

# Residential Resource

September/October 2003

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*The Mission of NARPM is to support professional and ethical practices of rental home management through networking, education, and certification.*

## The Tenants Who MUST Be Evicted

by Robert L. Cain

No amount of whining, crying, and blubbering should save these tenants. When the rent is late, tenants might have a reasonable excuse, tug on your heartstrings, and persuade you to allow them some extra time. Those are not the tenants I am talking about.

These tenants can make you lose your property. These tenants do not deserve to rent from any landlord. They deserve to be paying no rent at all — in jail. These tenants MUST be evicted.

Oh, they have their own set of stories. "It was my boyfriend." "It was my grandson." "My cousin came over while I was gone and did it." Or, "you can't evict me, I'm a protected class. I'm in drug treatment." None are worth the dust left over in a crack pipe. Tenants are responsible for the actions of their invited guests and co-tenants in addition to their own.

You learn of the situation when you read the letter from the police department. It says they have evidence that your rental property is being used for drug dealing. Had you observed and given it some thought, you could have concluded what the police told you months before.

You would have seen comings and goings at all times of the day and night, and strange, disreputable-looking people always at the rental property.

You would have seen people come up to the door, not go in, and leave furtively, looking up

and down the street. You would have seen people sit in their car after leaving. They might also park around the corner or a few blocks away and walk to the property. You also would have noticed more activity on paydays or on weekends.



The letter from the police department points out a city ordinance requiring landlords to evict tenants who are dealing drugs in a property. The fact that you received the letter is shield for the landlord against any complaints by the tenant of discrimination or illegal eviction.

If you fail to evict the tenants, your property can be boarded up by the city, or even worse, be forfeited as a drug property. That's why these tenants deserve no consideration whatsoever, they have endangered your investment and the neighborhood around your rental property. They must be evicted immediately.

Many times drug-dealing tenants know the drill and move out before the sheriff comes to put them out. They have probably victimized other landlords in the past. Other times you will actually have to take them to court to get their sleazy behinds out of your property.

One interesting point is that these tenants almost assuredly always paid the rent on time. They probably also never called. They wanted to be left alone. Those two "qualities" lull many a landlord into thinking all is well and thanking their lucky stars for regular rent

*continued on page 8*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Aloha Kakou! (Hello everyone)

'O au no me ka 'oia'i'o, (Sincerely Yours)

Chris (Kilika) Hermanski, MPM®  
2003 National President



NARPM President  
Chris Hermanski

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# I Am Not Your Competitor! The Benefits of Participation

by Mike Nelson, RMP®

When I first joined NARPM I heard a speaker quote a statistic that the owners themselves manage at least 85% of all rental homes in the nation. That indicates that the home leasing and management (HLM) industry has penetrated at most 15% of the potential market for their services. To support this, a recent property tax search in Gwinnett County, GA, indicates there are over 11,000 houses with an absentee owner. As a practitioner with the largest portion of my management portfolio in this county, I estimate that there are no more than 1,000 of these rental houses being managed by HLM professionals. There is a tremendous market available to us. It seems apparent that we are not competing with our peers in the industry; we are competing directly with the property owner.

In the United Kingdom and in Australia these statistics are virtually reversed. Imagine what your business would be like if 85% of the property owners in your market chose professional management. How much larger would your company be if that were the case? Or if you choose not to grow, how much more selective would you be in terms of the clients that you choose to represent?

This leads one to ask why so many property owners choose to manage the rental house themselves. Do they understand that HLM professionals can rent the property more quickly to a better qualified resident? Do they know how many problems, from nonpayment to physical maintenance issues to legal headaches and other liabilities, we can help them avoid? Do they see the value in the hundreds of years of cumulative experience that HLM professional practitioners possess? Do they understand that for those problems that cannot be avoided, we will reduce the severity of the situation for the same reasons? Ask these questions of many "For Rent By Owners" in your market and listen to their responses. Many will tell you about the time they hired a property manager and were disappointed with the results.

To substantially increase our market share is simple. We, meaning all HLM professionals, must become "the expert." We must, as an industry, focus on maximizing the owner's return on investment. We need to show landlords the financial and nonfinancial benefits of using a professional manager. When it becomes clear to owners that the benefits of management by an HLM professional far outweigh any so called "savings" from self-management then more and more owners will hire professionals to represent them. This process is simple — but not easy.

To become this expert, model the habits of successful real estate sales agents and brokers that you know. Notice that the top producers are the ones involved in their local boards and trade organizations. They actively participate in continuing education; they constantly pursue new and innovative ways to improve their service. They understand that much of their "education" takes place outside of the classroom by networking with other professionals in a "one-on-one" setting. Then compare these "top producers" to other real estate agents in your market. Note how often other agents are just going through the motions of selling without getting "involved" in

their organizations or pursuing continuing education opportunities. It's a very personal business. We must be more personable professionals.

NARPM is the place that brings all this together, where we are dedicated to improving the professionalism and ethics of the home leasing and management industry through networking, education, and certification. Learning is a way of life. It doesn't stop once you receive a particular degree or designation. NARPM can educate you on issues including fair housing, mold, marketing techniques, taxation, maintenance, and many other subjects that have a direct impact on your ability to improve the return on investment of your client's property. And NARPM members can help you address your specific concerns in many ways by sharing the lessons that we have learned through the years. It is not difficult to become the expert but *you* must take action! Go to a meeting. Learn something. Speak with or visit an industry peer. Ask a favor. Help someone. Teach something. Make a difference. Get involved in NARPM. You will be better for it, our industry will improve, and your business will reap rewards beyond your imagination. As we "build a better mouse trap, the world will beat a path to our door."

*Mike is the president and managing broker of Excalibur Home Management, LLC, formed in 1985, which today manages 764 rental homes in the Metro Atlanta area. He is a Graduate of Realtors® Institute (GRI) and president of the Atlanta NARPM chapter. Mike lives in Cumming, GA, with his wife Mary and their three sons. After serving for 13 years as a pilot in the Army National Guard, Mike now spends his free time helping to coach his son's wrestling team and volunteering with Younglife Ministries, which reaches out to high school kids across America.*

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# NEW MEMBERS

Welcome new NARPM members! The following is a list of new members who joined NARPM from July 1 to July 31, 2003.

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# ABCs of Fair Housing

Compliments of California Apartment Association

**A**lways practice good ethics; treat everyone fairly and equally.

**B**e aware; monitor employee performance and take corrective action when needed.

**C**arefully review all policies and procedures on a regular basis.

**D**ocumentation systems are vital.

**E**ducate and train all employees to comply with proper fair housing procedures.

**F**air housing offers the same opportunities to each applicant.

**G**ood management practices include being consistent with the enforcement of the rules and policies.

**H**ave back up documentation in resident files to avoid being accused of retaliation if a tenant is warned or terminated because of behavior.

