing them locally so that they can clear up some of the blighted properties. As we all know many blighted properties are not rental units and we hope to work with the City to make sure that they understand that. Obviously there are a lot of responsible out of town landlords and the code changes should not adversely affect them.

Recent articles in the Times News have included a lot of coverage about the sale of numerous properties that the City has had troubles with. There have been so many citations the City finally got peeved enough to force them to a sale for failure to satisfy the liens.

The larger looming problem continues to be enforcement and it will be interesting to see where it goes with the code changes.

Speakers

Darrell Lee Powell will be our speaker at the February meeting starting at 630 PM. Darrell will bring us up to date on various Fair Housing matters as well as the new Community Mediation Association.

For May we will have Bob Rider from the Cumberland Water Department. It has been a couple of years since we had Bob at one of our meetings. Cumberland is currently in the midst of having a system on line to read water meters wirelessly and this may include monthly water bills instead of quarterly.

We also hope to have Joe Mullenax from Allegany Business Consulting, Inc. to be our second speaker for the May meeting. We had hoped to have him at our February meeting however he is tied up with tax returns!

Looking forward to September we will plan on a speaker for that meeting and any ideas or suggestions from the membership will be appreciated.

Selling Rentals to Tenants

A recent article in the Times-News about a Tenant-Landlord problem on Maryland Ave. describes a situation that we all need to avoid like the plague.

The essentials of the problem are this, the property owner supposedly signed some sort of sales contract with the occupant (tenant) and they moved in and their child has become lead poisoned with the Health Dept and the MDE involved.

It appears that the unit which was previously rented has an outstanding list of defects that needed satisfied and that the occupant (tenant) moved in with these items still unresolved. The property owner is claiming that these problems are the occupants (tenants) as they have signed some sort of installment sales contract and they are responsible for the unit.

The deed still remains in the property owners name and he claims that this will remain as such until the contract is fulfilled. He states that this way he is assured of getting his money before he transfers the deed.

The MDE in the interim has filed legal action against the property owner regarding the lead poisoning situation and it is scheduled for a hearing soon

The City of Cumberland to a certain extent has also been caught in the middle of the dispute and it is hard to say where it is headed. Some years ago when I served on the Governor's Commission that re-wrote Landlord-Tenant laws for Maryland this exact type of situation was one of the major problems to be addressed. At the time the only issue to be addressed was separating the lease, if any, from the purchase portion. Not knowing all of the details it is hard to reach any real conclusion.

The bottom line is that these types of arrangements are best handled by competent lawyers and or other professionals. The Landlord in this situation makes reference to the fact that such an agreement could be written on a piece of toilet paper and be a legal and binding document. It will be interesting to see what the MDE and the courts think about this situation as its legal action moves forward.

This probably boils down to being another scheme to avoid doing the lead risk reduction work and is very, very risky. Without Lead Program compliance this landlord is opening himself up to a multi million dollar lawsuit! I am glad I am not in his shoes!!!

National Tenant Network

Brian D. Haymaker
President

15 East Boscawen St. 2nd floor
Winchester, VA 22601
866-387-6320

www.ntnnet.com

Carey Walker

Lead Inspections for Rental Housing
Visual Inspections and Dust Wipes
201 Massachusetts Ave.
Cumberland, MD 21502

301-722-8328

3-07

Chestnut Flats LLC Rental Property Management

www.chestnutflats.com

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

COPMAN HOME WORKS, LLC

301-722-3697

Remodeling, painting, kitchen and baths,
Also try our "Tub, tile and countertop resurfacing"

WE IMPROVE EVERY DAY!
MHIC-74778

1/08

Property Owners Association of Maryland, Inc. (POAM) and etc.

The Property Owners Association of Maryland met in Annapolis on January 24, 2007 and Bill Russell from Frostburg and Jeff Hutter from ALOC were in attendance. The meeting started with an overview of new bills introduced in the Legislature. At this early point there are few bills that affect Landlords, but rest assured there are many in the works and we only have to wait a short time for them to be introduced!! The deadline for submitting bills is quickly coming and we expect to have a much better idea as to what confronts us at the February 22nd Property Owners meeting in Annapolis.

Record Keeping

As we all get to cope with our taxes at this time of year we are again confronted with the task of sorting through records, receipts, check stubs, leases and piles of other papers too numerous to mention. There are many ways to keep track of your rental records however the only easy way to do this is by building and your categories for expenses and income should match with the IRS Schedule E used for reporting rental property income and expenses. If you examine schedule E closely you can see that it tracks everything by building across the top and the categories running down the side list things like rental income, repairs advertising, auto, taxes, insurance and utilities. If you set up a wide hanging file folder (pendaflex) for each building with individual manila folders having categories that match Schedule E your records will be easy to track. The only problem that you have is how to divide certain items like accounting charges, office supplies, computer software, postage and etc. between your units. These shared expenses can be kept in a separate folder and divided up at the end of each calendar year. I prefer to allocate shared expenses equally among each rental building throughout the year, which is another option. If you use a tax preparer or CPA it pays to ask them how they prefer to have the records kept as their fees may increase or decrease depending on your methods! Good luck with your taxes and we wish many refunds for our members!!

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.

Thought for the month

There is only one thing about which I am certain, and that is that there is very little about which one can be certain.

Somerset Maugham

DUES TIME

If you find a dues notice attached you will need to pay your dues for 2007 as soon as possible!
Members having any questions about their dues can call Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379 evenings and weekends.

Meeting Schedule

February 12, 2007

May 14, 2007

September 10, 2007

November 12, 2007

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

ALOC Officers

Jeffrey Hutter President

Carey Walker V. President

Jeffrey Hutter Treasurer

Board of Directors

Clarence Anderson

Steve Jenkins

Bob Saville

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

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

Rick 301-697-6530

A-1 Inspections, Inc.

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

PHONE 301-724-LEAD

301-724-5323

6-07

Ideal Property Management, LLC

“Call Us TodayFor A Peaceful Tomorrow”

2-07

A full-service, cost effective Management & Maintenance Company for Cumberland, Frostburg & surrounding areas.

Bonded and Insured *Complete Management Staff *Member of ALOC &FLA

Office: 301-777-2775 200 N. Centre Street Cumberland, MD

Email – ideal2006@verizon.net

Residential, CommercialJohn 703-593-2746

College UnitsJasmine... 202-491-6161