



June 2016

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NEW FEATURES

Do You Know? We'll be combing the world of rental housing to find interesting tidbits and information to surprise you.

News Around Oregon – We're gathering news from around Oregon. What's happening in LaGrande is just as important as what's happening in Portland, or Medford.

National Housing Headlines – We'll report on rental housing trends across the nation.

Housing Links – Want more information? Need contact numbers? Who, what, where and when? Check out these helpful links to sites that can help you.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

National Safety Month and Rental Owners

By **Terry Turner**, ORHA President

What does safety mean to you? When I think of going to sleep at night and feeling safe, for me it's locked doors and windows and the porch lights on. I never worry about a fire at night or breathing carbon monoxide—I have alarms and detectors. When my husband and I go on a trip, I stop the mail and newspaper, and go explore without wondering will I come home to a disaster.

Safety means a lot of different things to different people, but the main idea is that everyone wants to feel peaceful

and calm whether we are home or away. We are responsible to help our tenants and residents feel that safe in their homes. Have you done everything possible to accomplish this?

Locking doors and windows, porch lights and working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are really just the beginning, there is so much more you can do. When you inspect your rental properties, think—would I feel safe here? Do you need to cut back shrubs against the unit to eliminate hiding places for bad guys? Is the

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OREGON RENTAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION
Board Meeting Schedule
July 16, 2016 - Salem
September 17, 2016 - Bend



SAFETY TIPS FOR LANDLORDS

Violence against landlords and property managers appear in the news with some frequency. Thinking ahead and having specific plans to address your safety will go a long way toward making sure you don't become the headlines for tomorrow's news story.

1. Write down and follow screening guidelines.

Always checking credit reports, pulling criminal reports and verifying references will help weed out problem tenants. Always make a copy of the applicants' identification. Communicating your requirements to prospective tenants will start the process off on the right foot.

2. Learn how to de-escalate conflicts.

Problems are inevitable; learning to resolve issues will pay off in longer-term happy tenants and less stress for you. Developing new communication skills and really listening might help you to see the situation in a different way.

3. Don't show units alone, take someone with you.

Showing units in the daytime is always safer than at night. When showing a rental alone, always have the potential renter go through doors first. Pay attention to where exit doors are for a quick escape, if necessary.

4. Customer service is crucial.

Treat everyone the way you would like to be treated.

5. If a situation feels dangerous or you are threatened by a tenant, don't hesitate to back off.

Don't serve notices to a belligerent tenant. Don't "confront" an angry or out of control person.

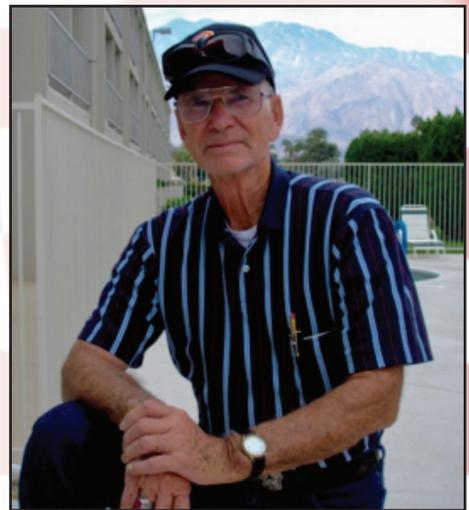
Remember keeping your cool is important in conflicts. Know as much as you can about the person you are showing and renting your property to. Think before you act, your safety depends on it.

(Based on an article by Tracey March)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF TROY F. MINNING

Troy F Minning was born on July 24, 1932, to Maudie and D.F. Minning. He grew up in Graham, Texas, with his two older sisters, Bennie and Bobbye. After high school, he joined the Air Force and proudly served during the Korean War. After his service to his country, he moved to Riverside, California, where he met his future wife, Noma. They married in May 1959. They had two children, Robert and Robyn. Troy later moved to San Bernardino, California, and married his current wife, Jane, in 1987. Troy retired in 1987, and they eventually moved to the Roseburg, Oregon area in 1993, where Troy helped manage their mobile home park and several rental homes. Troy spent his time with good friends and enjoyed camping, collecting rocks, model and matchbox cars and coins. Troy passed on from this earth on May 26, 2016, to be with his two sisters and parents at his heavenly Fathers side.

He leaves behind his beautiful and loving wife; his son and daughter; two step-sons, David and Randy; and two step-daughters Laura and Kathy; along with 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Sunday, June 5, 2016, at 2 p.m. at the Well Springs Bible Fellowship Church in Roseburg, Oregon. A second memorial service will be held on Saturday, June 11, 2016, in Penngrove, California, at the Penngrove Community Church.



AROUND

Here

Do You Want to Travel to One of Our Chapters for a Seminar? Here is the Class Schedule for June.