**I**n the screening process remember to verify all of the information on the application and do not deviate the information from one tenant to another.

**J**ust remember that changing policies and procedures from one class to another could be construed as discrimination.

**K**ee a log of all telephone calls and conversations.

**L**ease to the first qualified applicant.

**M**onitor your staff from time to time to be certain they are following the procedures.

**N**ever let your personal feelings interfere with your professional decisions.

**O**nly you can control your attitude and behavior.

**P**ay attention to how you meet and greet.

**Q**uestion any direction from a superior or another employee whom you feel is not legal.

**R**emember your record keeping could be the make or break points if taken into court for discrimination or retaliation.

**S**ave some time for yourself so that you are not so overwhelmed that you lack good judgement.

**T**oo many rules and regulations could be considered unreasonable and therefore unenforceable.

**U**tilize any of the educational resources available to you on a continuing basis.

**V**ery often you will have to defend your actions but if you have documentation there is little cause to worry.

**W**hen in doubt, don't guess, ask a reliable resource, which may or may not be an attorney.

**X**-amine your move-out procedures and offer everyone the same opportunity for pre-inspections.

**Y**ou cannot provide false, inaccurate information about the availability of a unit to any person.

**Z**eal for your job is what every employer hopes for — enthusiasm is catching.

*Reprinted with permission from the California Apartment Association's "Fair Housing: Its the Law" module of the California Certified Residential Manager (CCRM) professional designation series of courses.*

# Quit my 401k? Why Bailing Out Is the Wrong Answer

by Gary Foreman

## QUESTION:

Gary,

*Like a lot of people, I'm not happy with the way my 401k plan is doing right now. I have not lost a great deal of money like some of my friends have. However, I have been wondering if I should pull out of it right now and then maybe later start up the plan again. I have a friend who decided that he was just wasting too much money by investing in the 401k that he stopped contributing to it. The way the economy is going right now I might be better off to keep what I make. Even though I would have to pay taxes on it, at least I would still have some left over. What do you think?*

— Ruben in Florida

## ANSWER:

Ruben is not alone. Most everyone with a 401k plan invested in the stock market has suffered some decline in the value of his or her account. So it's only natural to wonder if it's wise to continue contributing to an account that seems to keep losing money.

Ruben is really asking three questions. Should he take all of his money out of the account? If not, should he continue to contribute? And, is there some way to improve the performance?

Before we begin, let's make sure that everyone understands that a 401k plan is an account that allows workers to contribute to their own retirement plan. The money that they contribute is deducted from their pay and is not taxed as ordinary income. Many employers match a portion of the employee's contribution. The combination of tax advantages and employer matches allows money to be saved much more rapidly than would otherwise occur.

Now for the first question. Should Ruben close his account? There are exceptions, but for most people who are still working, closing out their 401k plan would be a bad idea.

Withdrawing before you reach age 59-1/2 is expensive. Not only will Ruben have to pay a 10% penalty, but also all pre-tax contributions will be added to his income to be taxed. So, depending on his tax

bracket, Ruben could see one quarter or more of his 401k go to the government. — much bigger loss than any likely stock market drop.

The money withdrawn will need to be invested somewhere. For the most part, he'll end up with the same investment vehicles (stocks, bond, CDs, annuities, money funds) as inside the plan. They won't perform any better outside of the 401k than they did before. In fact, they'll grow more slowly since interest, dividends, and capital gains are subject to taxes each year.

So Ruben shouldn't sell out. Should he continue to contribute?

John Bogle was one of the pioneers of the mutual fund industry. In his book *Common sense on Mutual Funds*, he studied returns based on the Standard & Poor's Composite Index. From 1927 to 1997, the return over any 10-year period averaged 10.3%. The only negative 10-year return was for the period beginning in 1930 and that produced a -0.8% result.

What's the message for us? That unless you'll need the money soon, it should be worth more if you leave it invested. Time is the best friend an investor or saver has.

A 401k plan is designed to take advantage of time and also of an investment strategy called dollar cost averaging. That's where you invest the same amount of money regularly. You'll actually accumulate more money if stock prices drop periodically. That's true because your regular investment buys more shares when prices are lower. So market dips are a great time to buy.

Selling now would be an emotional response. Professional investors will tell you that emotions are dangerous to your financial well-being.

Also, unless Ruben's a very disciplined person, the money that had been going into the 401k will simply disappear. Adding that money to his take-home pay is an invitation to spend it.

Can Ruben improve the performance of his account? Although the 401k's do limit your investment options, he does have some choices.

When the stock market was roaring, many people liked to brag how well their stock picks were doing. But, that's not the purpose of your 401k plan. Your goal is to gradually increase wealth over a longer time frame so that it's available at your retirement.

His best strategy will include a mixture of investments. Ruben might want to study something called "asset allocation."

It's understandable that Ruben is concerned with his 401k plan. But bailing out is probably the wrong answer.

*Gary Foreman is a former financial planner who currently edits The Dollar Stretcher Web site [www.stretcher.com](http://www.stretcher.com) and newsletters. Before he began producing The Dollar Stretcher in 1996, Gary was a financial planner and purchasing manager. He has over 25 years experience in trying to get the best value for a dollar in the corporate or personal arena.*

## Contribute to the Residential Resource

<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Submission Due Date</u>
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December 2003	October 15, 2003
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February 2004	December 15, 2003

*If you are interested in writing an article, please e-mail an attachment of your article in Word or text format to Jessica Jacobs [jjacobs@assnmgmt.com](mailto:jjacobs@assnmgmt.com) or send her a Word or text file on 3-1/2" diskette to P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647. All articles are subject to editing and approval of subject matter.*

# A Handy Guide To Understanding Lease Proposals

by Clifford A. Hockley, President, Bluestone & Hockley Realty, Inc.

The lease proposal is the first step to making sure all your bases are covered when you are negotiating a lease. As a landlord or a tenant, it is critical to have a well-developed plan that both sides can rely on in the negotiations that lead up to a signed lease. This plan is outlined in the lease proposal. Many leases have the key variables located on the first few pages. A majority of these are reflected below.

## THE PARTICIPANTS

The standard participants in every lease are the lessor and the lessee. Their points of contact (i.e., mailing address for the rent and whom/how to contact when there is a problem) are normally included. The location of the property should be identified at the beginning of the proposal, and include the address of the space to be leased, including suite number, if applicable. If there is a management company, it is mentioned here.

