



Capital District Association of Rental Property Owners, Inc Newsletter March 2012

March 6th Schenectady Landlord Meeting – **tonight** -- click on this link for more info:
<http://schenectadylandlords.com/2012/03/06/tuesday-march-6-2012-schenectady-landlord-meeting/>

March 7th Rensselaer, 15th Schenectady, 22nd Albany, 29th Rensselaer Details **see full page 4** below
LEAD RENOVATION, REPAIR, & PAINTING (RRP-INITIAL) TRAINING CLASSES

March 8th CDARPO Meeting 7 PM Thursday Ramada Inn, 946 New Loudon Rd (Rt 9) Latham, NY . The guest speaker will be **Joe Fama, Executive Director** of Troy Architectural Program (TAP). TAP provides architectural, design, and planning assistance to low and moderate-income individuals and non-profit organizations. It advocates architectural preservation, design quality, energy conservation, fair housing, and the removal of architectural barriers. TAP offers a wide range of preservation services to homeowners, commercial investors, non-profit and government organizations, and is an active participant in the Troy Vacant Buildings Workgroup. Although TAP's activities are primarily focused in Troy, projects have also been undertaken in surrounding communities. Questions: (518) 433-7377. Meetings include “Problem Solving”, “30-second announcements”, 15-minute refreshment break for networking with people that speak “Landlording” as a second language and “Presentations” (of not more than half hour each).

April 12th CDARPO Meeting The guest speaker will be **Joseph Place, an insurance broker** with over 25 years of experience. Joe will give us a general overview of the insurance market with special emphasis on insuring apartments and commercial property. He will outline some specific coverages that every landlord should have on their policies, and offer tips on how to save money on your premiums. His presentation will be informal in nature, and questions will be encouraged.

April 25th Troy’s Landlord Training Program is open to all capital district landlords and wannabe’s. (*Editors note: I attended this program last year, and it was four hours packed with very helpful information*)

What Else is Happening in Troy?

Plenty! Especially with the Vacant Properties Workgroup. A large, dedicated, capable and ambitious group of volunteers meets at TRIP offices on River Street with an overflowing agenda. Concerns about the deteriorating areas of Troy prompt a myriad of options being considered. They are directed at both the long term and immediate reversal of the forces that have brought about the present inner-city blight. Of immediate concern are the vacant buildings, those abandoned by former owners and those purchased from the city, not rehabilitated and still vacant. **(continued next page -->>>>)**

Landlord Training Program

“maximize your return; minimize your aggravation”

Learn about:

Effective Tenant Screening Code Enforcement
Eviction Process Nuisance Abatement
Section 8 Housing Many helpful tips

April 25th 5:30 – 9:30 PM TRIP office, 415 River St, 2nd Floor TROY (just north of the Green Island Bridge)

Register by Friday April 13th to ensure your seat:

www.triponline.org or contact

Hilary Lamishaw, 272-8289 x214
TRIP Community Affairs Director (518)

\$25 materials fee includes light dinner

Attendees may pay at the door or via PayPal

A project of the Troy Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (TRIP), City of Troy and RPI

(Cont. Happening in Troy)

Gaining legal access to the buildings to evaluate their stabilization needs, using the Sherriff’s work party to clean out some of the buildings, and establishing a *Habitat for Humanity*-like store to remove architectural items from buildings slated for demolition are some of the options being considered by the group.

A study of code enforcement practices and recommendations for improvement, with the possibility of the establishment of a Code Court, will be discussed with the city.

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Albany Housing Authority

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An updated inventory of what is abandoned, bank-owned, owned by the city of Troy or previously auctioned and not yet rehabbed will be created. A study of the current rehab plans (with some incentives for activity toward re-use) for previously auctioned properties will be initiated.

Another important decision to be made by Troy is whether to pursue Land Banking. Recently authorized in New York State to give a select group of communities the ability to acquire, hold, sell or develop vacant properties within their boundaries. Land Banks have the ability to clear titles and forgive back taxes, expediting the process of bringing properties in New York back to market. This can be a very powerful tool for rehabilitation, but the Preservation League of New York State has concerns that it may be used for wholesale demolition without consideration of the revitalization potential of historic buildings.

It is fortunate that **Mayor Rosamilia’s** support for the efforts of the Workgroup is evident. The next Workgroup meeting will be on March 7th and I will be there to add CDARPO’s support for their ambitious activities.
By Ray Koloski

ADVICE TO THE HOUSELORN by Mac Mowbray



Due to the EASY winter (So far) we have had no weather related questions, no ice dams, no split drain pipes, no cracked flower urns, no salt damaged steps and walkways. Be advised, winter is not over yet. Remember the Blizzard of 1888 was in March. I remember that because my great Aunt Carrie was born during the Blizzard and never stopped talking about it. (As if she remembered) Her mother (my great grandmother) never said a word. It still is not a bad idea to check your flat roofs for leaves and debris in the drains. If we get rain instead of snow, you could still have flood if the drains back up. Make sure your outdoor faucets are turned off inside and open in the outside. Otherwise the pipe could freeze and split in the outside portion.