Central OR ROA - Bend

info@centraloregonrentalowners.org

June 25, 2016 – 7 credit hours
Property Management Boot Camp

Lane Co. ROA – Eugene

info@laneroa.com

June 29, 2016 – 2 credit hours
Small Claims Workshop

Linn Benton RHA – Albany

lbrhaoregon@gmail.com

June 16, 2016 – 1 credit hour
Landlord Tenant Law Update

Portland Area ROA – Portland

www.portlanarearoa.com

June 29, 2016 – 4 credit hours
Masters in Landlording (2nd of 3)

Salem RHA – Salem

Contact@salemrha.com

June 23, 2016 – 3 credit hours
Landlording 102

SW OR ROA – North Bend

coltercindy@gmail.com

June 23, 2016 – 2 credit hours
US Coast Guard

SOROA – Medford

info@SOROA.net

June 21, 2016 – 2 credit hours
Mark Dennett, Motivational Speaker

DO YOU KNOW

OREGON RENTAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION DUES/COPYRIGHTS

Oregon Rental Housing Association income primarily comes from association dues, education and forms sales. ORHA has exclusive copyright of forms and all copyrights have been in effect since the forms were created under United States copyright laws.



Infringement upon exclusive copyright is illegal and punishable with fines up to \$150,000., not including attorney fees and court costs.

ORHA on-line form sales are strictly monitored for compliance to copyright laws. Cease and Desist letters are issued to individuals and companies who abuse ORHA copyrights, and failure to comply is considered willful infringement.

Appropriate legal action will be taken to preserve ORHA rights if “willful infringement” is determined, and monetary damages and equitable relief may be sought in addition to fines.

Questions concerning ORHA forms and copyrights should be directed to the Oregon Rental Housing Association located at 1462 Commercial St., N.E., Salem, OR 97301, 503.364.5468.

Links

<http://www.realtor.org/topics/realtor-safety/56-safety-tips-for-realtors>

<http://www.nsc.org/learn/safety-knowledge/Pages/safety-at-home-fires-burns.aspx>

https://www.avivacanada.com/buildingmaintenance/docs/tenant_safety.pdf

<https://www.amfam.com/pdf/safety/tenant-safety.pdf>

Mind Your Business: Tia's Tips for Better Rental Management

Acts of God, Habitability & Essential Services

By **Tia Politi**, Lead Property Manager for Acorn Property Management, Licensed Property Manager, ROA Board Member



Among the habitability requirements for rentals in Oregon, few are more pressing than the need for essential services. These services include plumbing and electrical systems in good working order; hot and cold running water furnished to appropriate fixtures; and a heating system capable of generating warmth to the center of every room at a minimum temperature of 67 degrees.

This past winter had many landlords inquiring about their responsibility to restore essential services when the tenants have been the cause of frozen or bursting pipes. While it may be impossible for a landlord to restore services during a power outage, you do have a responsibility to do whatever is in your power to restore services quickly even when the tenant may be responsible for creating the problem.

Whether you take care of the issue yourself or hire the job out, it is your duty to make sure that service is restored as immediately as possible, then, and only then, can the finger-pointing begin. Can you pass the cost of the repair on to your tenant? The answer, as usual is, it depends...

Did you have your tenant read and sign a Winterizing Agreement, or similar document instructing them in detail the necessary steps to take in the event of freezing weather? If so, then the answer is probably, yes. If not, then you may not be legally able to pass the charge on. As with most issues during a tenancy, it goes back to whether or not you, the landlord, properly informed your tenants of their responsibility and got them to acknowledge that in writing. If you did, then it is allowable to pass any charges

(including a reasonable hourly charge for your time if you performed the repair) along to the tenant.

We had a few tenants whose pipes froze in December who swore that they did everything we instructed: ran both hot and cold taps a pencil width wide; kept the heat at or above 67 degrees; kept cupboard doors underneath sinks open. But they claimed the pipes must have frozen because they weren't insulated. That's a hard sell when most of our homes with no insulated pipes had no problem (even with a once-every-40-years weather event), or when a vacant apartment in the same building had been properly weatherized and no pipes froze there.

The response you can expect from many tenants closely resembles the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. First, they deny that they were ever informed of this responsibility. Second, they are angry at you for not reminding them, or something else that ought to be your fault. Third, they bargain with you for a reduction or an exception. Fourth, they don't want to address it and may not respond or pay anything for some time. Finally, most will accept their responsibility and either pay in full or make payments. If they don't, and you have assessed a lawful charge, then you have a decision to make. If you are not willing to absorb the cost of the repair yourself, consider that they may have a large enough security deposit or a co-signer, so you know that eventually when they move out you will get your money. If not, then a Notice of Termination with Cause will likely get their attention and initiate an appropriate response.

This column offers general suggestions only and is not substitute for professional legal advice. Please consult an attorney for advice related to your specific situation.



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outside lighting sufficient for nighttime safety? Has your tenant asked for something that would make them feel more safe living there? What about that extra slider lock they requested? Or the bolt lock on the front door? For just a few dollars and a couple of hours you have the power to make your tenant happy and content. For any rental owner keeping quality long term tenants it isn't just doing required repairs and maintenance, it's going the extra mile. Think about it, what can you do this month to improve the lives of your tenants?