## SQUARE FOOTAGE

If the building is a multitenant building, the total square footage of the building is usually tied to the square footage of the space being leased. It is important to establish the proportionate share of the leased space.

## USE

Spelling out the use of the space in detail is mandatory for the landlord and the tenant. For example, if you simply allow "retail use," that leaves you open to the sale of any retail item, including pornography, drug related paraphernalia, or goods that might not fit in with the tenor of the building. Suppose you have a retail building on the beach. You might be okay with a candy store or a clothing outlet, but would you want the tenant to be selling guns? As a landlord you want control of usage. As a tenant you want to make sure that your use is authorized. The same principles work for an industrial park. What landlord would want a chemical manufacturing tenant in the same building with a food distributor? An office building has similar issues. Do you really want a child-care program in the same building with CPAs or attorneys? In a large building this may work, but in a 20,000-square-foot building, the sound of kids playing could definitely create a problem for your conference calls.

## LEASE TERM AND LEASE COMMENCEMENT

The term of the lease is most easily expressed in months rather than years. For example a 60-month lease is clearer in terms than a period of 5 years. Identifying possession date (the date the common area charges start), the date of move in, and lease commencement all need to be addressed in the early part of the lease form. For example, an art gallery leases an industrial building. The building needs a new roof before the tenant can move in. The landlord and the tenant agree that the tenant can have possession of the building upon

completion of the roof. The tenant also needs two months getting the building ready with tenant improvements. Does he want to pay rent during this time? Of course not! He will, however, be using electricity, water, sewer, rubbish, and incurring other building-related costs such as property taxes, insurance, and property management. Those costs should be paid while the tenant improvements are being completed, but the rent might not start until the property has been approved for occupancy and inspected by the landlord and city officials. It is therefore important to keep in mind all of these dates in the lease proposal as well as the lease itself. If these dates are not met, one should execute a letter that will confirm the occupancy date for later referral as annual common area maintenance charges are calculated.

## RENT

This is the item most negotiated in a lease. The tenant wants low rent and many build-out (tenant improvement) concessions. The landlord wants a high rent and no concessions. The tenant wants a gross lease with all of the expenses included; the landlord wants a net lease and the ability to pass back all of the costs. In this section it is important to spell out the rent levels, annual increases (if any), if there are tax pass-through increases, CPI (Consumer Price Index) increases, or CAM (or triple net) costs.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF TENANT AND LANDLORD

Each property is different and each lease must address the key issues as to who is responsible for

1. building roofs, foundation, exterior, painting;
2. gutters and downspouts;
3. interior building maintenance;
4. broken glass windows;
5. landscaping/parking lot;
6. real estate taxes and property management;
7. liability and property damage insurance;
8. telephone;
9. water and sewer;
10. gas and electricity;
11. garbage;



*continued on page 17*

## Complete Internet Solutions for Residential Property Managers

# HomeRentals.NET

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effective ways  
to attract  
more owners  
and fill  
vacancies  
quickly?



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2

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3

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1-800-348-8630

# New Member Spotlight

by Betty Fletcher, MPM®, NARPM Membership Chair, 2003



This month the New Member Spotlight shines on Daniel Meachum from Maumelle, AR. He has been with Lynda Bowers & Associates for a little over two years where he currently manages around 60 quality residential properties. The youngest of three brothers, Daniel enjoys traveling whenever possible. He uses his Internet research skills to help friends research cars or products prior to purchase. (Daniel, can you help me find cheap airline tickets to Hawaii?)

### Q. How did you choose property management as a career?

A. I didn't — it chose me! Even though my previous real estate experience had all been in sales, my broker convinced me (read that 'twisted my arm') to take over the property management when the previous manager quit. It has not been easy to maintain a sales career and my sanity while doing property management.

### Q. What is your greatest professional or personal challenge?

A. Answering questions for interview articles! (Since Daniel is an extremely private person quite a bit of the information in this article was coerced from his office-mate and fellow NARPM member Susie Ellison.)

### Q. What is your advice to the new NARPM member to increase their NARPM experience?

A. Come to the meetings and get involved! The best benefit of my NARPM membership is the wealth of shared information, especially from Dusty Edwards, which proves that we really are colleagues not competitors.

### Q. What is the one tidbit of information about you that no one knows?

A. My age! And if I told you then everyone would know! (There is a cash reward being offered to anyone who can provide proof of Daniel's age!)

We are proud to welcome you, Daniel, as one of our newest NARPM family members. Thanks for being a good sport and allowing us to drag you into the spotlight and for sharing your perspective and great sense of humor. We look forward to seeing you at future events (maybe even Hawaii?) as you Build Your Future in NARPM.

## Tenants Who MUST Be Evicted

*continued from page 1*

payments. While paying the rent on time every month is one sign of a good tenant, it does not absolutely mean that your tenant is a good one. And these tenants certainly in no way qualify as good.

Taking complete charge of your rental property means protecting your investment. Drug-dealing tenants destroy properties and neighborhoods. Don't let them take advantage of you. They are one class of tenant that MUST be evicted.

Robert Cain is a nationally-recognized speaker and writer on property management and real estate issues. For a free sample copy of the Rental Property Reporter call 800/654-5456 or visit their Web site at [www.rentalprop.com](http://www.rentalprop.com). Copyright 2003 Cain Publications, Inc., used by permission.



# Three Important Steps for a Positive and Profitable Employee Review

by Ernest F. Oriente, The Coach

Can employee reviews really be positive and profitable? You bet! Follow the steps in this article and the changes in your property management company will be felt immediately! How you and your company handle each employee review is a direct reflection of your leadership and the importance of each individual within your company.

## PREPARING FOR EACH REVIEW

Start by establishing the frequency and time frame for your company employee reviews and be certain this is outlined in your administrative guidelines and employee manual. If each review is tied to a person's anniversary date, keeping track of employee review schedules can be a challenge. Consider doing all reviews during two months of the year, for instance — November and May. Each of your managers should be given a blank copy of the review form required by your property management company, and a list of their team members, who are scheduled for a review. Instruct your managers/supervisors to prepare each review in a typed format, as this makes it easy to read and looks more professional when being presented. Lastly, ask each of your managers to give you a copy of the final review notes, prior to it being formally presented. This gives you an opportunity to assess the quality of the work being done by each of your managers/supervisors and gives you a window for making any changes.

