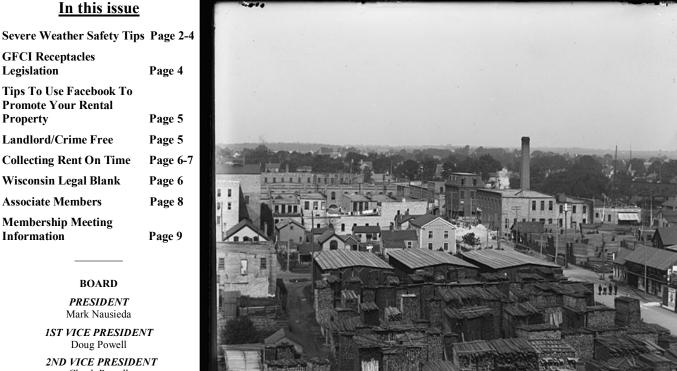


Kenosha Landlord Association

A Local Chapter of the Wisconsin Apartment Association

Volume 28, Issue 5

May 2015



Bird's Eye View of Kenosha 1880-1900

To Our Members

Our speaker last month was Art Andrews, from Safeway Pest Management. He gave us a thorough insight into bedbugs and other pests. Landlords, you should put an IPM (Integrated Pest Management) plan into your leases. Remember to educate your current and new tenants about bedbugs. KLA would also like to thank Art for the gifts and becoming an associate member.

At our next membership meeting, Wednesday, May 20th, Lyn Elvetici and Donna Cook from the Kenosha Housing Authority will give a presentation on all areas of the KHA and how they can benefit you as a landlord

May Meeting: Wednesday, May 20th at the Fireside Restaurant and Lounge, 2801 30th Ave. . Appetizers and networking at 6:30 pm. Meeting begins promptly at 7:00 pm.

DISCLAIMER: The Kenosha Landlord Association publishes this newsletter to create awareness of issues relating to the rental housing industry. Information is compiled from a variety of sources and the views and concerns expressed by the contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Association. When necessary, we suggest you consult an attorney.

GFCI Receptacles Legislation **Tips To Use Facebook To Promote Your Rental Property** Landlord/Crime Free **Collecting Rent On Time** Wisconsin Legal Blank **Associate Members**

Membership Meeting Information

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Kenosha Landlord Association. Inc. P.O. Box 1505, Kenosha, WI 53141

www.kenoshalandlordassociation.org www.waaonline.org



Severe Weather Safety Tips - to Save Your Life!

Source: http://www.tessa.org/safety_tips.html



<u>Fact</u>: Hundreds of people die each year in the United States due to heat waves, hurricanes, lightning, flash floods, powerful thunderstorm winds, and winter storms or winter cold. Additionally, thousands of people are injured by these weather events each year. Will it happen to you?

Fact: If you are aware of what weather event is about to impact your area, you are more likely to survive such an event. To stay on top of the weather, utilize NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards receiver units that can be purchased at most electronic stores. Make sure the model you purchase has a battery-backup. The programmable types allow you to selectively screen out those county warnings you are not interested in. Most homes have a smoke detector; shouldn't your home also have a weather radio?

You should also obtain the latest weather information from commercial TV/radio, cable TV, the internet/web, and newspapers. It's your responsibility! The Milwaukee/Sullivan National Weather Service office (WFO MKX) that services south-central and southeast Wisconsin has a web site at: http://www.weather.gov/mkx ...check it out....it is loaded with information and links!

What You Can do Before Severe Weather Strikes

1. Develop a disaster plan for you and your family at home, work, school, and when outdoors. The American Red Cross offers plan

ning tips and information on a putting together a disaster supplies kit at: http://www.redcross.org

2. Identify a safe place to take shelter. Information on how to build a Safe Room in your home or school is available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency at: http://www.fema.gov/hazard/tornado/to_saferoom.shtm

3. Keep a highway map nearby to follow storm movement from weather bulletins.

4. Have a NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards receiver unit with a warning alarm tone and battery back-up to receive warning bulletins.

5. National Weather Service (NWS) watches and warnings are also available on the Internet. Select your local NWS office at: http://www.weather.gov/organization.php ...or go to the to the NWS Home Page at http:// www.nws.noaa.gov

6. Listen to commercial radio or television/cable TV for weather information.

7. Listen to commercial radio or television/cable TV for weather information.

8. Check the weather forecast before leaving for extended periods outdoors. Watch for signs of approaching storms.

9. If severe weather threatens, check on people who are elderly, very young, or physically or mentally disabled. Don't forget about pets and farm animals.

