



WAA News

Volume 36 Issue 3 • April 2015 • Connecting the Rental Community Right Next Door and Across the State

Spring Cleaning & Maintenance Tips for Property Owners

on page 5

Spring Pest Control Tips

on page 11

Property Management Software Buyer's Guide

on page 19

Check out the “new and improved” WAA Conference, now the Landlord Education Day & Trade Show!

See the 2015 schedule for Saturday, October 10.

Register by May 31 to save \$\$ on pages 12-13!

Don't miss Toni Blake's save the date on page 2!



2015 Roster of Events

(for a full calendar of events, visit our website at www.waaonline.org)

BOARD MEETINGS

Saturday, April 18, 2015 • 10:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Leadership & Committee Work Day!

Chula Vista Resort, 2501 River Rd, WI Dells • Room I

Lunch (optional) will be a sandwich and soup buffet served at noon in room E.

Cost is \$15 and includes coffee, tea, or milk.

Please **RSVP** to Kristy at the WAA office no later than **Monday, April 13th**.

We have a few rooms held at Chula Vista if anyone would like to stay Friday for \$129 plus taxes and/or Saturday night for \$169 plus taxes. Room reservations can be made by calling 888-805-0248 and mentioning the Wisconsin Apartment Association **no later than April 3rd**.

Mark Your Calendar

October
10

2015 Landlord Education Day & Trade Show

MARKETING SHINE

With Your Budget In MIND!

A Special ENCORE Performance
By: Toni Blake

Chula Vista Resort

Cut out & Save!
2015 WAA DATES

Saturday, April 18
Leadership/Committee
Work Day
Chula Vista Resort, WI Dells

Saturday, September 19
Board Meeting
Ho-Chunk, Baraboo

Saturday, October 10
2015 Landlord Education Day
& Trade Show
Chula Vista Resort, WI Dells

Saturday, November 14
Board Meeting
Ho-Chunk, Baraboo

WIN! WIN! WIN!

**A Pizza Party for
YOUR Local Association...
Grow your Membership!**

\$100 Pizza Party
for the Local with
highest percentage growth
over 2014!

\$100 Pizza Party
for the Local with the
highest number of new members
over 2014!

*See page 17 for ideas on how to grow your local
membership this year and WIN!*



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Bold: Forms Representative

TEAMWORK

We need YOU! Our association is only as strong as our members and member participation is critical for our growth and success. We have established a number of standing committees (teams) to ensure that our association continues to meet goals that are set, retains and adds members, and provides education, leadership, and representation to ensure that YOU are able to operate your rental business successfully, ethically, and responsibly in our state. These members have agreed to volunteer their opinions, skills, and time to make this association the best it can be. Please consider getting involved as well and help make a difference in YOUR association, the Wisconsin Apartment Association!

Education Committee – Dale Hicks-Co-Chair (JARPA, Janesville), Matt Ruch-Co-Chair (BPMA-Beloit), Sherrie Dorn (SWLA, Racine), Julie Fay-Krivitz (Associate), and Pamela Strittmater (AALA, La Crosse)

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Membership Committee – Paul Winans-Chair (AALA, La Crosse), Julie Fay-Krivitz (Associate), Pamela Strittmater (AALA, La Crosse), Jeff Pralle (AALA, La Crosse), Kris Mueller (MAAA, Marshfield), and Gus Orozco (SWLA, Racine)

Conference Committee - Diane Orozco-Chair (SWLA-Racine), Kathy Haines (Associate), Julie Fay-Krivitz (Associate), Kelly Jensen (SWLA, Racine), Bill White (Associate), Dawn Powell (KLA, Kenosha), Lori Thurloff (AANW, Green Bay), and Dale Hicks (JARPA, Janesville)

Website/Newsletter - Pamela Strittmater-Co-Chair (AALA, La Crosse), Diana West-Co-Chair (CVAA-Eau Claire), John Dorn (SWLA, Racine), and Hank Drechsler (Member at Large)



President's Letter



Dear Landlords...Spring is right around the corner. Can't wait! Florida is looking better and better each year! How can going to Florida be possible? Yep, you are right...residual income to help you become financially free! Is this why you are in the rental business? Residual income or do you just enjoy buying properties, finding renters, collecting rent, paying taxes, doing maintenance, going to court, attending your local apartment association meetings, being involved with the WAA, going to Madison and paying dues? I don't think so. We all are in this business for different reasons, but if I would guess, most of us are building our retirement income. You are building a business that will pay dividends into the future! This means you need to pay attention to the details. Are you treating your business like a business?

If you are not in Florida, or traveling yet, please take your business a little bit more serious. There are many serious issues on the table that are affecting our rental business. This is why the Wisconsin Apartment Association exists. The WAA is here to help you manage your business more effectively, and, of course, return profits to the bottom line. We all need to make a profit, but the WAA does more than that. The WAA also provides a platform where you can meet locally with other landlords, learn from their mistakes, and help you be a better landlord.

