



NOVEMBER MEETING

Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 7 P.M.

Meeting Location → **RAAR**

6776 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61108

JOIN THE RAA!

Members enjoy ...

- ✓ 8 monthly meetings with guest speakers covering a variety of property management topics
- ✓ Winter Member Mixer
- ✓ Spring Banquet
- ✓ a Web link or page advertising your units on the RAA Web site
- ✓ Member networking with current tips, bargains and referrals
- ✓ Knowledge of State and local political issues affecting property managers and owners
- ✓ Monthly newsletter

A one-year membership is \$99.

To join or e-mail RAA, go to

www.rockfordapartmentassociation.org

To join the e-mail group, go to

RAAmembers@yahoo.com

Reduce Vacancy

Letter from the President:

At this month's meeting we will discuss methods to minimize vacancy of your units. We all know that when your units are empty there is no income being received but your obligations like mortgages and taxes are still there. Keeping properties occupied is critical to success in the rental housing business. Topics will include how to prepare your property for showings, effective methods to advertise your unit and ideas on how to handle showing your unit to prospective tenants.

Help support our lobbying effort:

The Rockford Apartment Association is a member of the Illinois Rental Property Owners Association (IRPOA). IRPOA is a coalition of groups like RAA from cities across Illinois. The purpose of IRPOA is to protect the interests of rental housing owners in state legislative issues. IRPOA retains a lobbyist in Springfield to monitor legislation that would affect your business. We fund this lobbyist through donations from our member groups and individual members. In order to provide additional value for individuals who donate to our lobbyist fund, IRPOA has established a subscription web site.

A member of RAA can subscribe to the IRPOA web site for \$14.95 per year. All money raised through subscriptions goes to our lobbyist fund. The web site provides access to information on new legislation that you need to follow. In addition, through our discussion forums, you will be connected to landlords from across Illinois. Forum topics include, maintenance, leases, evictions, collections, new laws, tenant screening, or you can introduce a new topic that interests you.

Go to www.IRPOA.org to subscribe

WELCOME new members:

Terry & Susan Heilman

Bruce Ross

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Tax Abatement Landlord Savings Program

The "Housing Opportunity Area Tax Abatement Program" is intended to provide access to housing near places of employment, reduce concentration of poverty, and promote economic diversity throughout Illinois. Under the program, owners who lease a unit to a Housing Choice Voucher holder, commonly referred to as section 8 tenants, in a Housing Opportunity Area are eligible to receive up to a 19% reduction in the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of their property for qualified leased units.

- The property must be located in a qualifying area defined as (1) having an above average tax base and (2) located in a census tract with a poverty level of less than 10%. Qualifying Townships are indicated on the back page of each annual application
- Landlords must have rented to and have a voucher holder occupying at least one unit as of January 1 of each calendar year.
- The eligible unit must be in compliance with the Authority's Housing Quality Standards (HQS) as of the most recent inspection
- The unit must not have any outstanding indebtedness to the Authority or have been involved with any criminal activities concerning the HCV Program.
- The number of qualifying units is limited to two(2) units per property or 20%, whichever is greater.
- An owner must, under oath, self-certify to the total number of dwelling units in the property and that the property is in substantial compliance with local building codes.

The determination of the potential property tax savings for program participation is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Qualified HCV Units} \times 19.00\%}{\text{Total Number of units}} = \% \text{ of savings} = \text{Reduced Taxable EAV}$$

Applications must be submitted on an annual basis and are not automatically renewable.

The reduced taxable EAV will be reflected in the "Billing Amount" on the property tax bill. A landlord does not receive a check or direct dollar amount rebate from their property tax abatement from the County Assessor, yet rather a reduction in the EAV resulting in a reduced "Billing Amount" to which their tax bill is calculated. Landlord-Owners are responsible for providing an accurate permanent index number (PIN) for each such property for further processing of applications. Applications may be picked up from the office of the Rockford Housing Authority, 223 S Winnebago St. Rockford, IL 61102. Contact Cynthia Woodard at 815-489-8531 for additional information.

Application Deadline is November 30th for 2011.

Want to expand your opportunities to rent properties?

One in five Americans has a disability - that's 20% of the population!

When renovating your properties keep these accessibility issues in mind. There is demand for rental units that can accommodate people with special needs. Even tenants who have no disability will find comfortable access more appealing when they consider renting your units. These can be cost effective improvements that will help keep your vacancy rates low.

ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- **Parking:** Is there a parking area with 8' side load space? Consider safety issues in entering/exiting vehicle)
- **Entrance Route:** Minimum 36" wide? Is it a level, solid surface, free from changes in grade of ¼" or more?
- **Interior Spaces:** 32" clear doorways throughout an accessible floor.
 - "swing away" hinges may be installed to allow doors to swing clear of the frame, creating additional clear space.
 - Lever type door handles, loop type drawer pulls, lever type handles on sinks, tubs, showers, make them easier to use.
- **Entrances:** Ramps can be added or the grade can sometimes be adjusted to create a zero step entrance?
 - Ramp from accessible route: preferred slope no greater than 1:12 with a 5' landing. In the case where 1:12 is not possible, 1:8 may be used with handrails.
 - Door threshold ¼" or less.
 - Doorway minimum 32" clear? 36" preferred.
- **Floor Coverings:** Hard surface flooring or tight loop, low pile carpet with thin or no padding.

For more information contact

RAMP 202 Market Sreet, Rockford, 815-968-7467



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RENTER'S GUIDE

We at the **ROCKFORD AREA
RENTER'S GUIDE**,
support the
ROCKFORD APARTMENT ASSOCIATION
and encourage everyone to do the same!

Until further notice

We will donate to the Rockford Apartment Association, 10% of the cost of any AD, placed by an RAA member, in the Renter's Guide.

Now you can rent your apartment and do something nice for the RAA. When you place your ad, you must tell us you are a member and request that 10% be sent to the RAA. (First time customers only.)

Call us for details.

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News and Notes

facebook.

✓ Are you on Facebook? Please follow the Rockford Apartment Association and Illinois Rental Property Owners Association. Facebook is a great tool to increase awareness of our groups and the issues that we are working on.

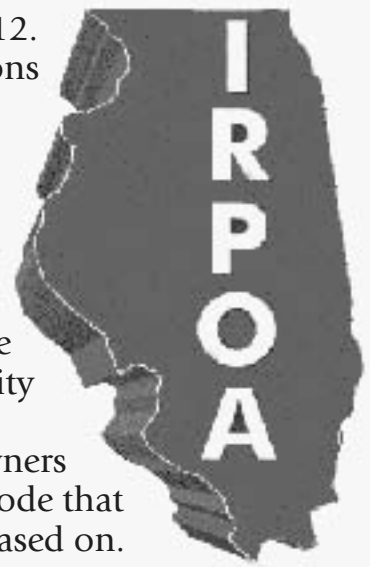
✓ HB1909, now Public Act 97-0561 becomes effective January 1, 2012. This bill covers county code enforcement. It requires that in all actions for the violation of any county ordinance, the first process shall be a summons or a warrant to appear in circuit court. Only in the case of a violation of the property maintenance code of the county by a repeat offender, service of process against the owner of the property that is the subject of the violation may be a notice to appear issued by a code enforcement official. This is important because property owners have the benefit of appearing before a judge for a first offence instead of a hearing officer. Property owners have a better opportunity to present a defense before a judge than before a hearing officer.

IRPOA was able to negotiate significant protection for property owners by having included in the law requirements that the notice cite the code that is violated and the conditions on the property that the violation is based on. This is something we would like to see in all code enforcement notices.

In addition the definition of repeat offender was clarified to mean a person who has been found guilty of 2 or more similar violations of a property maintenance code at the same location in a 36-month period. As introduced any person who had a second violation at any time or at any location within the same county would have been considered a repeat offender.

✓ One of the benefits of membership in RAA is our email group. By joining the group you can interact with other RAA members on a daily basis. Great information is shared on

issues like management questions, referral for service providers, and postings for people looking for rentals. If you are not currently taking advantage of the RAA email group and would like to see what it has to offer just send an email with the name your membership is under and the email address you want added to the group to arenacnst@charter.net.



Call us First!

The RAA board meets with the City of Rockford on a regular basis to discuss issues related to rental property. The subject of how the community and property owners can better communicate has been addressed. From our perspective, responsible property owners who receive a call about problems at their properties quickly address them and avoid the need for code enforcement. The city and community groups frequently complain that there is no simple way to know who to call.

In response, RAA has added a property contact directory to our web site. Please go to www.rockfordapartmentassociation.org. Click on the tab on the left of the screen that says "Property Contact Info." It will be available for anyone to use, not just RAA members. We believe that both owner occupants and investors will benefit from better communication when problems occur.