Tornado Safety Tips:

1. Seek shelter in a sturdy building, or a pre-designated shelter. Go to the lowest level of the building, preferably in a basement, and get under a heavy desk or workbench or sit next to the wall and cover your head with your arms/ hands. Best bet – have a safe room in the basement.

2. If an underground shelter is not available, move to an interior room/hallway – put as many wall between you and the outside of the building, and stay away from windows. Other possibilities: get into a bathtub or under a bed or sofa.

3. Get out of vehicles – they can easily be tossed around – do not try to outrun a tornado.

Continued on page 3



Severe Weather Safety Tips – To Save Your Life! (con't)

4. If caught outside – lie flat on the ground and cover your head with your hands. Remember, in tornado situations debris likes to settle in roadside ditches or other low spots. If heavy rains are falling in the area, ditches and low spots may quickly flood. Therefore, laying down in a ditch may not be your best choice.

5. Manufactured homes (mobile trailers) offer little protection, even if tied down. Leave these for a sturdy shelter before the storm approaches.

6. Do not seek shelter under a highway overpass. Wind blow stronger under the overpass due to the wind-tunnel effect. Additionally, flying debris (glass, wood, metal) can pummel you, and the tornado winds may suck you out from under the overpass anyway.

7. Don't waste time opening windows and doors to equalize air pressure differences – this is a waste of time and buildings have enough air leakage to equalize air pressure differences anyway. Buildings are more likely to explode after the wind gets inside.

8. Remember – the tornado can occur before there is a visible funnel cloud. A tornado is nothing more than a violently rotating column of air extending from the ground to the cloud base. You may not be able to see the tornado (can't see the rotating air) until enough debris and dirt get swept into the vortex, and/or the visible funnel cloud develops all the way to the ground. 11. No place is totally safe from tornadoes (except for a safe room) – if weather conditions come together properly, the tornado will go over or through mountains, lakes, rivers, swamps, marshes, bogs, and through downtown areas that have 1000 foot skyscrapers!

Lightning Safety Tips:

1. Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are imminent. Lightning can travel 5-10 miles away from the thunderstorm and strike the ground with blue sky overhead. The storm doesn't have to be overhead in order for you to be struck.

2. Move to a sturdy shelter or vehicle. Do not take shelter in a small shed, under isolated trees, or in a convertible-top vehicle. Stay away from tall objects such as trees or towers or poles.

3. If in your vehicle when lightning strikes – don't touch a metal surface. You are safer in a vehicle than being outdoors.

4. Remember that utility lines or pipes can carry the electrical current underground or through a building. Avoid electrical appliances, and use telephones or computers only in an emergency.

5. If you feel your hair standing on end – get down into a baseball catcher's position and plug your ears with your finger tips so if lightning does hit it will not blow your ear drums out. Do not lie flat!

6. 30/30 rule – if the time between lighting and thunder is 30 seconds or less, go to a safe shelter. Stay there until 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.

Flash Flood/Flood Safety Tips:

1. Nearly half of all fatalities in a flash flood involve a person driving a vehicle. Do not drive into a flooded area – Turn Around Don't Drown! It takes only 2 feet of water to float away most cars. It's amazing how powerful we feel when we get behind the wheel – don't do it!

2. It takes only 6 inches of fast-moving water to sweep a person off their feet – don't walk through a flooded area!

3. If you are camping in a river valley, move to higher ground if thunderstorms with heavy rains are in the area. Do not attempt to drive away.

4. Don't operate electrical tools in flooded areas.

Severe Weather Safety Tips – To Save Your Life! (con't)



5. Most flash flood deaths occur in the middle of the night when it is more difficult to see rising water levels judge the depth of water covering road surfaces.

Severe Thunderstorm Straight-line Winds:

1. Don't underestimate the power of strong thunderstorm winds known as straight-line winds – they can reach speeds of 100 to 150 mph. Hurricane-force winds start at 74 mph. Wisconsin does experience these kinds of winds!

2. If a severe thunderstorm warning contains hurricane-force wind speeds seek shelter immediately (as you would for a tornado situation).