## TIP FROM THE COACH

In the same way you give a blank copy of the employee review form to your managers/supervisors, give a blank copy of the review form to each person being reviewed. This will give your employees an opportunity to make notes about their performance, prior to each performance review. This step is critical because it allows each of your managers to “see” the gap between their point of view versus their employees’ point of view. This “gap” is exactly where the best coaching can be done to improve the performance of each person on your property management team.

## CONDUCTING EACH REVIEW

Since your manager and your employee will both be well-prepared for this review, the exchange of ideas and the depth of feedback will make for a rich and rewarding meeting. The review should start by having your manager explain how each person's review is a special time for personal and professional growth and the tone for each review will be both positive and productive. Have your manager begin by reading out loud the first question, then read his/her comments about their employee. Next, their employee should read their comments out loud. After each person has read their response to the first question, then specific feedback should be given by your manager or supervisor, about how the comments are similar and a discussion about any comments that are different. This “gap” leaves room for personal and professional growth and is the perfect place to build “action items” to be addressed between this review and the next one. After completing the first question, have your manager continue the rest of the employee review, using this format.

## TIP FROM THE COACH

This review format communicates “mutual” respect for each employee of your property management company, but it must go one step further. Since the feedback of each employee is important, and since you are requesting their feedback during each employee review, a salary increase must consider the comments from both your manager and your employee. This means a final decision about the size of each person's salary increase should be given one or two days after the review is completed. If a salary increase is given at the close of each employee's review, this says to your employee that their feedback was not important, as the salary increase had been predetermined in advance. I know this sounds like a small point — but it will make a *big* difference to your team!

## USING THE REVIEW FOR GROOMING AND GROWTH

So, the review is finished and the paperwork can now be placed in the employee's file to gather dust for the next year, right? Not a chance! Have your manager or supervisor end each employee review by first recapping all the positive comments that were shared and have them summarize each “action-step” required for improvement or growth. These action steps should focus on the goals and objectives for the next period and must be in alignment with the goals of your property management company. Have your manager schedule a short meeting in 30 days, to review the progress being made for each action item, as this review will become an important part of each month's conversation between your manager and his/her employee. Then continue to use this employee review monthly until the anniversary of the next formal review.

## TIP FROM THE COACH

While your manager is using this “year-around” review process, ask him/her to keep you posted on those who are making the most progress on their action steps. This is a good sign and a strong indicator that this person has leadership abilities and can easily be groomed for additional responsibility. As you identify these leaders in your property management company, develop a second set of action steps to accelerate this person's career path within your company.

Want to hear more about this important topic or ask some additional questions? Fax a note on your letterhead to 435/615-8670 or send an e-mail to [ernest@powerhour.com](mailto:ernest@powerhour.com) and The Coach will fax/e-mail back to you a free invitation to be a participant on a TeleForum conference call.

*Ernest F. Oriente, The Coach, is the founder of PowerHour® a professional business coaching/recruiting service and the author of SmartMatch Alliances. He has spent 13,960 hours [since 1988] delivering customized training, by telephone, in leadership, traditional/Internet marketing and sales for property management companies, apartment locator/corporate housing services, and multihousing sales/service companies worldwide. PowerHour® specializes in global distance learning by telephone, using their state-of-the-art conference call system for interactive and dynamic TeleForums. Twice-monthly TeleForums link 10–100 executives/professionals/individuals who are geographically dispersed, in a time efficient and profitable format. PowerHour® is based in Olympic-town, Park City, UT, at 435/615-8486. For more information send an e-mail to: [ernest@powerhour.com](mailto:ernest@powerhour.com). Recent PowerHour® articles have appeared in 3500+ business/trade publications and Web sites.*

# Electrical Safety

by Austin, Texas Fire Department

The following suggestions can help prevent fires and avoid serious injury or death.

## APPLIANCES

- Be sure to unplug all heat-producing appliances like coffee makers, broilers, toasters, irons, and heaters when not in use to eliminate a potential fire hazard.
- Heating pads and electric blankets can cause fires. Never roll an electric blanket and never leave a heating pad on for more than 30 minutes.
- Make sure all appliances have the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) listing.
- Operating or touching electrical appliances while standing or sitting in water can cause electrocution.
- Avoid using blow dryers, curling irons, radios, televisions, or electric razors around sinks or while in bathtubs.
- After washing a car, do not use electric vacuum cleaners or buffers while in the wet area. Move the vehicle to a dry location before using any electrical appliances to avoid a shock hazard.
- Never stick metal objects or tools into an appliance unless it is unplugged.
- Place all lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn and use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.
- The bulbs of halogen torchiere floor lamps reach temperatures of 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit. This heat is intense enough to ignite wood, plastic, or cloth on contact. Monitor the use of these products closely, don't exceed wattage recommendations, and keep them clear of combustible materials.



## EXTENSION CORDS

- Extension cords are designed for temporary use only. If you must use extension cords, do not overload them with several appliances or use too many cords in one socket.
- Make sure you use the proper gauge extension cord for the equipment being operated, especially with power tools and high-wattage appliances.
- Avoid running extension cords under carpeting, rugs, through doorways, or across walkways. To avoid tripping or electrical shorting hazards, protect cords routed across walkways with the proper shield.
- Don't staple extension cords to walls or ceilings, as this can damage the insulation.
- Electrical cords should be free of knots and kinks. Have damaged plugs and frayed or worn cords repaired immediately.

- When using outdoor appliances, use only approved exterior extension cords, not the household type normally used indoors.

## WIRING

- Splicing into the main wiring system of a house with appliance-rated cord is very dangerous. Any electrical work should be done by a licensed electrician.
- Circuit breakers are designed to prevent electrical overloads. Bypassing this safety device could cause a fire.

## OUTLETS

- Grounded (three-prong) outlets are by far safer than the two-prong outlets.
- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters are safety devices required on every outlet or outlet circuit within six feet of sinks.
- Avoid storing boxes or other combustible items in front of unused outlets in case a short or a malfunction should occur.
- Use child protector plugs when outlets are not being used.

## SWITCHES

- Be sure switches are rated for the proper amperage and voltage before installing.
- Replace switches making arcing sounds.
- Before performing any repairs or installations, be sure the circuit breaker is switched off for the circuit on which you are working.
- Junction boxes and cover plates on wall outlets are necessary to avoid shorting hazards caused by foreign objects coming in contact with wiring or connections. Replace broken or cracked cover plates immediately.
- If a short occurs in an outlet, be sure to shut off the power at the breaker before attempting to inspect or repair.
- Surge protectors are recommended for use with computers and entertainment equipment, such as stereos and televisions.
- Be sure to maintain a clearance space between furniture or other items and cords plugged into outlets.

