

NEW PROPERTY READINESS

If your property is new to the rental program, please take the time to go through it and complete a condition report. The tenant will receive a blank condition report at move in and that same report will be referenced at move out. Your report will be kept on file should any questions arise with regard to repairs/cleaning.

Your property should start out just as you expect it to be returned to you, so please set the standard for the tenant at move in by having the residence as clean as possible, and in good repair.

A residence in great condition will also encourage good tenants who will pay fair market rates to rent your place. If you are unable to clean and/or repair your residence, management will be able to direct you to a reliable cleaning/maintenance person. Remember to get quotes ...

Following is a short list of items, which are necessary prior to any showings and acceptance of property by Management :

Smoke detectors, Carbon Monoxide monitors and Fire extinguishers: Smoke detectors are required by law, in all rental properties. Detectors need to be placed at the entrance of, or in, each bedroom- **put new batteries in all detectors.** If your detector is more than 5 years old, you may want to consider updating them to a photo-electronic unit. Tenants are required to replace batteries if the detector indicates the battery is dead. As part of our Annual Fall Inspection, Management replaces smoke detector batteries and checks fire extinguishers.

Fire Extinguishers: A good rule is one for each level of the home and an extra if there is a woodstove/fireplace. Please invest in a large size extinguisher, able to extinguish all types of fire.

Carbon Monoxide monitors are now required by law in all rentals with any gas/propane utilities, or attached garage. There are several options if you do not already have a monitor. There are smoke detector/carbon monoxide monitor combos, wall plug in monitors, and battery operated stand alone monitors.

Carpets/Flooring: Carpets MUST have a professional clean PRIOR to commencement of Management- receipt (proof) provided. If carpets are old and in disrepair, consider removing carpets and replace with an easy to care for laminate, wood or vinyl flooring. Check with Management for a list of recommended cleaners or installers. Now is the time to repair any holes/rips, or stains that cannot be removed. A competent carpet installer can patch in a piece of carpet easily. It is always better to have a repair than allowing tenants to occupy a residence with existing damage. If this is an issue with your property, Management can assist with a list of repairmen.

Minor linoleum tears and curling can be fixed inexpensively, without having to replace flooring. Clean heating vents and baseboards in addition to floors.

Windows/Sills/Curtains/Blinds/Screens: All these need to be very clean, (inside & out for windows) Sills/Slides/Screens need to be clean and functional. Curtains and blinds need to be cleaned, if they are damaged or stained to the point of being unsightly & unusable, either have them replaced or just take them down. All bedrooms should have window coverings. Patch the walls where there are holes from curtain rods. It is best to leave curtain rods up rather than take them down, you do not want to encourage tenants to continue to put these holes in the walls. All

windows should have screens, and working locks. Also wipe down exterior and interior doors and trim, the main door can be especially grungy. Paint trim or door if necessary. We encourage painting with neutral colors to improve curb appeal. For about \$15-, you can purchase a pint of paint and make the front door 'pop' which makes the rental more inviting.

Light fixtures/switches/fans: Replace all burnt out light bulbs, and completely clean light fixtures- lights are often the first thing people look at to determine if a place has been thoroughly cleaned. If you have globe or platter fixtures, now might be the time for an update- nothing says 1970's more than an old globe light fixture. Updated properties rent faster, and encourage long term tenants, as well as bring in more monthly rent. Clean all dust off of ceiling fans and sconces; make sure the pull chains are long enough. Don't forget light switches- cleanliness and function. An old toothbrush works great to clean up a grungy switch. Broken switch plates and outlet covers need replaced- do not leave wiring exposed! These plates cost less than a dollar each.

Kitchen: All cupboards and drawers, cupboard fronts and pulls need to be extremely clean. Touch up paint or stain on cupboard fronts. If there is excessive staining on shelves, try placing some contact paper to cover up. Appliances that MUST be included and functioning are: stove/oven and refrigerator. Dishwashers, Washers and Dryers are optional but ovens and fridges ARE NOT. Tenants do not normally have these appliances and will pass by your place and rent another that does. Range hoods and fans need to be clean, and WORK. Range vents get especially greasy, either replace or clean thoroughly. Drip pans should be replaced if they are unable to be cleaned. If they are replaced, cover with aluminum foil to encourage tenants to do the same. The oven is another item that will be scrutinized, so make sure it is very clean, pull away from the counter and clean the edge of the countertop and back of oven, and don't forget the oven drawer. Broiler pans can be cleaned by placing them in the oven during the self-clean cycle. The fridge/freezer needs to be clean and smell fresh, remove or replace any broken drawers/shelves. Also, make sure the back and underneath of fridge is clean of lint/dirt- this may save a repair bill. Now is the time to check all faucets and drains for leaks and have them fixed. If you are supplying a washer/dryer, make sure to pull them away from the wall and clean around- be sure the venting is good for the dryer, could be a fire hazard...

Baths: Again, check for leaks, clean out drains. Bath-tubs and showers need to shine, make sure to get rid of all soap residue, especially on shower doors. Clean the grout around door bottoms and bath-tub rims. Replace old, discolored caulking. It is not necessary to replace a shower curtain- but please leave the shower rod. If the toilet lid is discolored or broken, replace with a new one. If there are any tell-tell signs of mold- clean with mildew remover and paint over with a stain blocker. Make sure the exhaust fan is working and is clean- this will save mold problems down the road.

Heating Units/Air Conditioners: Start out with a clean, new filter- clean out all lint from the unit, thoroughly clean ductwork and floor vents, and check function of the unit. Window mounted air conditioners should be removed in winter/fall. If it is not possible to remove, a cover should be provided- these are major sources of lost heat and if your residence sits vacant at all, can be cause for a freeze up, and high heat bills. A professional inspection and cleaning of stove/fireplace and chimney is required prior to start up of Management- any recommendations regarding repairs and replacement must be accomplished prior to Management.