I'm thankful for all the support the WAA has provided me in the earlier days, and it's my turn to give back to the WAA. My Dad said to me sometime before he passed away....*givers are always winners*. I'm also thankful for all those who have served before me and those who have given hours and hours to the WAA. They have kept the WAA together on many levels and we keep marching forward. This is my last year serving as President and I'm asking for others within our association to step forward. Maybe you have served in the past on some level and would like to serve again. Maybe you have never served with the WAA and you would like to. Many have served for many years in Regional Director positions and I also want to "Thank" them for their service, as well as those who have served on the Executive Committee. If you would like to serve or be some part of the WAA leadership, I encourage you to attend our upcoming **Leadership/Committee Work Day on Saturday, April 18, at Chula Vista Resort**. I also want to "Thank" those who attended the WAA/WRHLC Legislative Day in Madison on March 18!

In closing, I would like to quote what President Kennedy said....*Don't ask what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country*. I ask you....***Don't ask what the WAA can do for you, but what you can do for the WAA***. We appreciate every member of the WAA and your contribution to the cause. Without your contribution, we would not be able to exist! I look forward to seeing you in April.

Thank you!

Dean Ramsden

WAA President



Property Management Tips: Spring Cleaning & Maintenance for Property Owners

By Tom Binga, www.rentprep.com

Even though it may still be raining where you live, it is time to begin thinking about and planning for summer. There is no better time to do so than the spring time! There are a few things that you can do as a property manager to prepare now for a smooth-running summer.

Renew Communication

Now is a great time to begin formulating a newsletter for your tenants that describes all of the things that you will be doing for them as well as what they can do to make their summers as cool and uneventful as possible. Communication is key to setting expectations about what your tenant is expected to do, so get that letter out there in the next couple of weeks.

Tenants can help you help themselves by notifying you of any maintenance issues that may best be taken care of now rather than later. Things such as leaky faucets, stuck windows, and appliances that seem to be working a little less effectively than before are key items to look for.

Preventative Maintenance

Now is also a good time to replace the batteries in smoke detectors, as well as carbon monoxide sensors (if needed). Of course, the spring is an ideal time to change HVAC filters—doing so now also gives you a great opportunity to verify that the air conditioning is working in each and every one of your rental units.

Stock Up On Sales

You may want to begin stocking up on critical supplies like A/C filters, light bulbs of various wattages and sizes, garbage disposals, various screws and fasteners, and other consumables like faucet aerators, water filters, shower heads, and water heater heating elements, if applicable.

Evaluate Workload

People tend to move most frequently during the spring and early summer months, so you will typically find yourself using a lot of materials and supplies during this time of year. You may also find that your preventive maintenance routine gets put on the back burner this time of year because of all the move-ins and move-outs.

Try to refrain from making that mistake. In fact, you may want to consider hiring some temporary staff, just to help keep up with all that will be going on in a few short weeks. Line up your vendors, too, so that they don't become a sticking point in getting new tenants moved into their apartments.

Revise Budget

You will need to set your budget and calendar for more carpet cleaning appointments, painters, paint and supplies, as well as general maintenance on move-outs. There are always things you need to repair before moving a new tenant in.

Time Management

Additionally, your time will be tied up more, too, because you will be doing more inspections during this time, as well as all of the marketing to get new tenants and all that that endeavor entails: Things like interviews, background checks, more frequent deposits, and more frequent and greater expenses due to all of the outside vendors you may have to bring in to get people moved out and in as fast as possible.

Obviously, planning in the early spring for all of the activity that will ensue in May and June is time well-spent. If you don't plan soon, you may find yourself scrambling at crunch time.



Welcome New Associate Members!

Welcome New Associate Members!



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Buyers Access is the “one stop shop” that reduces property workload and provides an outstanding Multifamily Group Purchasing resource in the apartment industry. Our dedicated member services team and account managers are assigned to every member to provide property support and customized purchasing programs that meet all of your business objectives.

The Buyers Access Smart Advantage Purchasing Program is used in over 550,000 units to help drive Net Operating Income (NOI) and maximize the value of property’s real estate.



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Let's be clear. Smoke-free housing is about saving property managers money and hassle. It's about giving residents healthier, safer places to live. It's not about singling out smokers.

It's perfectly legal. (And perfectly logical.)

Property owners have the right to make their buildings 100% smoke-free. And residents have the right to ask for safer, smoke-free housing policies. You just need the right resources to get started.

Welcome Back!



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Ask the Doctor Monthly Q&A

By John H. Fischer, aka Dr. Rent

Welcome to the newest monthly column in the WAA News. John will provide an answer to a question that he recently or frequently receives. If you have a question you would like covered in a future "Ask the Doctor" column, it can be submitted to John at drrent93@hotmail.com.



Question:

Does a landlord have the right to terminate a lease early to do repairs on a building? If I am within my rights to do that, how much notice do I need to give? Are there any legal issues that I need to be aware of?

This is the situation: We received a letter from the building inspector stating that a tenant requested an inspection and that there are several things needing attention at the building. It's obvious from their letter that this tenant walked them around the building complaining about every little thing. Since we had planned to do some major remodeling when the current lease term ended anyway, I am now wondering if we can terminate this tenant's lease early and start the work now.

Answer:

The short answer is NO, the landlord cannot unilaterally terminate a lease because of maintenance issues.

Under the lease contract, both parties have certain obligations. The tenant has the obligation to pay the rent and follow rules and policies set forward in the lease. The landlord has the obligation to provide a safe and code-compliant housing unit in return. If the tenant is not keeping up their end of the agreement, the landlord has the right to terminate the tenant's right to be there. However, if the landlord is in breach, then the tenant has certain rights against the landlord.