3. Stay away from windows and go to the basement or interior room/hallway. Do not use electrical appliances.

4. Be aware that tall trees near a building can be uprooted by straight-line winds – that tree can come crashing through the roof of a home and crush a person to death.

5. Powerful straight-line winds can overturn a vehicle or even make a person air-borne when they get up over 100 mph!

6. One type of a straight-line wind event is a downburst, which is a small area of rapidly descending rain-cooled air and rain beneath a thunderstorm. A downburst can cause damage equivalent to a strong tornado!

Large Hail:

1. Although it is rare, people have been killed by large hail stones after sustaining head injuries. Additionally, several people are injured by large hail stones each year in the U.S.

2. Some thunderstorms can produce large hail stones that can reach the size of baseballs, softballs, or even as big as computer compact discs (CD) or DVDs! These large hail stones can fall at speeds over 100 mph! – that's why they are dangerous! The largest hail stone in Wisconsin was over 7 inches in diameter!

3. If a severe storm is producing large hail stones, seek a sturdy shelter and stay away from windows that can easily be smashed.



GFCI Receptacles Legislation Source: http://hdsupplysolutions.com/shop/static--gfci receptacles



Safety Improvements to Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI)

As of **June 29, 2015**, revisions to UL 943 Standard for Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) go into effect. The changes aim to improve protection against serious injury, electric shock, and electrocutions.

Newly manufactured GFCI receptacles must include auto-monitor self-testing and power-denial end-of-life features.

Auto-Montior Self-Testing

Self-testing will identify any failure or malfunction and help protect against electrocution.

Power-Denial End-of-Life Features

If a self-test finds the GFCI has reached its end of life, it will lock itself, deny power and prevent a reset.



Tips To Use Facebook To Promote Your Rental Property Source: http://www.nuwireinvestor.com



The current state of the rental market is problematic in many parts of the world. Investors have to come up with different ways to promote properties, which is not always possible. While many stay focused on regular ads through newspapers or even through Google AdWords, many end up using Facebook to promote, which is not at all a bad idea. While renting has many advantages, when you do not rent, problems appear. Facebook is especially useful for those that are at a beginner level. Professional investors already know all channels that have to be used, while beginners struggle as they are usually at the level at which they are still learning what to look at when buying a home. The great news is that Facebook is quite easy to use for those that are looking for clients. You just have to consider the following.

Opening A Facebook Page For Your Rental Business

It is never too early to open a page. Even if you have just a few properties, you can still use the social network. All that you really need to do is read a few articles to see how to set it up properly. Make sure that you always add all the contact information when you create that page since you want clients to be able to find you fast.

Always Use High Quality Pictures

Many believe that the sale is made when a person comes to the location but in many cases the sale is mostly made when pictures are seen. Just think about it! You see pictures of an apartment that you love. You immediately get an idea of whether or not you would like to live there. Because of that, all pictures you post on social networks have to be of a very high quality. Try to post many pictures instead of just one.

Highlight The Strong Points Of A Rental Property

Many just post pictures of the property and forget about the fact that text is equally important. On your Facebook page you can actually post news about the economic activity surge in Ireland or about why a duplex is perfect for a family. It is quite simple to add a small description to every single picture that you upload. You will not waste a lot of time and you can reap the benefits of that as more people will be interested in what you currently have available.

Properly Using Facebook Ads

According to Xpert Money, a lot of people make the mistake of buying Facebook ads in an inappropriate manner. For instance, they will just go through the main steps and promote their content to the entire country. You have to be patient and always target your ad appropriately. Make sure that people that actually want to rent a home are those that will see the ads. Think about location and target audience whenever you buy Facebook Ads. This goes for both Facebook Page likes and for posts that are boosted.

Remember that communication is very important on Facebook. You have to engage with your audience instead of just writing ads or posting pictures. The rental property owners that make the most money are those that take the necessary time to actually engage properly with their target audience.

Landlord/Crime Free Multi-Housing Rental Seminar

Saturday October 3th (9am-2pm) Saturday October 10th (9am-2pm)

Location: Boys and Girls Club 1330 52nd St. Kenosha, WI 53140

The KPD Crime Prevention Unit and the Kenosha Landlord Association designed this Seminar to help landlords make better decisions when managing their rental units.

The following topics will be discussed:

Property Maintenance Codes

- Crime Prevention Techniques
- Applicant Screening
- Leases and Evictions
- Crime Free Lease Addendums
- Process Serving
- C.P.T.E.D. (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design)
- Fire Safety
- Waste and Disposal



To register for the seminar please call: Crime prevention Unit at 657-3937 or e-mail: watch@kenoshapolice.com.

