

Newsletter April 2014



Please submit your photos and descriptions to Engels Rojas (engelsrojas82@gmail.com) or Ray Koloski (rayhats@gmail.com)

Next Meeting Thursday, April 10th Featured Speaker(s):

TBA

Speak-Up

Networking around the Refreshment and Resource Tables

Capital District Association of Rental Property Owners

Page 2

Advice to the Houselorn By Mac Mowbray

Well, it's been quite a while since I have done the column. Fortunately, I have been able to help folks when they called; it's just that I have not been able to share my solutions with the membership. Anyway, I am back and here's a sample of what I have been asked. Let's start with Schenectady, see, I have not forgotten how to spell it!

A new home owner laments: The ice tore the gutters right off the eaves of my house !! Water built up in layers over a few days and the weight was too much. Apparently there were frozen leaves in the gutter and the water could not drain before it froze. Any ideas ?

I've got a couple. Number one: Why do you suppose the gutters were installed in the first place ? Many homes were designed without gutters in mind. Look at how many of the neighboring houses have gutters installed. Ask a couple of the owners of the ones who don't, why they don't. The reason I ask is gutters can be costly, and they require maintenance. Then ask a few why they installed them. Use your judgment as to whether or not to replace the downed gutter. I presume the other side of the house is OK. If you install, make sure good quality gutter are properly installed. It may have come down because it was flimsy or improperly installed. Did it look new? It may have been installed to "dress" up the house in preparation for sale. If you do put up a new one, install gutter (leaf) guards to prevent leaf clogs. You also may have to install electric tapes to prevent the gutter and downspout from freezing up depending on the conditions around your building. This was an extra bad winter; you might not have the problem for another 20 years.

Ravena has a graffiti problem. While I was on vacation, my tenants moved out and left me a message all over the house, garage and storage shed. It appears to be crayon, lipstick and maybe some magic marker. No spray paint. The house has aluminum siding, the garage is painted cement block, the storage shed has vinyl siding. What can I use to remove it that will not damage the finishes? None of these buildings need repainting.

Mac says: I try to stay away from brand name suggestions, because products change from time to time especially once they get a good reputation, they cheapen down the product. But right now I would suggest: Orange Cleaner #414. Google it and you will find where to get it in your area. Try this before you try the home remedies. If the orange cleaner does not work, you will have to try harsher chemicals. Give me a call if Orange does not work. The harsher chemical can damage the finishes. However, it is crayon or lipstick, a clean terry cloth rag dampened with kerosene might work. Good luck. I hope you did not return the security deposit.

Colonie is next with a step problem. My steps were painted in the fall. They were very slippery this winter and I put self-stick nonskid treads on the portion where people are supposed to walk. However, the other areas are so slippery, I am afraid someone will fall. Mac Says: Try repainting that portion with a sand finish paint. You can get it at a paint store or big box store. The best is the kind you add yourself; you can determine how much sand to put in.

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LEAD RENOVATION, REPAIR, & PAINTING (RRP-INITIAL) TRAINING CLASSES April 2013

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED—REGISTER TODAY—ALL TRAININGS ARE <u>FREE</u>

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



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, and landlords.

Trainings to become EPA certified are offered by Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County, an EPA accredited training provider. This course is approved for purposes of certification under Section 402 of Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) for the respective discipline.

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.



<u>Dates</u> April 24 – Price Chopper Community Room, Schenectady April 30 – Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County, Voorheesville

> Time 7:45 am registration/breakfast 8:00 am - 5:00 pm training

> > Locations

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County 24 Martin Road Voorheesville, NY

> Price Chopper Community Room 1639 Eastern Parkway Schenectady, NY

<u>Contact</u> Questions can be answered by: Nancy at 518-765-3521 <u>NKL1@cornell.edu</u> OR

> Lisa at 518-765-3512 LKC29@cornell.edu

PARTICIPANTS MUST PRE-REGISTER Register-Send completed form below to:

Lead Training, P.O. Box 497, 24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186 Or online: https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event registration/main/events.cfm

ALL RRP INITIAL TRAININGS INCLUDE: Continental Breakfast * Lunch * Refreshments * Course Manuals & Materials

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

TROY TOPICS Citizen-Activists in Troy.