Here's an old one from the owner of a Delmar duplex:

My tenants recently moved out (At midnight, of course) after a noisy scary six months. The lease was for a year. We were so happy. Living next to them was like living in a Fraternity House. The sheetrock walls do not block any sound. The lease was not up but we have decided not to persue them. Their last brawl (They are newlyweds) occurred shortly before they moved out. They punched a hole in the wall **(continued >>>)**

(continued Mac's Advice)

and the fist came all the way into our house. Since it was the guest room we did not notice it right away. I know how to patch sheetrock. I read your column sometime ago about how to do that. My question is: Since our house was not properly built, what can I do to make my wife feel more secure. She feels someone could just punch through our walls and take our stuff, once they figured out there are only 2 pieces of sheetrock between them and us.

Mac answers: I am not sure what the code is in your town about walls between units in a duplex, but I am sure it was not met when this place was built. Before you do anything, check with your Code Enforcement officer. If I were you and the code did not specify otherwise, I would do this:

Remove the sheetrock on your side of the common wall, put some insulation between the joists (whatever the code calls for), then, for security reasons, I would install some plywood, (Half inch would be adequate) then on top of that I would put some fire rated sheetrock. This should satisfy the sound and security questions. Again, all this is predicated on what the codes at the present time happen to be.

If this sounds like a lot of work, it is. However, I am with your wife, noise and security are quality of life problems and they need to be addressed. Next time, vet your tenants better. Also, when you live in a home with tenants and there are less than six units in the building, you have special rights. Consult with codes in your area, or with **United Tenants**.

That's all we have for this month, I will resume answering questions when I return from Florida in early March.

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John T. Keenan, III
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW
600 Broadway
3rd Floor
Albany, NY 12207
Phone: (518) 432-5100
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E-Mail: John@keenanlegal.com
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Bill Hughes, ACI
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Business Card	\$ 68	\$ 132	\$ 200
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½ Page	\$ 225	\$ 375	\$ 600

LEAD RENOVATION, REPAIR, & PAINTING (RRP-INITIAL) TRAINING CLASSES

March 2012 CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED - REGISTER TODAY - ALL TRAININGS ARE FREE

Funding provided by the Albany County Department of Health, the Rensselaer County Health Department, and Schenectady County Public Health Services

Dates

March 7 - RENSSELAER

March 15 - SCHENECTADY

March 22 - ALBANY

March 29 - RENSSELAER

Locations

Security Supply

475 Central Avenue

Albany, NY 12206

Price Chopper Community Room

1639 Eastern Parkway

Schenectady, NY 12309

West Sand Lake Fire Hall

3697 Route 43

West Sand Lake, NY 12196

Time

7:45 am registration/breakfast

8:00 am - 5:00 pm training

Contact

Questions can be answered by:

OR

Nancy at 518-765-3521

Lisa at 518-765-3512

NKL1@cornell.edu

LKC29@cornell.edu

Effective April 22, 2010, workers performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination and must be certified. This federal EPA Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) rule applies to contractors, painters, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, window replacers, roofers, property owners, and landlords.

Trainings to become EPA certified are offered by Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County, an EPA accredited training provider. Upon successful completion of the RRP Initial course including passing an exam at the end of the class, participants are EPA certified renovators. This certification is good for 5 years. Failure to comply with EPA's RRP program requirements could result in penalties of up to **\$37,500 per day per violation**.

ALL RRP INITIAL TRAININGS INCLUDE:

· *Continental breakfast* · *Lunch* · *Refreshments* · *Course manuals and materials*

PARTICIPANTS MUST PRE-REGISTER

Register-Send completed form below to:

Lead Training, P.O. Box 497, 24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186

Please register me for the RRP Initial training:

Name: _____ Training _____

Address: _____ Date of Training _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Company or Organization: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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Cornell Cooperative Extension in Albany County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

Lessons in landlording

About 10 years ago my husband and I had a vacancy in the basement apartment of a four-unit in Albany. A prospective tenant completed the application; referenced and everything checked out. She paid a full deposit and then two weeks later came to pay the 1st month rent. We signed the lease and I accepted the rent. As we were talking about her move-in date and her furniture she described her oversized television, (not a flat screen. . . . this was 10 years ago). So I told her go home and call me the next day with the measurements -- I was sure it would fit through the basement windows, they're quite large, and that's how everyone moves their furniture into that apartment. You know the style. There's no room to maneuver items around the front entrance angles.