Coffee, soda, water, and lunch will be provided!!!!!!!

This seminar will help landlords and property managers in the following ways:

- Satisfied tenants build stable neighborhoods
- Active management leads to less turnover
- Stabilized property values and rents
- Lower maintenance and repair costs - Everyone is safer
- Peace of mind from spending less time on crisis control.

Come and learn about all of the new laws!!!!!



Collecting Rent On Time

Source: http://www.landlordology.com/collecting-rent-on-time/



Managing rental properties can be a profitable business as long as you manage your cash flow well and collect rent on time. In fact, the biggest factor in your cash flow will be your ability to collect rent on time.Stereo-typically, renters are not the most fiscally responsible people. Whether this is true or not, at one time or another you are bound to have a tenant who pays rent late – or not at all.

Here are seven tips for collecting rent on time and handling tenants who have trouble paying rent.

1. Make it Automatic: Requiring tenants to pay rent via an auto-pay or auto-deduct system is the best way to collect rent on time. There are even multiple systems that will deposit the money automatically to your bank account. The major benefit is that this eliminates the factor of human error -i.e. tenants "forgetting" to pay rent. There are multiple ways you can set up automatic rent payments:

ACH Debit: Use an ACH (automated clearing house) to withdraw money from the tenant's bank account. To authorize this transaction, the tenants sign a document that allows the landlord to withdraw a set amount of money on recurring basis. Cozy uses ACH direct deposit systems to deduct the tenants rent money and deposit it to your bank account. The downside is that if a tenant doesn't have enough money in their account to fund the withdraw, the draft will bounce, and you won't get paid. ACH systems usually cost 50 - 300 per transaction and take 4-7 days to process – so it's not the quickest solution for collecting rent – but it is the easiest.

Online Bill Pay: All major banks have an "online bill pay" feature. If you don't want to set up an ACH, you can ask your tenants to set up their rent payment as a recurring bill with their bank. This way, the bank will issue a check and mail it to you automatically every month.

The downside is that you still have to deposit the check, and payments could get lost in the mail - albeit, the bank is mailing the check, not the tenant.

Collect Post-Dated Checks: Prior to the invention of online payments, some landlords would collect 12 post-dated checks – one for every month of a year-long lease. Then, the landlord would simply deposit the check on the first of every month. It's pretty simple, but most tenants I know are uneasy about writing 12 post-dated checks – especially to a landlord they just met. Remember, it's illegal to cash a check before the date mark.

2. Choose Your Tenants Wisely: Only rent to qualified tenants with a great rental history. No surprise here, right? When screening tenants, you will see the entire gambit of credit ratings. Some prospective tenants will have an excellent history paying bills, but others will have downright terrible payment habits.

•Set your Criteria: Start out by being very clear about the criteria prospective tenants must meet to pass the application process. Discrimination laws state that you much hold the same standards and criteria to all tenants. If you deny an applicant for having \$50,000 in credit card debt, you must deny all applicants who have \$50K or more in consumer debt.

•Income Requirements: At the very least, this should include regular income equivalent to three times the rent amount or more, and an established history of paying rent on time with past landlords.

•Good Credit: Landlords and property managers should always obtain an up to date consumer credit report, which usually doesn't include rent payments, but does include eviction judgments and past debts. You will also discover how they've been paying other creditors.

Check References: I believe that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Therefore, thorough verification of the application information is critical to paving the way for prompt, full rent payments. Always call the previous landlord and ask "*would you rent to them again*?". Keep in mind that a previous landlord does not have to tell you anything, but it doesn't hurt to ask!



VISCONSIN LEGAL BLANK PRINTING & FORMS Wisconsin Legal Blank Co., Inc. http://www.wilegalblank.com/ Rick Russell - 414.344.5155 rick@wilegalblank.com

11 NEW RENTAL FORMS Approved Rental Forms conforming –ACT 76 Mandatory March 1, 2014

Wisconsin Legal Blank Printing and Forms has provided it's customers with high quality pre-printed and custom forms for over 100 years. We are constantly keeping up-to-date and ahead of Rental and Real Estate regulations, government changes to forms, renovation literature, and EPA safety mandated requirements.