Under WI SS 704.07 (4), if a landlord is breaching their duty in providing habitable premises, the TENANT has the right to break the lease and move. They have the right, but NOT the obligation. That same law allows them to pay a reduced rent to account for the diminished use of the property.

If the work to the property cannot be completed with the tenant occupying the property, because it is the landlord that is in breach, the landlord has an obligation to ensure the tenant has safe housing. How far that obligation goes is not established by law, but I have seen courts order hotel payments during the renovation period.

The landlord and the tenant can negotiate an early lease termination and can end the lease early if both parties agree... but the landlord cannot DEMAND that the tenant accept the early lease termination unless the tenant is the one in breach.

On the other hand, if the repairs that are needed to the property were caused by the tenant, then the tenant breached the lease and their right to occupy the property can be terminated the same way you can if the rent wasn't paid. However, as always, getting legal advice from an attorney before doing so would be highly recommended because it is illegal for a landlord to take retaliatory action against a tenant for calling the building inspector.

Editor's Note: Answers in this column are specific to Wisconsin, other states may have different landlord-tenant laws. Nothing in this article should be considered legal advice. Dr. Rent along with the Wisconsin Apartment Association recommends you contact an attorney familiar with landlord-tenant law if you need legal advice.



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WAA Newsletter Dates & Procedures

1. Items for newsletter should be forwarded to kristy@waaonline.org, electronically whenever possible.
2. Please submit news articles in the following formats: MS Word, Html copy, PDF, MS Works, eps, jpeg, tiff or text format.
3. Your articles, either by email, fax, or US mail must be received by the 3rd of the preceding month.

Please send your articles to:
Kristy Weincke
PO Box 2922
Oshkosh, WI 54903



Updating an Apartment for Spring: Choosing Colors

From www.american-apartment-owners-association.org

When it's time to update and renovate an apartment, there are a number of different things to consider. One of those things is the time of year you're going to be offering that apartment for rent. While you need neutral colors that look good all year round, you also want to appeal to potential tenants when they first walk in the door.

As spring approaches, it's important to look for colors that are going to work well with that time of year, and evoke the feeling of home to anyone who comes to see the apartment. Many people associate spring with softer colors, like pastels. Light blues, greens, and yellows are commonly used during that time of year. Of course, the colors you use in the updated apartment won't change with the seasons, so that's an important consideration.



By selecting light, airy colors, you can update the apartment for springtime but also keep your tenants happy throughout the year. Especially in climates where it's cold and dreary during the winter months, those softer, cheerful colors will be a great choice when it comes to making your tenants feel happy and comfortable.

Another consideration regarding colors is avoiding anything that might easily clash with furniture or other belongings. If a potential tenant thinks that their belongings aren't going to look good in the apartment without repainting all the walls, that potential tenant may decide to look for something else.

Repainting an apartment and getting it ready for spring can take time, and you don't want to do all that work just to have a tenant ask if they can repaint it before they move in. Some apartment complexes don't allow tenants to paint the walls at all, while others agree to it, provided it's repainted the original colors before the tenant moves out.

If you choose your colors wisely, you'll have happy tenants and you won't need to worry about those tenants wanting to repaint the apartment. The colors will last for a long time, and they'll work with each and every season as tenants come and go over time. The more light and neutral you decide to be when choosing colors, the longer those colors will work in the space.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't consider doing something bold, though, as long as it's not carried through the entire apartment. A lot of landlords like to create an accent wall in the living room, or another area of the apartment, to provide some visual interest. If you do that, you could use a pale yellow on the walls and a darker or brighter yellow in only one area, for example.

No matter what you choose when you're updating an apartment, remember that spring colors can be popular choices all year round. Since they generally make an apartment feel lighter and bigger, many landlords use them on a regular basis, no matter what time of year they choose to make renovations and updates to their existing apartments.



Spring Pest Control Tips

By Arrow Pest Control, www.arrow-pest.com

Inside The Home Pest Control Tips

Clean your doors and windows.

Thoroughly vacuum and clean window and sliding door tracks to help prevent outside invaders such as carpet beetles, earwigs, silverfish and spiders.

Store away wool and fur-trimmed clothing.

During warm weather months, wash and store away wool and fur-trimmed or -lined clothing in sealed containers or plastic bags to reduce the chance of moth or carpet beetle activity.

Time to organize the garage.

Clean up and organize cluttered items along the perimeter walls of the garage, where rodents hide out. Now is an opportune time to install shelving or storage cabinets and get all your stuff off the garage floor.

Outside The Home Pest Control Tips

Repair weather damage.

Damage to vents and other access points to your home. It is a good idea to inspect your roof for missing or damaged shingles or tiles that may allow pests access, or water damage that would contribute to pest infestation.

Remove clutter from your gutters.

Including twigs, leaves and other debris.

Drain all standing water.

This serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes and a water source for rodents and other animals.

Yard work.

Remove unwanted weeds, leaves, twigs, branches, and other debris.

Trim the trees.