Here's another example of Troy's citizen-activists, with the support of the administration, improving life in Troy for residents and visitors.

Active, dedicated volunteers are meeting to discuss and improve conditions in the city. A Complete Streets Program is being initiated. The premise is that streets should not only serve automobiles, but also pedestrians, cyclists, the handicapped, and parents with carriages or strollers. Considerations include curb cuts, level sidewalks, clear signage, safe islands in wide intersections, attractive natural beauty, and appropriate crossing signals, among others. The group took a short walk down River Street near City Hall, and was surprised how many improvements could readily be made to make the area more livable and safer for the residents and visitors. Mayor Rosimilia welcomed the group and thanked them for their civic spirit evidenced in their joining this program.

I suggested that a great available resource is CDARPO and other like-minded landlords and the idea was most welcome. I'd appreciate anyone from Troy or having property in Troy to contact me if they would like to participate in this worthwhile endeavor.

A volunteer to scan The Record to share any items of interest to landlords in the paper for noting in our newsletter and on the website would be most appreciated.

Big news!! Our June 12 meeting will be held at the Best Western Hotel in Troy (just across from the Green Island Bridge and across from the Dinosaur Barbeque). We hope to welcome many Troy landlords as potential new members.

Ray Koloski

Tenant Tales

"I had three rental properties. Worst case was a very rich guy, family lots of \$, lots of \$! He had utilities cut off, so he tapped into my property's electrical lines with an extension cord and ran four heaters off it for a month, until it burned through on the new hardwood floor. Then he stripped wallpaper and moldings and sold them at a wood-supply business. He tried to take fixtures but was surprised by another tenant, who called me. He skipped. Family is still very big \$ and supports him, I have been told, but they won't pay any back rent or damage costs. I was out \$3,700 for him -- the cost of his mountain bike, he told me once."

Source:

http://realestate.msn.com





3 Little Factors to Help Minimize Vacancy Rates

by Marcus Maloney

Gaining long-term tenants is a desire for any landlord. Securing a long-term tenant provides security for the unit along with a decrease in vacancy rate. These tactics are used to ensure units are occupied by tenants with a desire to stay longer.

When first starting out, I made every mistake imaginable: bought the property too high, underestimated rehab cost, screening tenant criteria was little to none, and many more. Because of these initial mistakes I found myself trying to re-coop the overages on the backs of the tenants, which is a big NO-NO! Finally, after reviewing my business plan, it triggered my purpose for becoming a landlord; long term wealth. The only way to become a successful landlord was to keep all units occupied and minimize vacancy.

After evaluating all processes from screening procedures to exit interview, I focused on the patterns and behaviors of tenants, once these patterns were identified, minimizing vacancies was not hard to do. All humans are socially, physically, and emotionally connected to someone or something. Learning how to identify what the prospective tenant is most connected to will help determine what needs to be focused on during the ongoing conversations regarding their needs. By listening attentively, all candidates will tell exactly what they are looking for in a unit. If the unit does not offer the basic amenities the tenant is requesting; then the tenant will not qualify for long term tenancy. That being said...

Here Are 3 Factors to Help Minimize Vacancy Rates

1. Social Connection– One way to determine if the prospective tenant can be encouraged to sign a long term lease is to find a social connection between them and the unit. This may be a close family member that lives nearby. This connection can be made by always adding a "For Rent" sign in front of the property. This form of advertisement is still the best, in my opinion, because it provides a referral from someone in the area that is a family member or friend. Having a connection with a neighbor minimizes the likelihood of the tenant making a brash decision to move unexpectedly. The best referral is from an elderly parent or some other elderly family member. Finding the social connection will assist you during the screening process for long term tenants.