When the tenant called with the measurements, It was clear that the monster TV would not fit through the basement window. I encouraged them to "Sell the TV and get a smaller one." She liked her TV so much she refused, and I ended up returning all her money back. Luckily it was May and I still had time to rent the apartment way before winter came. The moral of my experience . . . I don't say "IT'S RENTED" till I have the contract AND the money AND they've actually MOVED IN. **Jaye Nerad** (*Editor's note: Sometimes it's easier to sleep at night when we go easy on the other guy.*)

A few suggestions

1. People often tell us how they like to be managed, and will often function well under their own "rules." If a tenant has a consistent problem (i.e. late rent), ask them what would be a fair way to handle it or how other landlords have handled it with them in the past. You might be surprised at the severity of the late fee that the tenant suggests you impose on him or her.
2. Tenants either smoke or they don't. There is no such thing as a tenant who is "about to quit smoking" once he or she moves into your non-smoking building.
3. There are good pet owners and bad pet owners. If you have a no-pets policy, you may wish to instead just screen pets really, really carefully. Sometimes I'll ask for more references on a dog than I would on a human. I want to hear from the vet (is it up to date on shots?), a past landlord (was there any damage?), and a nearby neighbor (does it bark?). Good pet owners can be ideal tenants: The types of responsible people who have their lives together enough to care for another being.
4. I try to teach my tenants some basic emergency management skills. What to do if a pipe burst, what actions they can take if there is a fire, how I can be contacted in a crisis and what to do if I can't be reached. Fingers crossed, knock on wood, they have yet to have to put my teachings to the test, but I can only hope, if, god forbid, things came to that point, they are more prepared than they would be otherwise.

Anonymous

Buy used???

I would strongly encourage every Capital District landlord to at least walk through the Historic Albany Parts Warehouse at 98 Lexington Ave. (<http://www.historic-albany.org/warehouse.html>) and the Habitat for Humanity Restore at 454 North Pearl St. (<http://www.capitaldistricthabitat.org/restore/>) to know that they sell, and also what you might want to donate to them. These are great places to donate stuff when you are doing rehab work -- stuff that would otherwise end up in a landfill becomes a tax deduction for you. My convenient way of separating out the two is by thinking about the year the item was made. If I'm looking to buy or donate something that was made prior to the 1960s, I head to the Parts Warehouse. If I'm looking to buy or donate something that was made in the 1970s through today, I go to the Habitat Restore.

Donate???

Here are two warehouses to check out

Albany Zoning Confusion wreaks havoc on some landlords

I'm having the same problem with a three-unit I own as a member described at the last meeting. I just renovated the basement apartment and am unable to get an ROP, let alone an inspection, until they find out if the building is zoned as a three-family, which I'm sure it's not, since I inherited it from my father and I never had it zoned as a three-family. I told Code that I believe that it is registered with the rental registry as a three-unit. He said that it doesn't matter and that the City is going to be investigating all the rental property in the city (*continued >>>>*)

(continued) to determine if they are properly zoned, regardless of whether they have ROPs. There has to be something illegal about this. They have collected taxes for years on the basis of these building have a certain number of units and have collected fees and given out ROPs to these apartments and now are telling us that these units are illegal and cannot be rented unless we receive a variance. In my opinion, they have waived their right to assert that these units are illegal. In my particular case, I believe it is a violation of my due process rights that I took out a loan to renovate this apartment on the assumption that I could get an ROP and now am told that I cannot legally rent it. *(Name withheld to protect the innocent landlord)*.

CDARPO NEWS is published by the Capital District Association of **Rental Property Owners**.
Inquiries regarding the newsletter or advertising should be directed to: Joe Van Alphen, Editor
P.O. Box 11097, Albany, NY 12211-0097
e-mail: **cdarpo@yahoo.com** tel: (518) 371-0964

Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday each month
September – June.

CDARPO does not give legal, tax, economic, or financial advice and disclaims all liability for actions resulting from communications with officers or members. Opinions contained within this newsletter are not necessarily those of the organization. Individuals are encouraged to consult legal or financial advisors for professional advice regarding such matters.

Capital District Association of Rental Property Owners (CDARPO) welcomes you. Please join us on-line at www.cdarpo.org

Renew your CDARPO membership for 2012.
Dues \$45 = emailed newsletter
or \$50 = mailed b&w newsletter.

Know a prospective member or a landlord who needs help? With their permission, send their e-mail or address to cdarpo@yahoo.com or call (518) 433-7377. We will send them newsletters and information.

CDARPO is on **Facebook!** Search PAGES for “Capital District Association” and LIKE us to be updated in your news feed with CDARPO communications of interest to landlords. You can also comment on our posts.

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