*Printed with permission of the Austin, Texas Fire Department.*

# Stuff Is What Happens After Your Hard Drive Crashes

by Karen A. Ebert, MPM®

Lots of stuff happens after your hard drive crashes, not to mention that your life changes. Yet, we must all know that life is what happens after you make your plans. And aren't our plans for our hard drives to go on humming forever?

Recently, a colleague of mine had a hard drive crash. Not only was this a reminder all data files should have been backed up, but to his horror he was faced with having to reconstruct his address book in Outlook Express. To complicate things, he had created folders and subfolders to which sent and received mail from tenants and owners had been stored. This documentation was lost.

"ACCCHHHH!" as Garfield would say. But there is a light at the end of the tunnel. After hearing of this person's plight, I examined our own scenario and discovered that we would be in the same boat should our hard drives crash. We have since taken steps to export and backup our address book and folders. Here are the steps we took:

## TO EXPORT THE ADDRESS BOOK

1. Open Outlook Express.
2. Click file.
3. Click export.
4. Choose address book.
5. Choose Text file and browse to a directory to store the files in. You can create a new folder called Address Book or you can put it in a folder or file that you regularly back up. I think the latter is the best. Change the name of the folder or file so that you will see where it is located.
6. Click store.
7. This will export your address book to a folder or file on your hard drive. You will have to perform backup functions from there. If you have a large address book, this is probably a large file and will require you to backup onto a CD.

## TO EXPORT THE FOLDERS AND

## SUBFOLDERS IN OUTLOOK EXPRESS

1. Open Outlook Express.
2. Click tools.
3. Click options.
4. Click maintenance.
5. Click store folder.
6. Highlight all the text in the window that pops up.
7. Right click highlighted text and choose copy.
8. Click start on the start bar (you can leave Outlook Express open).
9. Click run.
10. Right click in the new window and click paste.
11. Hit enter.
12. This will open a new window showing your Outlook Express folders and files. Press Control key and A. All the files will be highlighted.
13. Click copy.
14. Browse for the folder you have your address book in and click paste or Control key and v.

## REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE TO BACKUP THE HARD DRIVE FILE, OR THIS DOESN'T DO ANY GOOD.

Depending on how often you make changes to your address book or Outlook Express folders will dictate how often you need to back up. Once a week wouldn't hurt. If you are really paranoid, doing so every day you have additions or changes would be best.

This may seem like a lot of work, but if you don't do it you might be faced with having to reconstruct the whole thing. This is called *stuff hitting the fan!*

*Karen A. Ebert, MPM® is president of Austin Landmark Property Services, Inc. ALPS, CRMC®, Austin, TX*

## AFFILIATE MEMBERS LISTED BY SERVICES

### Business Products:

Landlordsource.com  
National Bank of Arizona  
Paychex, Inc.  
Peachtree Business Products  
Professional Office Services of ID, Inc.

### Claim Services:

Claim Source One

### Internet Tools:

Escapia, Inc  
HomeRentals.net  
Lease Place, Inc.  
Rentclicks.com

### Legal Services:

Law Offices of DeMartini & Walker  
Law Offices of Heist & Weisse, P.A.

### Maintenance:

Allen's All-Stars  
EnviroCare, Inc.  
Mr. Handyman International  
Northern Electric, Inc.  
Omega Termite & Pest Control  
Pro Source Wholesale Floorcoverings

### Marketing:

Home Management Network

### Software:

EFC Systems  
PROMAS Landlord Software Center  
Property Automation Software Corp.  
Small Computer Services, Inc.  
Winning Edge Software Solutions  
Yardi Systems, Inc.

### Tenant Screening:

First American Registry, Inc.

For more affiliate information, please visit the NARPM Web site [www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org).

# Second Annual Leadership Symposium and Winter Business Meeting

This conference is for you whether **YOU** are or want to become a stronger

- business leader,
- industry leader,
- local chapter leader,
- committee leader, or
- National NARPM leader.

## CONFERENCE DATES AND LOCATION:

Monday, January 26 – Wednesday, January 28, 2004  
Austin Marriott at the Capitol  
701 East 11th Street • Austin, TX

## HOTEL

Discount convention rate \$127 single/double/triple/quad (+hotel tax). Call 800/228-9290 or 512/478-1111 prior to January 3, 2004, to book reservations. Mention NARPM to receive the discounted hotel rate. After this date, rooms and rates will be on an as-available basis.

Learning from the success of last year's first leadership symposium, 2004's promises to be even more interactive, including

- leadership training,
- general sessions,
- committee meeting,
- special guest "leaders",
- chapter leader, and National Board installation, and
- leadership workshops.

Registration brochures will be available from NARPM soon.

Stay tuned to the *Residential Resource* and bookmark the NARPM Web site to get additional information on this exciting event.

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# Writing the Basic Article: Getting Started

by Ed Newman

## TECH TIPS TO HELP YOU GET YOUR POINT ACROSS.

Do you remember the first time a professional carpenter showed you how to hold a hammer and pound a nail? A neat trick, eh? The hammer does the work. And it makes a difference in the results you get — fewer bent nails, fewer frustrations, and a generally more pleasurable experience.

So, too, with writing. Learn a few tricks, and you will have fewer bent nails, fewer frustrations, and a generally more pleasurable writing experience.

## ORGANIZING FOR THE TASK

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to write another article for *The Company Newsletter*. But where do you begin? Obviously you start with a blank terminal (or a blank page if using pen and paper to get your initial draft into palpable form). But where do you go from here? How do you make it happen?

A writing project can be broken down into three simple steps. For best results, they should be performed in the following order:

1. Organize for the task.
2. Produce a rough draft.
3. Polish the product.

## FOR THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS WE WILL WORK ON HOW TO GET ORGANIZED

### CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Compare your writing project with baking cookies. The procedure, at least at the outset, is the same.

First, you decide what kind of cookies you want to bake. Snickerdoodles? Peanut Butter Cookies? Refrigerator Cookies? Let's try Chocolate Chip Toll House Cookies.

Next, you gather the ingredients, making sure you have everything you need, including the chocolate chips. Mixing bowls, measuring cups, and cookie sheets are gathered from the four corners of the kitchen. Finally, you take a brief inventory and begin.

So it is with your writing project. Before diving headlong into it, you need to get your materials together. Are there statistics you need? What are the main points you should make? Have you heard any good stories that go along with these points? Do you need to do preliminary research?

Now that your materials are organized, you may begin.