Collecting Rent On Time (con't)

3. Exercise"No Cash" Policy: Accepting cash as a rent payment is never a good idea. I know it's tempting, but as I discuss in the article "Danger Danger, Be Cautious of Cash", just don't do it.

Cash is too easily lost, leaves no paper trail in the event that your tenant disappears, and may sometimes imply that your tenant is involved in illegal business activities.

You can eliminate these risks by establishing a policy in which you do not accept cash as a payment for rent. Serve a legally sufficient notice of your "no cash" policy and advise your tenants of acceptable ways they can make their monthly payments, such as check, money order or direct debit. Remember to communicate this policy in your lease or rental agreement.

4. Enforce Your Rent Collection Policy: To ensure regular, timely rent payment, keeping your collection policies firm and consistent is the industry best practice – but there are few exceptions.

In your lease, you should address all payment related issues including the:

•exact amount due every month

•where payments are made

•acceptable payment methods

•when rent is due, grace periods

the consequences of bounced checks or default.

At one point or another you may feel sorry for a tenant falling on hard times, or simply be in too much of a hurry to charge a late fee. If you are sure that a good tenant is only experiencing a "just this once" type of issue, feel free to cut them some slack. However, to keep them from taking advantage of your generosity in the future, be firm about your policy from then on and don't make a habit of being lenient. Let them know that rent should always come first in regards to paying bills and that their delinquency results in costs that will be passed on to them. In a previous article, we suggest forgiving a late fee once, but **ONLY** once. If you are so short on time that you cannot adequately collect rent or late fees, then consider hiring a reputable property manager to do this for you.

5. If they are Late, Ask the Necessary Questions: When you come in contact with the tenant who has yet to pay rent for the month, ask them a few questions that will clue you into the heart of the issue.

•When do you expect to make a payment?

•Where will you be submitting your payment?

•What is the exact amount that you will be paying?

•What will be your method of payment?

•What is the source of income you will be using to make your payment?

If they are evasive in answering these questions, serve them with an eviction notice the next day. You can only serve an eviction notice if they are breaking your lease. Check your state rules to find out the legal amount of time required for the notice before you file for eviction, and if your state requires multiple infractions before pursuing eviction. Serving notice (unofficially) can be as simple as taping a piece of paper to their door saying "pay past-due rent, or I'm evicting you ". However, it's not really official until you mail them a formal letter and send it via Certified Mail as evidence of receipt. In a perfect world, the letter taped to the door will be enough to scare them into finding the money somewhere (i.e. mom and dad).

6. Make the Consequences Known: You have to be prepared to report a past-due tenant to the credit agency. More importantly, make sure your tenants know that you **will** report them – which will ruin their credit. You must include a statement in your lease agreement, informing your tenants that late rent payments may be reported to the three major credit agencies. You must also disclose that late payments may negatively affect their credit. This alone will likely keep the tenant on their toes and ensure you receive rent on time. Obviously, you don't "want" to report anyone, and this is more of a scare-tactic than anything else. Nonetheless, you should know how to follow-through. To report a late rent payment, or a delinquent tenant, you'll need to call the credit bureaus for guidance:

Equifax, 1-800-685-1111

Experian, 1-888-397-3742

Note: In some cases, there may be a fee to report a tenant. In other cases, you may have to get a judgment, or submit the debt to a collections agency before it will show up on the tenant's credit report.

TransUnion, 1-800-916-8800

7. Offer Rewards to Responsible Tenants: A critical part of managing a rental property is holding on to good tenants. Sometimes landlords can be so focused on preventing unwanted situations that they overlook the renters who make their job worthwhile. If you have a tenant that always pays rent on time, abides by your rules and takes good care of your property, show them how much you appreciate them with an Amazon gift card or fruit basket. A perfect opportunity to show your appreciation is after your tenants have paid a year of consecutive, timely rent payments. A well-timed gift basket could also provide a wavering tenant with the motivation needed to renew their lease.

KENOSHA LANDLORD ASSOCIATION NEWS





Kenosha Landlord Association

P.O. Box 1505 Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



& Lounge 2801 30th Ave.

(262) 551-0600

On our regular 3rd Wednesday of the month

May 20, 2015 6:30 p.m. networking 7:00 p.m. meeting **Kenosha Housing Authority**

with

Lyn Elvetici and Donna Cook

www.kenoshalandlordassociation.org Free Appetizers and Beverages Provided At Meetings