Trees provide insects and rodents access to your house, so limbs should be pruned back at least four feet from the roofline. Shrubs should also be regularly trimmed so they do not come into contact with the structure of the home.

Move firewood outside. All unburned firewood should be taken outside so that insects residing beneath the bark do not infest the home. Firewood should be neatly stacked at least 18" off of the ground to help prevent rodents and to help deter termite activity.

By following these simple steps you will greatly reduce your chances of having a pest control problem in the spring and summer months.

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RED CARPET SERVICE



2015 Landlord Education Day Schedule

2015 WAA Landlord Education Day & Trade Show Schedule

(All seminars/events & locations subject to change without notice)

Friday, October 9, 2015			
	7:00pm – 11:00pm	2015 LED Kick Off <i>Silent Auction/50-50 Drawing</i>	
Saturday, October 10, 2015			
Saturday, October 10th	7:30am – 8:00am	Registration & Breakfast Buffet	
	8:00am – 9:45am	Keynote: <i>Marketing SHINE with Your Budget in MIND!</i> by Toni Blake	
	10:00am – 11:00am	Trade Show <i>Silent Auction</i>	
	11:00am – 12:00pm	2015 Legislative & Political Update by Gary Goyke, Chris Mokler, & Dale Hicks-WRHLC	
	12:00 – 1:00	Trade Show & Lunch <i>Silent Auction</i>	
		Track A – Basics Track	Track B – Legal Track
	1:00pm – 2:15pm	<i>Forming a Good Rental Business (An Introduction to WAA-Approved Forms) – John H. Fischer</i>	<i>How to Prepare Evidence to Make Your Small Claims Court Case – Andrew Schmidt, Schmidt & Schmidt S.C.</i>
	2:15pm – 3:15pm	Trade Show <i>Silent Auction</i>	
	3:15pm – 4:30pm	<i>Dos & Don'ts (A Practical Guide to Fair Housing Compliance) – John H. Fischer</i>	<i>Security Deposit Withholding – Andrew Schmidt, Schmidt & Schmidt S.C.</i>
	5:30pm – 6:30pm	President's Reception Music by All That Jazz <i>Silent Auction</i>	
	6:30pm – 9:00pm	Dinner & Annual Meeting <i>Silent Auction</i>	
	9:00pm	Hospitality Room <i>Refreshments</i>	

2015 Landlord Education Day Registration



Registration Form 2015 Landlord Education Day & Tradeshow

October 10th, 2015
at Chula Vista Resort,
Wisconsin Dells

MEMBERS: ONLY \$99/person!

Includes all sessions & meals on Saturday & KICK OFF event Friday evening.
These rates apply through May 31st for WAA members only. Rate then increases to \$119/person.
Take advantage of the savings & register NOW for this year's "new & improved" event!

NON-MEMBERS: ONLY \$129/person!

These rates apply through May 31st. Rate increases to \$149/person beginning June 1st.

Name of Registrant(s): _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Fax (____) _____ - _____

Local Affiliate: _____ Email: _____

First-Time Attendee Local Officer Past State Association President

TOTAL Conference fees \$_____ Please draft check to "WAA Conference"

Sorry no refunds or transfers. Registrants may resell registration if necessary.

Visa or Master Card Payment

Name on credit card: _____

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CW: _____

Please make your annual dinner choice and list name(s) for each choice:

() *Beef Medallions Mondovi* _____
(Medallions braised with red onions, shitake mushrooms & Robert Mondovi Pinot Noir, served over buttered fettuccini.)

() *Atlantic Cod Asiago Provencal* _____
(Broiled & topped with fresh roma tomatoes & melted Asiago cheese, served with wild rice pilaf.)

() *Honey Buttered Half Chicken* _____
(Braised & seasoned with savory spices & herbs then finished with signature honey butter, served with garlic mashed potatoes.)

Registration **DOES NOT** include hotel reservations . . .

Chula Vista, 2501 River Rd, Wisconsin Dells

Visit www.chulavistaresort.com or call 888-805-0248

and mention ID#D06609 to get the special room rate of \$119/night for a tower jr suite.

Room Block closes on September 8th!



Wisconsin Apartment Association PO Box 2922, Oshkosh, WI 54903

(920) 230-9221 * admin@waaonline.org



Local Affiliate Updates

APARTMENT ASSOCIATION OF NORTHEAST WISCONSIN (AANW), GREEN BAY

Info submitted by Kathy Haines

Check out our new website at www.aanw.org!



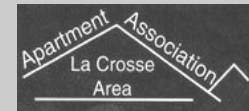
Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1015 Lombardi Ave., Green Bay
Networking at 6:00 p.m. & meeting at 6:30 p.m.

APARTMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE LA CROSSE AREA (AALA)

Info submitted by President Pamela Strittmater

Our Appeal brief has been filed with the state appeal court. It is a very solid brief that focuses on one major point of our lawsuit. The City of La Crosse has 30 days to respond, unless they ask for an extension. Since this appeal is a state wide issue and the outcome will be reflected state wide, funds are always appreciated in any dollar amount. Thank-you for your support.

Please send funds to AALA Legal Fund, C/O Duane Roesler, 1909 Sunset Dr, La Crosse, WI 54601.



Meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Moose Lodge

CHIPPEWA VALLEY APARTMENT ASSOCIATION (CVAA), EAU CLAIRE

Info submitted by President Diana West

Check out our new website at www.cv-aa.org!

