

A Newsletter for Housing Owners

METRO HRA

Housing & Redevelopment Authority

VIEWS



EPA REQUIRES CERTIFICATIONS IN LEAD-BASED PAINT

The Environmental Protection Agency requires contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb paint in housing built before 1978 to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.



Landlords who use their own crews to work on investment properties must also follow the new rule. To sign up for training at a discounted price see below.

2012 Safe Work Practices Training

Safe Work Practices Training is provided by a certified trainer through the Metro HRA and other local housing authorities, to train and certify property owners and their agents on the safe stabilization of lead based paint hazards. Training is required in order for you to perform the work. **Proof of certification is required before a unit will pass a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection or before a housing assistance payment will be made.**

2012 SAFE WORK PRACTICES TRAINING DATES:

Saturdays 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

November 17, 2012, is our last class of the year

To register, contact Kimberly Henry at Kimberly.Henry@stpha.org, or 651-298-5081.

There will be a \$50 charge per person to offset the cost of this training, due at the time of registration.

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW?

If there are topics you would like to see addressed in upcoming issues of the newsletter, please e-mail them to Mary Dooher at mary.dooher@metc.state.mn.us



FALL 2012

DID YOU KNOW?

You can access a copy of the Metro HRA Owner's Handbook at www.metrocouncil.org. Go to Housing, Metro HRA, Landlords, Owner Handbook. It's packed with useful information.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Metro HRA provides all landlords the opportunity to enroll in the direct deposit system as a convenient payment option for receipt of your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). By offering direct deposit, Metro HRA provides you the option to have your monthly HAP directly deposited into your checking or savings account.

Direct Deposit is a convenient way to receive your payments and eliminate the delays of mailing and the possibility of lost checks.

To request an enrollment form for direct deposit, or to make a change if you already have direct deposit, please contact your tenant's coordinator.



A MOVE IS A MOVE IS A MOVE

When a tenant moves out of a unit they are renting. It doesn't matter if they move across town or across the hall. It doesn't matter if they are changing landlords or not. All moves must be treated the same and they must follow the same procedures. Metro HRA policy states a tenant may only move once in a 12-month period. The following steps are required to process a move:

- The tenant must give their landlord proper written notice in accordance with their lease and submit a copy to their Metro HRA Coordinator. Metro HRA requires a 60-day written notice to process a move.
- The tenant must update their paperwork and provide all verifications required to process their file.
- The tenant must locate a new unit and turn in a completed Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) by the 15th of the month prior to the month they plan on moving in. For example if the tenant planned on moving in for December 1, 2012, they would need a completed RTA turned in to Metro HRA by November 15, 2012. If they are moving outside of Metro's jurisdiction the RTA must be turned in by the 10th to allow time to transfer the paperwork to the new housing authority.
- An inspection must be done on the new unit before any assistance can begin. The HRA cannot pay rent on any unit that has not passed an HQS inspection. The rent assistance will begin on the day the unit passes, no retroactive payments can be made.



If you have a tenant who is receiving rent assistance through our office and they plan to move to a different unit that you own, be sure they follow the right steps or we may not be able to pay you all of the rent you think is due. If the tenant is in violation of their lease, please notify the coordinator in writing as soon as possible.

Owner Briefings!

Would you like to know more about the Section 8 rent assistance program but don't know who to ask? Metro HRA can help. We are offering ongoing briefings to provide Landlords/Property Managers with valuable information about the Section 8 program. These briefings offer owners/managers an opportunity to see what is new, ask questions, and network with other property owners. The briefings last approximately one hour and are offered on the second Tuesday of every third month at Metro HRA, 390 North Robert St., St. Paul. Upcoming briefings are as follows:

- **November 13, 2012, 2:00 p.m.**
- **February 12, 2013, 10:00 a.m.**
- **May 14, 2013, 2:00 p.m.**

For more information or to register contact Mary Dooher at:
mary.dooher@metc.state.mn.us or 651-602-1445.