Walls: Nothing makes a place look and smell better than a fresh coat of paint. If it's been awhile since you've painted, now might be a good time. Also, PLEASE paint

wood paneling--- nothing says cheap and outdated like 70's interior wood paneling. Paint is a minor investment with big returns. If you have old wallpaper that is discolored and curling, remove it and paint. Wallpaper and tenants do not always mix well. It is also helpful to inform management of the paint color to keep on file for future touch ups. Door stops are another cheap investment that will save the walls and doors. **PAINT WITH NEUTRAL COLORS-** *not everyone is a fan of purple!*

Garage/Sheds: Clean out all debris and please do not leave any belongings, other than items that may be necessary for repairs. If you leave paint, make sure it is well marked and stored where it will not freeze.

Gutters: All gutters should be free of debris, downspouts need to be attached properly and should drain away from the foundation. Tenants are expected to keep gutters clean and repaired exactly as they find them at move in.

Decks/Patios/Walkways: Broken stairs are a major liability, so repair/replace anything broken. **If there are more than 2 steps, a handrail is necessary** in most instances. If your patio is not covered, make sure it is not subject to run-off or standing water- this may mean installing a gutter, but will save damage to the patio in the long run. Walkways need to be even and any large cracks in concrete should be fixed. If a tenant or guest falls and is injured, fault may be found with the owner if due to disrepair. Make sure outdoor lights are cleaned of bugs and are working.

Driveway/Parking: These can be interesting living here in Montana. We have mud and ice many times of the year, so if your place is especially prone to these, you may want to invest in a load of gravel. This has the added effect of designating parking areas by having them graveled, not to mention less dirt tracked into the residence. **Spray those weeds!** Overgrown weeds give the residence a look of abandonment and tenants will get a feeling that weeds are not their responsibility.

Landscaping: We want the residence to have some curb appeal, if it is spring/summer, make sure everything is nice and green. Lawn mowed, and shrubs trimmed at ALL TIMES- it is a waste of time to show a property that is overgrown or lacks any landscaping- this sends the signal that you do not care about your property and tenants don't need to either. All pet droppings need to be picked up and **no debris** (old appliances, cars, fencing and building material, etc...) lying around. If you have extensive landscaping that needs trimmed annually, please make note of that to Management and it will be referenced in lease agreements. Not all tenants are knowledgeable about trimming shrubs and trees, so it may be necessary to hire that work done each year.

Fencing/Gates: Make sure fencing is sturdy and not a liability, and that all gates close and lock properly.

Pump Houses / Septic Systems: Again, make sure the pump house is well insulated and there is a heat source for winter months. Inform management of any necessary annual winterization. We will conduct an annual inspection, but the tenant will be ultimately responsible for making sure heat sources are on and functioning after that. Septic: The septic tank must be readily accessible and easy to identify with a riser cap and lockable lid. If the system has not been pumped in the last 2 years, we will require proof of current pump before Management start up.

Condition Report: Each new owner is required to complete a condition report. This is a statement as to the condition of the home. One should be included with your New Owner Packet. Please bring it to Management's attention if you did not receive one. The Condition Report is an essential document to record any pre-existing

damage. Without it, tenants may dispute damage they have caused and Management may not be able to deduct that damage from their security deposit.

Pests/Rodents/Insects: If there has ever been a problem with rodents in the home, please make certain that all possible areas of entry have been sealed to prevent reoccurrence. **All evidence of pests absolutely must be removed and disinfected thoroughly.** Our area is especially prone to hornets nests- please inspect your home, sheds, garages- exterior and interior for any nests- remove and spray. Ants and spiders are another seasonal joy, if there is evidence of many insects, a spray by a professional pest control person may be in order. Log or cedar sided homes are especially attractive to insects.

Keys: Management requests that all exterior locking doors be keyed the same- this cuts down on number of keys floating around and lock changes in-between tenants. To begin Management, 4 keys are needed: 2 for tenants and two for the office. We request that all keys be made by the local Locksmith and that they are encoded with the words DO NOT DUPLICATE. The 2 keys for the office will be one of these DND keys and one key that is NOT stamped so that Management may make copies if necessary.

Make Notes: For anything you can think of that requires special instructions, write it down and post it at the house, also give a copy to Management. Many homes have special 'quirks'; it's good to give everyone a heads-up if there are any problems that could arise. Any items requiring ongoing Maintenance (water filtration system, for example) please note to Management so that it can be included in your Contract.

Inspections : Management conducts an annual inspection in the fall to each property. We will be replacing smoke detector batteries, checking the fire extinguisher for function and also location (to make sure tenants have not buried it). Heating units, heat tape, storm windows, gutters, etc... are inspected. Included with this packet of information is a Winterization / Maintenance checklist. Please note that if there is a wood burning stove or fireplace, it will be cleaned and inspected annually- cost is invoiced to owner. This is a minor insurance policy to protect you against loss caused by fire.

Any repair items will be noted and Management will contact you the owner to discuss them and arrange for repairs if necessary.

Management conducts random drive-by inspections of properties, if there appears to be any indication of misuse or lack of care, Management will schedule an inspection of that property and report to owner immediately any findings which will result in tenant eviction proceedings

Final thought:

Waiting for a tenant to show interest in the place in order to justify maintenance, repairs, cleaning and lawn care is only asking for trouble.

Management will not advertise a property that is not completely ready to rent.

This office has been consistently building an admirable reputation for renting quality dwellings to quality tenants, the foregoing requests are vital in continuing that reciprocal relationship.

Properties in disrepair will not be managed.

Thank you for your understanding.