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 3411 Stein Blvd, Eau Claire

JANESVILLE AREA RENTAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATION (JARPA)

Info submitted by Dale Hicks

April 16th - Screening Workshop with Dale Hicks presenting what he learned at the recent Landlord Boot Camp.

May 21st - Denise Webb from Hagen LLC will share information on creating an LLC, as well as other pertinent tax deduction strategies.



Meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Commercial Bank, 1400 Blackbridge Rd., Janesville

KENOSHA LANDLORD ASSOCIATION (KLA)

Info submitted by Secretary Jeanette Marchetti-Hamm

February's speaker was Kathy Haines from Landlord Services LLC. Kathy has been in the industry for over 30 years and gave a excellent presentation, discussing the various services her company can provide to landlords, including credit reports, criminal and eviction reports. Thank you Kathy Haines!



Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Fireside Restaurant, 2801 30th Ave., Kenosha
Networking with refreshments at 6:30 p.m. & meeting at 7:00 p.m.



MARSHFIELD AREA APARTMENT ASSOCIATION

Info submitted by President Kris Mueller

Starting in 2015, we have changed our Educational Seminars to the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Since that falls on Legislative Day this year, we will be meeting in Madison this year. Call Kris at 715-676-2353 to make arrangements for a ride. It will be an all day event.

Plans are to invite the Mayor of Marshfield to our April Board meeting. The Marshfield City Council is discussing the creation of a potential city-owned subdivision. The City feels (from the survey they took last year) that families are not moving to Marshfield because the city doesn't have affordable housing and if they had affordable housing then they would have jobs. The target for the houses in this new subdivision would be \$125,000 to \$200,000 homes. It is still in the planning stages and we will be keeping an eye on this.

Educational seminars are on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Belvedere Supper Club, Marshfield
Networking & dinner (at your own expense) at 6:00 p.m. & seminar at 7:00 p.m.
Board meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of every month at the Sunrise Restaurant. Everyone is welcome!

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN LANDLORD ASSOCIATION (SWLA), RACINE

Info submitted by President Jon Frickensmith

Visit our website at www.racineswla.org!

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of each month at Harbor Lite Yacht Club, 559 State St, Racine
Networking & food at 6:00 p.m. & meeting at 6:30 p.m.

WAUKESHA AREA APARTMENT ASSOCIATION

Info submitted by President Adele Vogel

October 10th - Waukesha members voted to offer 2 paid registrations for the 2015 Landlord Education Day & Trade Show at Chula Vista Resort via a drawing to be held at our June meeting. Each member who is in good standing receives one chance to win, simply by attending any of our local meetings or any other WAA sponsored/endorsed event, such as Legislative Day, a WAA Board meeting, or even our Annual Christmas Dinner.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Waukesha Eagles Club, Grandview Ave, Waukesha
Networking/dinner at 6:30 p.m. & speaker begins at 7:00 p.m.; Business discussion to follow.

WAUSAU AREA APARTMENT ASSOCIATION

Info submitted by Larry Sommer

Serving Marathon, Lincoln, Portage and Wood Counties. The Wausau Area Apartment Association currently has 72 members that manages approximately 7,000 properties.

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Sam's Pizza, 5811 Bus. HWY 51 South, Schofield
Networking at 6:30 p.m. & meeting at 7:00 p.m.



Local Affiliate Updates

WISCONSIN RAPIDS AREA RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS

Info submitted by Helen Streekstra

Our meetings always are at the Hotel Mead beginning at 5:00 with a social time including a pizza buffet with the meeting starting at 6:00.

Meetings are held 4 times per year: Next meeting is Monday, June 1st at the Hotel Mead
Social/dinner at 5:00 p.m. & meeting at 6:00 p.m.

WINNEBAGO APARTMENT ASSOCIATION, OSHKOSH

Info submitted by President Donn Lord

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at Benvenuto's Grill, 300 S. Koeller St., Oshkosh
Board meeting at 5:30 p.m., social (in the bar) at 6:30 p.m., & business meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the back room.

*We're waiting to hear
from you . . .*

Beloit Property Managers
Association
and
Fond du Lac Area Apartment
Association.



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Leveraging Non-Member Email Addresses for Membership Recruitment

By Tony Rossell, www.membershipmarketing.blogspot.com

Many membership organizations have accumulated email addresses in their database of prospective members through site registrations, event attendance, or product purchases. Here are some strategies that you may want to consider in order to maximize these records to strengthen your overall membership marketing efforts.

