



RENTAL NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2010

Landlord Responsibilities

As a landlord it is important you understand your "rights and responsibilities" so that you don't fall foul of legislation and end up facing hefty fines.

The Bond

All tenants pay a security deposit (bond), which is equivalent to 4 weeks rent. The bond must be forwarded to their State's residential tenancies bond authority who will hold the bond on behalf of the tenant and landlord during the tenancy. At the end of the tenancy, we occasionally find that the landlord believes he can claim on the bond because the premises is not in the same condition as it was at the beginning of the tenancy. Whilst costs of rectifying what is commonly called "fair wear and tear" cannot be claimed, as a landlord you can make a claim on the bond for:

•Damage caused by the tenant or the tenant's visitors •Cleaning expenses •The tenant abandoning the premises •Unpaid rent •The tenant leaving the landlord to pay bills that the tenant should have paid •Loss of the landlord's goods

If there is a disagreement about the division of the Bond, or the landlord wants to claim compensation over and above the bond, the landlord must apply to the Tribunal within 10 business days of the tenant vacating the premises.

The Rent

Rent can be paid weekly or fortnightly. The landlord cannot ask for more than 14 days rent at the beginning of a tenancy.

Visiting Your Property

While you may feel like checking on how the tenant is looking after your property, you can't just pop in whenever you feel like it. For example, a landlord may enter the premises as long as the tenant agrees and 48 hours notice is given. We can legally only do 4 inspections a year.

Increasing the Rent

The rent cannot increase until the end of the fixed term unless your agreement states otherwise. The rent cannot be increased more than once every six months and the tenant must be given at least 60 days notice of any proposed rent increase, if fair and to market rent.

Installation Rebate For Landlords

The Home Insulation Program offers ceiling insulation worth up to \$1,200 to owner-occupiers, landlords and tenants. The program targets homes that are currently uninsulated, or have very little ceiling insulation and were built before the mandatory thermal performance requirements under the Building Code of Australia were introduced commencing in 2003. If the total cost of installation is less than \$1,200 there will be no more for the householder to pay. This will be the case for most households. If the cost of the insulation is more than \$1,200, the householder will ordinarily have to pay the difference, or the full amount if they are ineligible. The program commenced with its announcement on 3 February 2009 under a rebate scheme. From 1 July 2009 to 31 August 2009 there were separate arrangements for owner- occupiers and rental properties. This program now covers all eligible households and is in effect from 1 September 2009 to 31 December 2011 or until the date when Program funds have been fully allocated, whichever occurs first.

Getting started

Householders who wish to participate in the program should read the Program guidelines before arranging insulation. The insulation must be installed by an insulation installer who is registered on the Australian Government's Installer Provider Register. The \$1,200 insulation assistance is an alternative to the \$1,200 solar hot water rebate. Householders cannot access both \$1,200 assistance packages for the same home. Further information:

- Home Insulation Program Guidelines - from 1 September 2009
- Climate zone maps
- Frequently asked questions
- Your Home Technical Manual - Insulation

Further Information and the Home Insulation Program fact sheet can be obtained from the website or contact number below.

Website: www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency (source: www.environment.gov.au)

Severe Storms

What is a severe storm

There are two types of severe storms: thunderstorms and land gales. Thunderstorms can produce hail, wind gusts, flash floods, tornadoes, and lightning which can cause death, injury and damage to property. Thunderstorms are more common and generally more dangerous than land gales. Land gales are simply gale force winds that occur over the land.

Preparing Your Property For Severe Storms

1 Check the condition of the roof

Repair loose tiles, sheets, eaves and roof screws; clean gutters and downpipes so water can drain away as quickly as possible; and trim trees and overhanging branches.

2. Insurance

Ensure your home building insurance is current and covers your asset adequately; and check your policy includes debris clean up and disposal.

3. Flood-prone areas

Consider an alternatives to carpet floor coverings; consider relocating electrical sockets and power-points to well above floor level.

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INVESTMENT

50 Hansen Crescent - \$375,000
3/4 Bed, 1 Bath, 1 Car



INVESTMENT

1/13 Derby Street - AUCTION
2 Bed, 1 Bath, 1 Car



INVESTMENT

45 Alder Street - \$359,000
4 Bed, 2 Bath, 1 Car