*Editor's Note:* NARPM welcomes articles written by members that are relevant to the property management field. Articles can be submitted to the *Residential Resource* by sending a Word attachment to Jessica Jacobs at [jjacobs@assnmgmt.com](mailto:jjacobs@assnmgmt.com). NARPM members receive the *Residential Resource* as part of the annual dues.

*Ed Newman has been writing professionally since 1983.*

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*"Local Focus. National Reach"*

# Member Retention and Leadership Training: A Mission ~~Impossible~~ <sup>POSSIBLE</sup>

by Betty Fletcher, MPM®, NARPM Membership Chair 2003

NARPM Agent, welcome to your Objective 6 briefing.

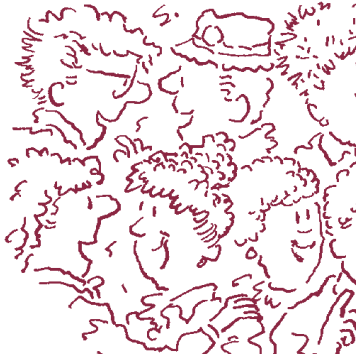
Our mission has thus far been successful in helping the property managers pictured join NARPM. Most realize and take advantage of the seemingly endless benefits and educational opportunities their NARPM membership provides.

Thus far we have Found them, Invited them, Joined them, Educated them, and Retained them. Now in Objective 6 your mission is to complete the Chapter Excellence Award application for your chapter.

The Chapter Excellence Award is presented at each national convention (remember the 15th National Convention is in Hawaii in September 2003!) to those chapters earning enough points for providing education, membership growth, members earning designations, and organization. *Every* chapter has an opportunity to achieve this award.

Applications are sent out each year to your chapter's leadership. It is suggested that the chapter vice-president or President-elect complete the application. This helps them learn the components of a successful chapter and what areas they may need to improve on for the next year. Beware there is a deadline for submission of the application.

The Chapter Excellence applications are also used to select chapters for the Chapter of the Year and New Chapter of the Year award. So Get Yours Completed! Send it in today!



In the interest of NARPM national security this not-so-top-secret information will be presented in a series of articles. Skipping ahead is allowed on a Need-to-Know-Sooner basis. If you Need-to-Know-

Sooner — your contact at Mission Control is Betty Fletcher, MPM®, AKA Membership chair. You can drop her a dime at 501/907-7091 ext 101 or a line at Betty@FletcherPM.com.

Please note: The articles in this series will *not* self-destruct in 15 seconds — so keep them around for future reference! Collect them all.

And last but not least — remember the successful completion of your mission times five will reward you with *free* NARPM dues or discounted national event registration not to mention your *five* new NARPM friends.

Here's to *your* successful mission.

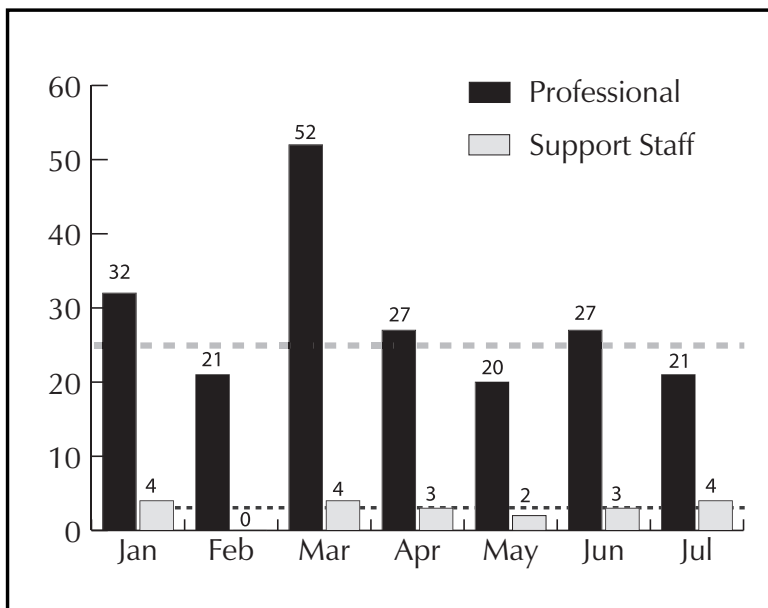
Mission Control,

Betty Fletcher, MPM®

*Betty Fletcher, MPM®, is owner and principal broker of Fletcher Property Management, Inc., in Little Rock, AR. She is the founding president of the Central Arkansas Chapter of NARPM. On the national level, Betty serves as chair of the NARPM Membership Committee 2003.*

## Membership Goals

by Betty Fletcher, MPM®, NARPM Membership Chair 2003



NARPM members, the mission has been successful! Here is a graph of how well we have accomplished our goals. The 2003 Membership Committee has a goal of acquiring 25 *new* Professional members and three *new* Support Staff members each month.

Thanks to an **outstanding** team effort we have **exceeded** that goal by 12.4%, adding 200 Professional members and 20 Support Staff members.

In addition, NARPM has chartered four new chapters.



## Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program was designed a few years ago to reward our current members for referring new members to our organization. Who better to spread the word of the benefits of NARPM than its members? If you refer five new members in one year, you will receive an

award certificate that may be used toward your next year's dues or for events for the coming year. When you achieve ambassador status and receive your \$195 NARPM credit, it can be used toward your annual dues or applied toward the 2003 Hawaii Convention Registration. It's flexible! Just follow the simple steps outlined here:

- ★ Call NARPM Headquarters at 800/782-3452, and request membership application forms. Headquarters, upon request, will mail the application directly to the prospective member but will not fill in the "referred by" line.
- ★ The 12-month membership period for the five new members starts the day your first new membership application is approved by headquarters.
- ★ When Headquarters receives the fifth new membership, an Award Certificate will be issued and dated. A Recognition Certificate will also be issued, and you, as the "Ambassador," will be recognized in the *Residential Resource*.
- ★ The Award Certificate can be used to pay NARPM annual dues, or like amount can be applied toward National Convention.
- ★ It must be used in full at the time of use and attached to your dues or registration for Convention. The value of the Award Certificate is equal to what the national dues were at the time the Award Certificate was issued. It also must be used within 12 months of the issue date.
- ★ A member can earn more than one Award Certificate per 12-month period.