The directory associates a contact name with an address. If you don't manage your property personally then the name and number should be for your property manager. It will only search by property, not by your name. You set up an account that allows you to edit or delete your contact info as necessary. The goal is to encourage complaints to come to the owner before calls are made to the city which end up in code enforcement actions. In order for RAA to promote this we need members to participate. Please consider putting contact information for your properties in this directory.

If you have any problems using the directory report them to Paul Arena at ArenaCnst@charter.net.

Great Ad Rates for Your Rental Units!

10% OFF for RAA members!

- Buy two weeks, get the third week FREE
- Fax, e-mail, or phone your ad in
- Deadline is Thursday noon before following Wednesday's publication
- All classified ads must be prepaid

Call Stephanie today at
815-964-9767



e-mail: rrtimes@rworld.com
phone: **815-964-9767**
fax: **815-964-9825**

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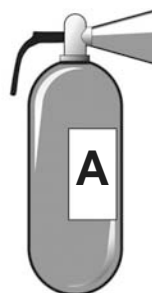


Talking Real Estate
with Tim and Tim **WNTA**
1330 AM

Call in with your questions!

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Rockford Apartment Association Directory

1-800-RAA-6676 | www.RockfordApartmentAssociation.org | PO Box 2502 | Loves Park IL 61132

RAA SERVICE DIRECTORY

A-Fire Extinguisher	815-961-8100
Coin Appliances Inc.	800-242-5453
Geoffrey Erdman, gerdman@bizwi.rr.com www.coinappliances.com	
Great Lakes Commercial Sales	800-236-5599
J&J Concrete	815-519-4795
Ken Becker Realtors	815-399-8000
Nicholson Hardware	815-963-4821
Northern IL Sewer Service, Inc.	815-229-1174
The Rock River Times	815-964-9767
Rockford Area Renter's Guide	815-964-6700
Suburban Patrol	815- 961-8100
616 South 6th Street	

RAA 2010-2011 BOARD MEMBERS

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	Mary O'Sullivan-Snyder	815-988-2755
IRPOA Rep	Paul Arena	815-243-2924
	Greg Osen	815-601-8008
Web Site / Events	Steve Lantow	815-633-9967
*Legal Counsel (Board Advisor) Tom Wartowski		815 978-1572

Rockford Apartment Association Code of Ethics

We, the members of the RAA, recognizing our duty to the public and the intimate nature of the relationship between the apartment resident and the owner, or manager, and being aware of the vastly increasing role of the apartment industry in providing the home of the future, and in order to provide the apartment-residing public with the maximum in quality and service upon the highest standards of honest and integrity, do hereby bind ourselves, with each and every member, together and alone, agreeing that, so long as we remain members of the RAA and so long as nothing contained herein shall be unlawful, we shall:

1. Promote, employ and maintain a high standard of integrity in the performance of all rental obligations and services in the operation of our apartment communities.
2. Maintain and operate our apartment communities in accordance with fair and honorable standards of competition, ever mindful of the purposes of the Rockford Apartment Association and in compliance with the by-laws thereof.
3. Strive continually to promote the education and fraternity of the membership and to promote the progress and dignity of the apartment industry in creating a better image of itself in order that the public may be better served.

4. Seek to provide better values, so that an even greater share of the public may enjoy the many benefits of apartment living.
5. Establish high ethical standards of conduct within the apartment industry in the business relationship between the owner, managers and suppliers of products and services to the apartment industry.
6. Maintain property standards of the appropriate governmental authority.
7. Ensure that every qualified individual, regardless of that individual's race, color, religion, gender, disability, familial status or national origin is afforded the same opportunity to rent an apartment and enjoy the benefits of apartment living.

Financial statement available upon request to members in good standing.

The content and opinions expressed in the RAA newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of, nor are they necessarily endorsed by, the Rockford Apartment Association or its board.



NOVEMBER MEETING

Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 7 P.M.

Reduce Vacancy

Come to a meeting!

Join and save!

Free to RAA members

\$15 non-members

**Rockford Area
Association Of Realtors**

6776 East State Street

Rockford, IL

RAA rental forms for members only

Forms are available at the following locations. Please call in advance to be sure someone will be available to help you.

RAA Meetings	6776 E. State St.	1-800-RAA-6676
Hurd Properties II LLC	124 Water Street Suite 204	1-815-519-5583
State Line Rentals	6952 Rote Rd. Rockford, IL	1-815-398-8886
Terra Creek Apartments	375 Bienterra Trail	1-815-397-3320

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