2. Physical Connection– I have never met anyone that enjoyed moving. This is a huge expense and an unsettled feeling for everyone involved. By focusing on the physical distress of moving I offer potential tenants the option to reduce the monthly payment if a long term lease is signed for a minimum of 18 months versus the traditional 12 month lease. For example if the going rental rate for a SFR is \$650-\$800, the rent for a traditional lease maybe \$725, i would explain "by signing an 18 month lease or longer at \$700 monthly can reduce your rent by \$300 throughout the term of the lease." In actuality, by signing the 18 month lease, you will limit turnover and will secure \$12,600 per tenant versus \$8700 for a traditional lease. I make sure to offer this solution while the tenant is in the midst of moving, this is done for 2 reasons: fatigue enhances poor decision making and the tenant will have a fresh reminder of how difficult it is to pack and move.

Tenants with school aged children are a major advantage. These tenants are looking to secure a stable placement and a good school district for the kids. On average, when securing a tenant with school aged children, the length of stay is 3 years. As discussed previously, offering an 18 month lease will provide the security you are looking for and the tenant becomes settled in their home. After the 18 month lease it is customary to then continue with an ongoing 12 month lease.

3. Emotional Connection– this tool is essential when communicating with tenants and potential tenants. The emotional connect is closely tied to the social connection, normally these connections go hand in hand. I call the emotional connection the "Jedi Mind Trick." If any of you are familiar with Star Wars, the "Jedi Mind Tricks" is a psychological tool used by the Jedi to persuade their counterparts to do whatever they say. I use this tool when communicating by making the tenants feel as though their rental unit is exactly that: "THEIRS." I am not an advocate of manipulation and do not condone it in any way, but the "Jedi Mind Trick" is valuable. For example, when referring to the unit; its always theirs "is everything alright with "YOUR" home, or "is there anything that can be done to make the move into YOUR new home easier?" This technique instills the pride of ownership. This simple approach subconsciously provides an immeasurable value to the property. **Source:**

http://www.biggerpockets.com/renewsblog/2014/03/21/factors-to-help-minimize-vacancy-rate/



Spring Maintenance Tips

Flush Your Water Heater

Once or twice a year you should drain your water heaters. This is done to remove the sediment that can build up in your unit from the municipal water supply that enters your property. If too much sediment builds up, it can reduce the efficiency of your water heater or clog the drain valve. Replacing a water heater is expensive! Be cautious, If you're not comfortable doing it yourself, hire someone who is.

Source: http://landlords.about.com

OPPORTUNITY IS KNOCKING FOR **PROPERTY OWNERS**

Join the Albany Housing Authority's growing network of the region's property owners who rent to Section 8 families!

Save advertising cost!

AHA completes criminal background checks for you. AHA completes yearly HQS Inspection. AHA pays subsidy directly to the owner on the 1st of each month. If the client's income goes down, AHA pays additional subsidy. Client must sign a 1- year lease. Client must pay security.



<u>It's quick and easy to list your rental unit.</u> For additional information Albany Housing Authority at: (518) 641-7500 or on the web at www.albanyhousing.org

HVAC Check-Ups

...Nothing puts a tenant in a sour mood faster than the air conditioning going out in July or walking up to flooded hallway. A qualified HVAC service company can clean out the condensation line, check the air filter and coolant pressure in the unit. Whether you elect service contract or just a service call for this is up to you. Either way, the HVAC system will be ready for the summer months ahead.

Source:

http://www.traininglandlords.com/springmaintenance-checklist/





We are the Capital District Association of Rental Property Owners

CDARPO members represent the entire Capital District – Albany, Rensselaer, Troy, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties.

Please join us!

Dues are \$45 emailed newsletter or \$50 snailmail newsletter.

Already a member? Renew your CDARPO membership for 2014.

Find our membership form on-line at www.cdarpo.org.

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

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¹ / ₂ Page	\$ 225	\$ 375	\$ 600			

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www.cdarpo.org

CDARPO can help.

We offer 10 newsletters each year, general meetings with professional speakers, and members with years of experience.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 10th

Days Inn Formerly The Ramada Inn 7:00pm – 9:00pm

> 946 New Loudon Rd Latham, NY 12110

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

CDARPO NEWS is published by the <u>C</u>apital <u>D</u>istrict <u>A</u>ssociation of <u>R</u>ental <u>P</u>roperty <u>O</u>wners.

CDARPO

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