

Landlord News

Fall 2010



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BELMONT

HOUSING RESOURCES FOR WNY

For Landlords Participating in Belmont's Section 8 Rental Assistance Programs

Landlord Advice – Staging a Rental Property

Many of you may have seen the hit HGTV show “Curb Appeal”. The premise of the show is to ready a home for purchase. Well staging a house or apartment for rental is not much different. The staging can really improve your property’s competitiveness in today’s tough rental market and get the lease signed. Here are a few quick and easy tips for preparing a rental property inexpensively.

Prospective tenants often cannot see beyond the superficial defects and in doing so fail to appreciate an apartment’s potential. When

walking into a unit for the first time, many renters find it hard to imagine themselves living within those empty rooms. A few inexpensive touches can make an unoccupied unit look more cozy and homelike and help tenants imagine the apartment as their next home.



Quick and easy way to stage a property.

Outside of Rental Unit:

- * Landscaping: Can be as simple as a freshly mowed lawn, trimmed hedges and a flower pot or two.
- * Front walk and front door: Free and clear of clutter, make sure that the lights and doorbell are working properly.
- * Fresh paint: Do a quick touch up on chips and cracks.

Inside of Rental Unit:

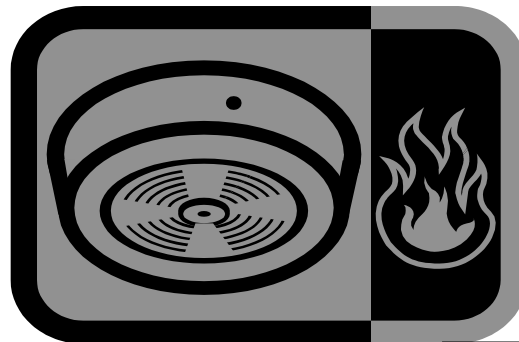
- * Entrance: A door mat inside the front door welcomes visitors and helps protect rugs or hardwood floors from dirt tracked in from the outside.
- * Windows: Install inexpensive mini-blinds on every window.
- * Kitchen: Adding a small table and a couple of chairs can come in handy for filling out applications and displaying property flyers. Put a new broom and toilet plunger in the closet to leave for the tenant who eventually moves in.
- * Bathroom: Provide hand soap, paper towels and toilet paper.
- * Bedrooms: Put a vase of silk flowers or a silk tree in the corner.
- * Walls: Add a fresh coat of paint or wipe them down.
- * Add a pleasant scent to the surroundings with candles, plug ins or potpourri.

FALL SAFETY TIPS

- * Check all window and door locks for proper operation.
- * Review fire escape plan with your tenant
- * Make sure there are working lights at the top and bottom of all stairs.
- * Have a heating professional check the heating system.
- * Replace or clean furnace filters. A dirty filter can lower the efficiency of the heating/cooling system, increase heating costs and cause fires.
- * Clean the kitchen exhaust hood and air filter. Keeping this clean of cooking grease will help keep a stovetop fire from spreading.
- * Always have a multi-purpose fire extinguisher accessible. Make sure it is Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed or Factory Mutual (FM) approved. Check the gauges to make sure they are charged and ready to use.
- * Run all gas-powered lawn equipment until the fuel is gone.
- * Test your emergency generator.
- * Have a certified chimney sweep inspect and clean the flues and check your fireplace damper.
- * Remove any bird nests from chimney flues and outdoor electrical fixtures.
- * Inspect and clean dust from the covers of your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
- * Check your water heater. If you have a gas-fired water heater, check to make sure it is venting properly. Light a match

next to the vent and wave it out (don't blow it out). See if the smoke is pulled up into the vent. If it isn't, have a professional inspect and repair it. Otherwise, carbon monoxide and other combustibles can build up in the home.

- * Clean the clothes dryer exhaust duct, damper and space under the dryer. Poor maintenance allows lint to build up in the exhaust duct and cause fire.
- * Check appliance cords that have become brittle, worn or damaged. Exposed wires may cause arcing, which will produce heat and can start a fire. Keep appliances and their power cords away from water or a heat source because this will damage the cord's insulation.



Courtesy of the PFD

Did You Know?

Rental registration is required for all non-owner occupied one and two family homes in the city of Buffalo. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Program Director, Sam Fanara at 851-6538 or Mike Donovan at 851-4267.

Is It Warm Enough?

According to the NYS Multiple Dwelling Law, for landlords who provide heat to renters, heat must be supplied from October 1 through May 31 as follows:

- * If the outdoor temperature falls below 55° Fahrenheit between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., each apartment must be heated to a temperature of at least 68° Fahrenheit.
- * If the outdoor temperature falls below 40° Fahrenheit between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., each apartment must be heated to a temperature of at least 55° Fahrenheit.

For additional information, copies of *The Residential Landlord and Tenant Guide*, can be found in our Housing Resource Center at 1195 Main Street in Buffalo, or contact the Office of the New York State Attorney General at (716) 853-8404.



Change of Ownership

When selling a home that is occupied by a tenant with a Section 8 voucher, the seller and buyer need to ensure communication with Belmont. We must be notified prior to or immediately upon the sale of an assisted property.

We'll need to know the date of sale, as well as the new owner's name, address and telephone number. This will help to ensure the smooth transfer of payments to the new owner. Belmont will then contact the new owner and a contract amendment will be put in place.

Section 8-Friendly Listings

Belmont produces a list of apartment complexes that accept Section 8 vouchers. These listings provide general information regarding the complex, unit information, amenities and rent. Listings are made available to apartments seekers in all of our office locations.

To qualify, complexes must have 20 or more units **on the same site**. If you are an owner or manager of a complex that has served voucher holders in the past, currently accepts Section 8 vouchers, or are willing to accept vouchers in the future, WE NEED YOU! Please join us in providing a range of housing choices to those in our community.

To add your complex to our database, please call Cassandra Bellamy at (716) 884-2358 Ext. 128/TDD 711.

Have You Moved



Some of the mail that Belmont sends out is not forward-able, which means if we do not have your correct current address, important documents may not reach you in a timely manner. This becomes even more of a potential problem as we approach tax form season.

We will gladly direct mail from our office to temporary locations, such as military service and moving south for the winter. To avoid any delays in the delivery of your 1099 forms, notify your Housing Specialist as soon as possible of any change in your address.

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Cassandra Bellamy and I am the new Landlord Relations Specialist with Belmont Housing Resources for WNY.

I invite you to call with any questions, concerns or suggestions you may have. You can reach me directly at (716) 884-7791 Ext. 128/TPD 711. I look forward to working with you and having the opportunity to meet you.



**1195 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14209-2196**

ATTENTION LANDLORDS!!!!!!

Get you property listings out there!!!

We are currently updating our web listings of available housing units. Please visit us on the Web at www.belmonthousingwny.org.

- *Register
- *Log on
- *You can add, edit or delete property listings.
- *All for Free!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

*1195 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14209
(716) 884-7791 TDD: 711*

*33 Spruce Street
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
(716) 213-2784 TDD: 711*

*174 Main Street
Hamburg, NY 14075
(716) 312-8086 TDD: 711*



Please practice fair housing . . . because it's the right thing to do.