## Ambassador Program

July 2003 New Members

New Member

Meghan O'Brien  
 Dean Parker  
 Kristine Williams  
 Bruce Armstrong  
 Donna Krueger  
 Tammy Silvers-Tropiano  
 Michell Anglemyer  
 Joanne Horneff  
 Linda Wix  
 Debra Bennett  
 Gayle Keller  
 Nicki Clark  
 Linda Martinez  
 Toni Taeuffer

Ambassador Member

Jacquelyn S. Holdbrook  
 Teresa C. Parker  
 Lyle Sall  
 Barney Christiansen  
 Ted White, MPM®  
 Michael E. Nelson, RMP®  
 Susan Pendt  
 Michelle L. Horneff, RMP®  
 Melissa Prandi, MPM®  
 Tim Gearin, RMP®  
 Helen Baptiste, RMP®  
 Jim Hodge  
 Arlene Lopes, RMP®  
 Pamela Taeuffer

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CONTACT



# The 10 Things People Want Most in Their Jobs

**Joe Phelps, CEO, The Phelps Group**

With the free market determining the labor costs (salaries) in most products and services, the most important value-added component a company can offer its people increasingly will be job satisfaction.

Extensive research has been done on what's important to us in our jobs. The conclusions of most studies, and my personal observations, are that the following 10 points are the main components of job satisfaction.

1. Recognition for a job well done — Mark Twain said he could live for two months on a good compliment. It is widely known that recognition is the number one motivator of people.
2. A healthy working environment clean, well-lit, adequate space; the proper equipment; and inhabited by people who care and who communicate in an honest, timely fashion. Some companies have workout rooms and bring in trainers to help their teams achieve optimum health.
3. Meaningful work — trading your time in life to help achieve something worthwhile. This can be something within the company, the community or even global. Reminding your team that everything they do touches other people adds meaning to their lives and work.

## LANDLORD Source

4. Responsibility — people need to believe that they are responsible for their own actions, and that they are trusted. Self-directed teams give people clear responsibility. They are also the ultimate delegation tool for busy executives.
5. Accountability — a feeling of ownership and of outcomes. It is a sense of the proverbial buck stopping with every single person and not in the lap of someone far down the line. People on self-directed teams willingly hold each other accountable as well as themselves. Accountability is the ability to follow through with your commitments.
6. Equitable compensation linked not to longevity or rank, but to performance; being treated like partners; possible equity in the business can be important. There are numerous ways to do this such as ESOP, phantom stock, etc. Talk with a compensation expert to find out what is best for your company, and then put the plan into action.
7. The chance to learn opportunities to grow into more significant positions with greater responsibility and ultimately, to increase one's value to the organization. Supporting the team members in getting advanced degrees or improving their skills through classes or conferences is a great way to open this door for them.
8. The chance to do great work not just work that meets minimum standards and expectations, but quality work: A+ work! Ask your team what it takes for them to do their job really well and ask if they'll commit to that standard.
9. Understanding knowing how the work relates to the realization of the overall goals of the business. Sharing the company goals and getting input from your team at your annual meeting is a great tool for getting buy-in and creating understanding.
10. The chance to work with interesting, motivated, responsible people whose personal and professional goals are in alignment with one's own. Encourage your team members to introduce great people to your company, you never know when you'll meet someone who is a great fit.

Now, take just a moment to review the list again. It becomes obvious that the concept of a self-directed worker deployed on a self-directed team is a natural system for making sure many of these needs are met.

*Joe Phelps is the founder of The Phelps Group, one of the nation's leading integrated marketing communications agencies located in Southern California. Phelps, who started his agency 20 years ago with one client, Fender Guitars, was named the "Entrepreneur Leader of the Year 2000" by the Los Angeles Advertising Association, is a Belding Award-winning writer, and has been featured on the cover of Inc. magazine. At his agency, and prior to that at NW Ayer and Grey Advertising, Phelps managed multimillion dollar campaigns for many of America's and Japan's top companies. Phelps' revolutionary business model is used as a case study at numerous universities, including Northwestern, Colorado, Pepperdine, and USC. He may be contacted at 310/752-4400 or through the Web site at [www.pyramidsare-tombs.com](http://www.pyramidsare-tombs.com). © Reprinted with permission of IMC Publishing, 2003.*



## Understanding Lease Proposals

continued from page 7

12. HVAC maintenance;
13. tenant improvement costs; and
14. architectural and permit expenses.

### OTHER KEY ISSUES

- **Signage:** where, how big, who is going to pay for it?
- **Parking:** Where, how many spaces, is it included in the rent or is there an extra charge?
- **Renewal options:** If you want to renew, how much notice should be given? Is rate negotiated now, or in the future when exercised?
- **Right to expand or contract:** Are there options for growth or shrinkage?
- **Right of first refusal to purchase:** If property is listed for sale, and if an offer comes in, the tenant has the right to purchase the property first by matching the offer price.
- **Right of first offer to purchase:** Property must be offered to the tenant first before going on the market for sale.

### LATE FEES AND FAILURE TO MEET TERMS OF LEASE DEFAULT PROVISIONS

It is important for both sides to agree on late fees and nonsufficient fund fees as well as time frames for late payments and when rent is

due. Is a payment late after five days, 10 days, or 15 days? Must the landlord notify a tenant in writing if a payment is late? How soon after a rent payment is not received must a landlord send a notice to the tenant? What happens if a landlord does not pay a bill (like electricity) for instance? How does that impact a tenant, does he need to pay the rent? What are his remedies?

### LEASING COMMISSION

If a real estate brokerage company is negotiating the lease proposal, it should be identified in the lease proposal and the lease. The amount of commission due at the beginning and upon extension of the lease must be included.

### SUMMARY

As you move forward with your negotiations, remember to detail your issues in writing to make sure that there are no communication breakdowns once a lease has been executed. Using a written lease proposal will help you reduce the number of miscommunications that might occur over the lifetime of a lease and set the stage for a successfully executed lease.

*Clifford A. Hockley is the president of Bluestone & Hockley Realty, Inc., which is one of the larger brokerage and property management companies in Portland. The property management department manages commercial buildings, apartments, condominium associations, houses, and small plexes in the Portland/Vancouver metro area. The brokerage department handles leases and sales of investment properties throughout Oregon and Washington. Clifford has a bachelor's degree in political science from Clarendon McKenna College and a master's in management from Willamette University. He is a certified property manager, and Bluestone & Hockley Realty, Inc., is an accredited management organization by the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM). Cliff serves as member-at-large on the Portland IREM board. Bluestone & Hockley Realty, Inc., is committed to providing high quality real estate services in the greater Portland and Vancouver area.*

# Humidex Reduces More Than Molds...

• Legal Problems • Tenant Complaints • Structural Damage

Property managers have been hard hit on the issue of molds and poor indoor air quality. As a result they are in desperate need of an affordable and cost effective solution that will minimize the many risks associated with these problems. As per EPA guidelines, the patented HUMIDEX system expels excess indoor moisture, thereby drying out the structure, while creating a fresh and healthy continuous air exchange. The patented Humidex system provides numerous legal, health and cost benefits to both homeowners and property managers.