1. **Improve Targeting** – Email is one of the least expensive marketing tools, but also has lower response rates than other more expensive channels like telemarketing, direct mail, or face to face sales. However, email can allow you to cast a broad net across industry segments, recency of contact, and source of records and through open rates and click through rates see where the hot spots of interest appear. The emailed segments that demonstrate interest in membership with high click through rates or new joins will probably warrant the use of more expensive marketing channels. The non-responding segments will be unlikely to be cost effective targets for more expensive promotions.
2. **Gain Contact Information** – Some organizations have only a name and email address in their database. Without a mailing address available for a thorough merge-purge, there may not be clarity whether the individual is a current member or not. Sending the individual an email that offers free content with the requirement of providing full contact information is a great way to update information and re-engage a prospect in the membership conversation.
3. **Verify Data** – Another concern of many organizations is the accuracy of mailing addresses for non-member records in their database. People change jobs and move to new companies. Once again, email is an effective tool to verify that a prospective member is still at the same company. If the work email is not deliverable then it is unlikely that the mailing address is still correct. Other data hygiene solutions should also be used like running mailing addresses through the National Change of Address (NCOA) registry.
4. **Deploy Flash Offers** – Although email may not produce as high of a return as other marketing channels, it does lend itself to deadlines and instant response. That makes email a great channel for short-term specials called “flash offers”. These are exceptional deals made available for only 24 to 48 hours that are designed to encourage an impulse buy. Like it or not, sales do motivate purchases and email lends itself to immediate decisions.

Effective marketing is all about connecting the tools and channels available to you with the appropriate target markets, messages, and offers. Email is one tool that not only can be used to sell, but also allows you to read the digital fingerprints of those who receive it to leverage your overall membership marketing program.

Remember, the local with the **highest percentage growth** over 2014 AND the local with the **highest number of new members** over 2014 will each win a \$100 pizza party. Let's spread the word, bring in new members, and grow WAA!





Ten Tips for Landlords

Simple suggestions to help your landlord or property management business run smoothly

From www.nolo.com

1. Screen tenants.

Don't rent to anyone before checking credit history, references, and background. Haphazard screening and tenant selection too often results in problems -- a tenant who pays the rent late or not at all, trashes your place, or lets undesirable friends move in. Use a written rental application to properly screen your tenants.

2. Get it in writing.

Be sure to use a written lease or month-to-month rental agreement to document the important facts of your relationship with your tenants -- including when and how you handle tenant complaints and repair problems, notice you must give to enter a tenant's apartment, and the like.

3. Handle security deposits properly.

Establish a fair system of setting, collecting, holding, and returning security deposits. Inspect and document the condition of the rental unit before the tenant moves in, to avoid disputes over security deposits when the tenant moves out.

4. Make repairs.

Stay on top of maintenance and repair needs and make repairs when requested. If the property is not kept in good repair, you'll alienate good tenants, and tenants may gain the right to withhold rent, repair the problem and deduct the cost from the rent, sue for injuries caused by defective conditions, and/or move out without needing to give notice.

5. Provide secure premises.

Don't let your tenants and property be easy marks for a criminal. Assess your property's security and take reasonable steps to protect it. Often the best measures, such as proper lights and trimmed landscaping, are not that expensive.

6. Provide notice before entering.

Learn about your tenants' rights to privacy. Notify your tenants whenever you plan to enter their rental unit, and provide as much notice as possible, at least 24 hours or the minimum amount required by state law.

7. Disclose environmental hazards.

If there's a hazard such as lead or mold on the property, tell your tenants. Landlords are increasingly being held liable for tenant health problems resulting from exposure to environmental toxins in the rental premises. Check your state law for other landlord disclosures.

8. Oversee managers.

Choose and supervise your property manager carefully. If a manager commits a crime or is incompetent, you may be held financially responsible. Do a thorough background check and clearly spell out the manager's duties to help prevent problems down the road.

9. Obtain insurance.

Purchase enough liability and other property insurance. A well designed insurance program can protect you from lawsuits by tenants for injuries or discrimination and from losses to your rental property caused by everything from fire and storms to burglary and vandalism.

10. Resolve disputes.

Try to resolve disputes with your tenants without lawyers and lawsuits. If you have a conflict with a tenant over rent, deposits, repairs, your access to the rental unit, noise, or some other issue that doesn't immediately warrant an eviction, meet with the tenant to see if the problem can be resolved informally. If that doesn't work, consider mediation by a neutral third party, often available at little or no cost from a publicly funded program.

If your dispute involves money, and all attempts to reach agreement fail, try small claims court, where you can represent yourself. Small claims court is good for collecting unpaid rent or seeking money for property damage after a tenant moves out and the security deposit is exhausted.



Property Management Software Buyer's Guide

By Taylor Short, www.softwareadvice.com

What Is Property Management Software?

Property managers have unique needs when it comes to technology, and there are hundreds of systems on the market to meet those needs. Some are designed for companies managing multiple types of properties, while others target a specific niche in the industry (e.g., residential, commercial, university housing and homeowners' associations).

Common Features of Property Management Software

Property management systems help landlords and managers increase efficiency, improve collections and enhance the quality of service provided to the tenant. Property management software streamlines the wide range of tasks that a manager performs on a regular basis. Common applications found in these systems include:

Accounting: Assists managers with their general ledger, payables and rent rolls. Some systems provide reporting features that calculate total per-unit vacancy days and profit/loss at both unit and organization-wide levels. Examples of vendors offering accounting features include IBS 10.0i and SKYLINE Software.

Tenant & lease tracking: Enables landlords and rental owners to automate and track the leasing process from beginning to end. Functions include: tenant screening, move-in, rent/utility payments, maintenance, vacancy planning, move-out and make-ready. Example vendors: Buildium, Spectra and Association-Voice Building Edition.