INSPECTIONS

Prepare for the HQS inspection as soon as you receive notice of your inspection date. Checking for potential fail items and making repairs ahead of time greatly increases the possibility of a passed inspection on the first visit. Please be sure the repairs are completed **BEFORE** you call for a re-inspection. **Thank you for being proactive.**

DRYER DUCTS

Metro HRA Inspectors have been enforcing the correction of dryer ducts to meet the 2006 International Mechanical Code as explained below in an excerpt directly from the 2006 code:

504.6 Domestic clothes dryer ducts. Exhaust ducts for domestic clothes dryers shall be constructed of metal and shall have a smooth interior finish. The exhaust duct shall be a minimum nominal size of 4 inches (102 mm) in diameter. The entire exhaust system shall be supported and secured in place. The male end of the duct at overlapped duct joints shall extend in the direction of airflow. Clothes dryer transition ducts used to connect the appliance to the exhaust duct system shall be limited to single lengths not to exceed 8 feet (2438 mm) and shall be listed and labeled for the application. Transition ducts shall not be concealed within construction.

504.6.1 Maximum length. The maximum length of a clothes dryer exhaust duct shall not exceed 5 feet (7620 mm) from the dryer location to the outlet terminal. The maximum length of the duct shall be reduced 2 1/2 feet (762 mm) for each 45 degree (0.79 rad) bend and 5 feet (1524 mm) for each 90 degree (1.6 rad) bend. The maximum length of the exhaust duct does not include the transition duct.

VAWA

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) became federal law in January 2006. VAWA prohibits the eviction of certain persons if the grounds for such action are an instance of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. This means that you cannot terminate a lease because of an abuser's actions toward a tenant or their family. All owners, whether participating in the Section 8 voucher program or not, must comply with this law. For the full text on the law visit:

<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/domviolence.htm>

Are you familiar with the "Right of Victims of Domestic Abuse to Terminate the Lease", Minnesota State Statute 504B.206? This state law allows a tenant to terminate their lease if they are a victim of VAWA. The statute can be found at:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=504B.206>



VENDOR NUMBERS

All of the correspondence you receive from Metro HRA should now include your vendor number. Please keep your vendor number handy and use it on ALL correspondence you send to Metro HRA to ensure we are providing you with accurate information.

RENEWING THE TENANTS LEASE?

Approximately 4 months, (120 days) prior to a tenants lease renewal, Metro HRA sends a letter to the landlords of all current tenants asking if they intend to renew the lease. We require these back at least 60 days prior to the lease renewal to provide us with at least a 60-day notice of possible rent increase or non-renewal. Please help us by returning these on time.

ENERGY STAR

Consider buying ENERGY STAR products next time you replace an appliance. It's good for you and good for the environment. Go to www.energystar.gov for more information.

GO GREEN

Would you like to receive the Metro HRA Newsletter and other important information electronically? Please send your name, property name, phone number and e-mail address to: mary.dooher@metc.state.mn.us

FREE ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

Do you have a vacancy to rent? HousingLink is the primary distributor of affordable housing information in the Twin Cities. The HousingLink online listing service is easy to use and it is FREE. The website is viewed by almost 35,000 people each month and used to list vacancies by over 6,000 landlords. Get the word out through Housing Link! Visit www.housinglink.org, click on the landlord link and advertise your affordable housing vacancies today.

This website also provides current Payment Standard and Utility Allowance information for the Twin Cities area Housing Authorities.

ARE YOU AND YOUR TENANT READY FOR WINTER?

Snow and Ice

Every winter we hear stories of people slipping and falling on the ice or snow that wasn't cleared from the walkways of a home or multi-unit complex. Please don't let this be your property. If it is your tenant's responsibility to clear the walkways, please review this part of the lease with them before the snow begins to fall.

If the walkways are not safe, or impassable, the inspectors may abort the inspection, which may result in a late inspection and missed payments. Remember! We cannot pay rent if there is not a passed inspection.



Fireplaces and Chimneys

Has your fireplace and chimney been inspected and cleaned recently? Is it in proper working condition?

If your property has a fireplace, remember to teach your tenant how to properly use it. Do they know how to start a fire, or properly vent the fireplace? Do not take this for granted. Take a little time to instruct them and ensure a safe heating season for all.