- Tested & proven to provide year round moisture control.
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# A Box of Chocolates for the Property Manager

by Karen Ebert, MPM®

A little over 15 years ago, 13 property managers had a belief that sharing what they did in their property management businesses would benefit them and their property management peers, clients, residents, and those with whom they did business. They believed their networking would lead to more success, efficiency, less stress, and a less litigious profession. The final product was the beginning of the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM).

What followed was indeed like a box of chocolates. Each year, since NARPM's inception, has produced a myriad of surprise morsels. Members never knew quite what they would get, but one thing was for certain — whenever you opened the box you would find at least one delectable delight that would satisfy the current appetite or need.

As we prepare to celebrate our 15th anniversary, we have created this book to reflect on where we have come individually and as an associ-



ation since the first networking produced that "box of chocolates." All of us have experienced measurable successes from our involvement in NARPM. We have also experienced events that would tickle the funny bone of even the most somber. And we have experienced challenges that have been overcome perhaps only due to our involvement in this association.

This is an opportunity to share those "chocolate morsels" with fellow members, to recharge our belief that this association has been life-changing and life-lifting for all of us. Buy the book *A Box of Chocolates for the Property Manager* written especially for our 15th anniversary. The purpose is to create a renewed sensation of euphoria, hilarity, inflation, nostalgia, appreciation, passion, love, appreciation, and celebration of our association, our profession, and our fellow members.

## A Box of Chocolates for the Property Manager (Order Form)

(Please print or type)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15.00 ea. plus \$3.00 ea. for shipping) = Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Method of Payment

I have enclosed a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Ck/M.O. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as follows:

VISA    MasterCard    Discover    American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize NARPM to charge my credit card.

**1. MAIL** your form with payment to NARPM, P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647.

**2. FAX** your form with credit card payment to 512/454-3036. Please do not mail the original.

# 2003/2004 RMP®/MPM® Certification Classes

Date	Location	Class	Instructor
October 17	Winchester, VA	RMP® Tenancy	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
October 23-24	Fredericksburg, VA	MPM® Owner/ Client Relations	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
February 19	Denver, CO	RMP® Operations	Instructor TBA
February 18-19	Denver, CO	MPM® Owner/ Client Relations	Wallace Gibson, MPM®

## Interested in Sponsoring Certification Classes?

Opportunities are available to chapters that would like to further member education, promote certification, and increase their chapter funds by sponsoring a certification class. However, it takes time to plan a class — so give your chapter five to six months lead time if you wish to sponsor one of these events.

Find out more by calling Bill Jackson, RMP®, at 425/467-7785 or e-mailing [bill@protocolpropertymgmt.com](mailto:bill@protocolpropertymgmt.com). Bill can provide you with the details you need to make a Certification class a successful venture.

To register for classes, complete the registration form and mail or fax with payment to NARPM Headquarters. For more information call Headquarters at 800/782-3452.

## RMP®/MPM® Class Registration

FEES	Early Registration*	Registration*
<b>RMP® Classes</b>		
Member	\$195.00	\$225.00
Nonmember	\$250.00	\$280.00
Retake	\$97.50	\$127.50
<b>MPM® Classes</b>		
Member	\$395.00	\$450.00
Nonmember	\$450.00	\$505.00
Retake	\$197.50	\$252.50

\* To receive the early registration price payment must be postmarked, faxed, or e-mailed 30 days prior to the class.

### CLASS INFORMATION

- On-site registration begins at 8:00 am. Class hours are 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.
- RMP® classes qualify for 6 hours of NARPM certification.
- MPM® classes qualify for 12 hours of NARPM certification.
- All materials will be given to students on the day of the class.
- All attendees are required to make their individual hotel reservations.

### CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing. If cancellation notice is received at least 30 days prior to the class, a full refund will be issued less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation notice is received less than 30 days before the class, a 50% refund will be issued. No refunds will be made on the day of class; however, the registration fee can be applied to a later class with a \$25 transfer fee.

Due to low registration, a class may be cancelled with 15 days prior notice. Registration fee would be credited to a future class.

(Please print or type)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

### List Classes

Name of class	Class Date	Cost
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
		Total \$ _____

### Method of Payment

I have enclosed a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Ck/M.O. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as follows:

VISA  MasterCard  Discover  American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize NARPM to charge my credit card.

### Two Easy Ways to Register

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# A Checklist for Rental Managers: How to Identify Responsible Pet Owners

The following is a list of questions to use when interviewing prospective residents with pets. These questions will assist you in getting to know a resident and his or her commitment to providing responsible pet care. We strongly suggest that you meet the pet, especially dogs; a well-groomed, well-behaved pet is one of the best signs of a responsible pet caregiver.

## FOR ALL PET OWNERS

- What types of pets do you have?
- How long have you had your pets?
- Do you have a letter of recommendation from your veterinarian stating that each pet is in good health and up-to-date on vaccinations?
- Do you have any written references for your pets from your current landlord?
- Have there been any complaints about your pet at your current address? If so, have you paid your landlord for all the damage done?
- Does your pet have any medical or behavioral problems? If so, what treatment or training is he receiving?
- May I visit you and your pet after you move in to see how your pet is adjusting?
- Who will care for your pet when you are on vacation?

## FOR CAT OWNERS

- Has your cat been spayed or neutered?
- Do you keep your cat indoors?



- Does your cat use the litter box that you provide?
- Does your cat wear a collar with visible identification (and vaccination verification if required by law)?
- Is your cat registered with the local animal care and control authority (if required by local law)?

## FOR DOG OWNERS

- Has your dog been spayed or neutered?
- Is your dog licensed and wearing a collar with visible identification? (and vaccination verification if required by law)?
- Is your dog housetrained?
- Do you keep your dog on a leash when you go for walks?
- How do you clean up your dog's waste when walking him?
- Have you and your dog completed a dog training class?
- How much time does your dog spend alone each day?
- How often do you treat your dog for fleas and ticks?
- Has your dog ever bitten anyone?

*Adapted with permission from materials originally produced by the Hawaiian Humane Society. For more information on renting with pets, go to The Humane Society of the United States section on the Web, [www.rentwithpets.org](http://www.rentwithpets.org). The booklet "Profiting from Pets" and "13 Steps to Finding Rental Housing That Accepts Pets" are available for order on the Web site.*