Budgeting & forecasting: Helps managers develop accurate operating budgets and calculate future values. Uses historical lease and financial information to make budget projections for revenue and expenses, accounting for CPI increases, inflation, market rates and tenant improvements. Includes tools for assessment and analysis, tax planning and scenario planning. Example vendors: Buildium and Propertyware.

Building maintenance: Tracks work orders, schedules preventative maintenance and coordinates communication with maintenance staff. Applications can automatically create schedules and alerts and generate work orders, and some systems let tenants make maintenance requests online, expediting service. Example vendors: HippoFM, Maintenance Connection and Bigfoot CMMS.

What Type of Buyer Are You?

Before evaluating solutions, you'll want to know in what type of buyer category you belong:

- **Niche-use buyer.** If your company specializes in a single property type, a system specializing in that type of property is a better option. Managers of commercial offices and retail space may want a commercial software application, while those with residential properties may benefit from a residential property system. Other examples of systems include those designed for homeowners' associations (HOA software), affordable housing or hotel management software.
- **Integrated suite buyers.** For managers with several types of properties in their portfolio, selecting a more robust system may be a better option. These provide functionality to support all types of properties in your portfolio.

Property Management Software BuyerView

We've spoken with thousands of property managers over the years about new software solutions. Based on our interactions with these buyers, our report looks to answer the following questions:

- How are buyers currently managing properties?
- What are the top reasons for replacing existing property management software systems?
- What are the top applications required by property managers?
- How have buyer sizes changed over the years?

(cont'd on page 20)



(cont'd from page 19)

Key Features to Consider

Online tenant services. Renters increasingly want to receive rent reminders via email. They also want access to Web-based property management software interfaces where they can pay rent, file maintenance requests, submit their notice to vacate or search their handbook. A system that supports renters' needs is critical, especially if you own multiple units or properties.

Automatic vacancy postings. The Internet is the first place most people go when they're looking for a place to live. Therefore, many systems allow you to post vacancies to sites like Craigslist, Rental.com and Apartments.com using the information already in your system. All you have to do is click a few buttons, and the listing is posted to half a dozen places, helping you fill vacancies faster with much less work.

Integrated Web and marketing tools. Many products include tools that help managers build websites that showcase and market their properties. More integrated systems may include search engine optimization (SEO) tools to help build traffic to your site—and your listings. These tools can include analytics features that allow you to identify traffic sources and dashboards that help measure the impact of your marketing efforts.

Recent Events You Should Know About

Trimble purchases Manhattan Software. In order to further expand its reach into facilities management, Trimble, headquartered in Sunnyvale, CA, acquired Manhattan Software in August 2014. Manhattan Software provides SaaS-based facility and real estate management software services to facility managers and property owners, plus space scheduling and capital asset planning applications.

Rentec Direct offers two-factor authentication. In an effort to improve the security of its system, online property management company Rentec Direct added two-factor authentication to its client login portal in December 2014. Oregon-based Rentec Direct also offers professional accounting services and tenant screening to property and building managers throughout the country.

Landlords are Throwing Away Money

From www.american-apartment-owners-association.org



If you're like many landlords, you may have at least one tenant (maybe more) that left owing you money.

Chances are, it was a frustrating and upsetting experience. Their unpaid rent, damages and other monies owed are all listed in documents, gathering

dust your file cabinet.

It may come as a surprise to you that many of these collection files that you have "written off" as uncollectible are actually worth money!

With the economic collapse that began in 2008, a lot of tenants lost jobs and the ability to pay rent. Subsequently, landlords got the short end of the stick since these tenants often left owing thousands of dollars in unpaid rent and other damages.

But as the tepid economy chugs forward, many of these ex-tenants now have new jobs and a reliable source of income. And now they have the ability to repay the money that is owed to you.

Don't throw away money by leaving tenant debt sitting in your file cabinet.

The first thing to do is check with the laws of your particular state to determine the statute of limitations on the outstanding debts.

Some states have a short time frame (only a few years), but you may be surprised that many states have a longer time period where the debts remain valid. You also may be surprised that some tenants may be ready to clean up their bad credit and move on with their life.

Sometimes all it takes is a simple letter. That has the potential to be worth thousands of dollars to you.

Landlord Boot Camp Overview



Landlord Boot Camp

By Dale Hicks, Past WAA President & current JARPA President



All I can say is wow! As much as I have been around the apartment association and have done Landlord training, you would think I am on top of things. But after going to Tristan Pettit's Landlord Boot Camp, I find myself coming home and thinking I need to review our procedures.

The Rental Housing Industry is a living industry, always in a changing environment. Landlords need to stay up on new laws and actions involving Landlord-Tenant issues. Keeping my screening up-to-date may require me to make changes and actually use those changes.

Be aware Landlords...those ATCP authorities are more active in Landlord-Tenant complaints. Most of the complaints are with security deposits, landlords' misuse of or

inaccurate deductions. When this happens and a tenant complains, action can be brought against the Landlord. You could end up paying for your own attorney as well as the tenant's attorney. Tenants can get a Rental Resource Attorney and you pay! A simple error on the security deposit could end up costing you in the thousands of dollars. \$60K just to get out of a wrongful \$300 or \$500 deduction and six months of your time is small to the Tenant Resource Center.