All rental owners carry fire and liability insurance, but we

don't want to have to use it. Obviously, smoke alarms are the first line of defense for fires, but when was the last time you thought about defensible space around your rental property and when did you last have the chimney cleaned (they should be cleaned and inspected at least yearly)? Have you really looked at your property for issues that could be dangerous to your tenants? What about sidewalks, porch steps or hand rails? Would your grandchild or grandparent be safe living in your rental, how about your 19 year-old daughter? Take advantage of National Safety Month and make someone happy—your tenants!

Housing is Housing

By **Herb Yussim**, President, ROA Southwestern Oregon



On May 26th I attended The South Coast Housing Forum in Bandon organized by Susan Brown, Curry County Commissioner. The intent was to draw together many varied stakeholders involved in the future of housing in our region. The agenda was to address the serious shortage of low income and affordable housing.

THE TOPICS WERE:

- Developing a Community/ County Housing Plan Project Management
- Technical Assistance
- Project Funding Resources

THE PRESENTERS WERE:

- HUD
- Oregon Housing & Community Services
- USDA
- Neighborhood Partnerships
- Home First
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation
- NeighborWorks Umpqua
- Gordon Elwood Foundation
- Et.al.

There may (most certainly will) be many differing perspectives regarding the information delivered by the many presenters. Many of the other people in attendance

are employees of county, state, and federal agencies as well as foundations and a large contingent from the public health arena. My point of view is to protect the interests of private property and rental owners against unreasonable regulation, government interference & intrusion, and taxation; basically to allow the free enterprise system to work without unreasonable interference. Additionally, my point of view is to allow development of residential housing in a manner which accelerates achievement of the stated goals of providing low income and affordable housing. It is likely that the Rental Owners who make up the membership of this Association share similar goals and views.

Unfortunately, there are several realities which seem to pose severe obstacles which became self-evident (with a little questioning by yours truly,) to the challenges of siting and constructing affordable and low-income housing funded through public sources. These obstacles cause the average price (including land with all costs in) of constructing one low income unit to total approximately \$250,000!!!!

On the other hand, we all know that most reputable builders can complete a reasonable and affordable rental unit of approximately 1,000 square feet for between \$70,000 and

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\$100,000. The obvious questions which I asked of the panels of experts were “where does the other \$150,000 go?” “Is that how much we are spending on all the salaries needed to pay all the administrators of these various programs?”

The answer was fascinating. Partially yes, some of the additional cost goes towards the administration of these projects. During the break, one of the panelists from NeighborWorks Umpqua referred me to a document publically available on the Meyer Memorial Trust website “Cost Efficiencies Report” It explains in both the executive summary and the detailed text that much of the cost of building publically funded, low-income and affordable housing, is due in large part to the governmental regulations for constructing green housing under tightly regulated conditions. For those who are interested it is worth a read: http://mmt.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cost-Efficiencies-white-paper-FINAL-10_1_15.pdf

Refreshingly there was a presentation from Rob Justus of HomeFirst Development. They raise money from the private sector providing 3% annual returns for 60 year commitments and build their affordable and low-income units for \$68,000 to \$70,000 in Portland and also wrap each occupant in the services he or she needs whether it be counselling for mental health issues, employment help, addiction services, etc. to move forward in their lives. HomeFirst Development has a track record of success and it is all privately funded. This was most encouraging.

On another note, in fact a more disturbing note....one might think ‘what could be more disturbing than to

realize that it costs the public sector 3 ½ times more money to build housing than the private sector?’...there is another issue. A very disturbing issue...“Housing is Healthcare”

The reason we had so many public health professionals in attendance is because this is the new buzz phrase. What is of particular irritation is the notion that there will be an attempt by tenants’ rights groups to justify the regulation of rental rates as well as rental terms and conditions based on the notion that tenants experience health impacts when rents are too high or terms and conditions are not to their liking.

There is much more along these lines but I have referred the rest to the ORHA President, Legislative Director and Lobbyist, as this is surely coming down the pike. No reason to reveal our hand too early on this one. There is also a coalition of several real estate broker groups, real estate developers, rental owner associations and various other associations coming together to address attempts to remove mortgage deductions on loans over \$500,000 or for homes other than the primary residence. All of these issues when taken together will translate into a damper on development. That is contrary to the best interests of all parties. And there you have it.

Herb Yussim, President, ROA Southwestern Oregon

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www.CascadeProcessServices.com

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For more information contact
Maren at: (503) 364-5468
or maren@oregonrentalhousing.com

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ORHA ADMINISTRATIVE & LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Maren Winters, Administrator | maren@oregonrentalhousing.com

Shawn Miller, Lobbyist | shawn@millerpublicaffairs.com

Jim Straub, Legislative Director | legislatedirector@oregonrentalhousing.com