So, your screening is the very first thing to keep you on the right track. You see, it is what you do right all the time that will keep you safe for when you do something wrong. Boot Camp was intense, but well worth the time.

Thank you Tristan Pettit!



Above: A full room for Tristan's Landlord Boot Camp

Left: Matt Ruch (Beloit Property Managers Assoc), Gus Orozco (Sothern WI Landlord Assoc), and Dale Hicks (Janesville Area Rental Property Assoc) attended Tristan's Landlord Boot Camp.



WAA Contact Information



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Extra WAA News Subscription (12 months)

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Associate Members	\$55.00
General Public	\$80.00

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WAA RENTAL HOUSING CERTIFICATION CLASSES

Rental Housing Certification 100 Series

The Basics, is devoted to keeping rental property owners informed and education on new laws. Comprised of seminars on basic property management aimed at the new rental property owner, property manager, leasing agent; it is also suggested as a refresher series for those who have been in the business a number of years. Classes in this module are:

- * 101 The Law and the Landlord I: Wisconsin Statute Chapter 704
- * 102 The Law and the Landlord II: Consumer Protection (ATCP) Chapter 134
- * 103 Fair Housing Laws
- * 104 Lead Paint Awareness
- * 105 Credit Reports
- * 106 Basic Recordkeeping
- * 107 Screening Your Applicants
- * 108 Screening Workshop
- * 109 Nuts and Bolts of Eviction
- * 110 Bonding and Garnishment

NEW for 2014: "Landlord & Tenant Law in Wisconsin" by John H. Fischer – This is a 8-hour educational session that takes an in-depth look at Wisconsin-specific landlord-tenant regulations and also covers some of the most important federal regulations that deal with rental housing."

Why Join WAA?

The WAA is your portal to the rental housing business in Wisconsin. Membership gives you access to what you need to know and what you need to do to run your rental properties successfully, ethically, and responsibly.

10 things every successful landlord needs to know. Do you?

- Fair housing information
- Applicant screening and processing
- Eviction procedures
- Rental forms specific to Wisconsin
- Lead based paint requirements
- Rental disclosures required by law
- Bills and rental housing policies under discussion at the Capitol.
- Best rental housing management practices
- Document storage, security, and disposal
- Property marketing techniques

*Information in these articles should be used as a guide only and should not be relied upon as the sole source of information relating to its content. Additional sources of information may be listed herein. No warranty, either expressed or implied, is made with respect to the information contained herein. Neither WAA nor RHR is responsible for any loss, inconvenience, damage (whether special or consequential) or claims arising out of the use of the information contained. You should always seek advice from your attorney regarding any legal matters.



The Small American Landlord: A Guide to Tenant Screening

By Matt Angerer

Overview

The Small American Landlord's Guide to Tenant Screening was put together to help landlords across America seeking no-nonsense advice from other landlords in the industry on how to properly and legally screen applicants.

Being a small landlord in America isn't easy today. With nearly 40 million small landlords in the United States today and very little education on how to screen applicants properly, now was the time to release this eBook. The FCRA (Fair Credit Reporting Act) governs how small landlords can screen applicants. There are many laws that the small landlord must abide by and it can get overwhelming rather quickly! The direct-to-consumer model is another approach allowed by the FCRA to give small landlords like you the tools needed to properly evaluate applicants. No on-site inspection needed, no hefty fees to pay, just straight-forward advice on how to use the Internet's best tools to screen applicants quickly.

Many small landlord's often overlook tenant screening. They figure it's too expensive or time consuming and most rely on gut instinct. We believe that gut instinct serves us well in many situations. We also believe in Ronald Reagan's famous line of: "Trust, but verify". Our guide gives small landlord's the industry statistics on why you can't afford to skip tenant screening during the application process. The cost of NOT screening is far greater than the cost of screening your applicants. Besides, you can pass most of the costs onto the applicant these days anyhow. Our book breaks down the figures and opens your eyes to the REAL COST of not screening applicants with real-world examples of Small Landlords that were burned by bad tenants.

If you are a green small American landlord, then you likely need a little coaching on what you CAN'T ask an applicant, former employer, or former landlord of an applicant. It's easy to stick your foot in your mouth a few times. In this guide, we also coach you on why SMS texting with your applicants or tenants might be a bad idea. You need to keep a healthy level of distance between the applicant and yourself to maintain harmony and balance. If you're too friendly, you get burned. If you're too strict, you get burned. The key is balance and we give you some guidelines to achieve that with your tenants. As a small landlord, you need to understand how to strike this balance with your tenants so that they realize you mean business at all times and that you're a law-abiding citizen just trying to live the American Dream.



Narrow It Down

From www.american-apartment-owners-association.org

Finding the right tenant to fill a vacancy is a numbers game. You want to attract as many applicants as possible, but sifting through prospects can also be a drain on your resources. There's a balance to strike between getting applicants through the door, and narrowing it down so only those who are qualified pick up the phone or shoot you an email.

If you find yourself talking on the phone to half a dozen prospects, only to find that none are qualified to rent your property, take a harder look at your rental ads. The more information you provide about the rent, the size, the locale and amenities, the costs and the terms of the lease, the more likely that prospects can do some of the screening for you. They won't want to waste their time on a unit that isn't right for them.

That way, they won't waste your time either.



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