

# Residential Resource

The Newsletter of the National Association of Residential Property Managers

September/October 2000

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## Paper Trail

By John Parker, PPM

Recently, I was asked to assume management of a home from an owner who was encountering difficulty with the tenant who had just moved into their home. While going through the lease and related papers, I began to see how they got themselves into this predicament. The tenant was over 3 months behind in the rent. They had several months of paying less than the agreed rent prior to that. Of course, the tenant was going to "catch up soon!"

In their standard stationery store one-page lease was a space indicating when the rent was due. It was blank! This could be interpreted as to mean that the rent could be due at the tenant's discretion any time during the month! Big mistake! As a broker, having been to small claims, eviction court, and having participated in many grievance meetings over the years, I can tell you that a properly constructed paper trail is incredibly important. Forms with unfilled blanks in them do not satisfy this requirement.

The owner did not have any written agreement with the tenant that covered cleaning, deposits, damage, or move-in condition. They had absolutely no leverage to compel the tenant to be responsible. The tenant could fall back on

that vague phrase in the landlord-tenant law regarding "normal wear and tear." I would not want to be subject to the whims of a hearing panel or judge to make those determinations. Everything needs to be documented in writing. Not only in the case of a problem tenant, but also in all files that move through the office.

I will never forget the attorney for the tenant asking, "Is this standard practice in your leases?" If the answer is, "No, I did it for this file only," you are in trouble. If the answer is, "I reconstructed the information from memory of the events that happened," once again you are in trouble. The only safe way to protect your owner and ultimately yourself is to establish a paper trail in all files as events occur. This also makes your statements more credible.

Train your secretaries and assistants to write into a permanent record conversations regarding work orders, complaints, and procedures used. This way if you are ever audited by any state or federal board, such as HUD, or have to respond to an ethics complaint, you will have an accurate record of what happened and when it happened.

*John Parker, PPM, is with Willow Properties in Lakewood, WA. He is a member of the Pierce County Chapter.*

## Never too early to think about foul weather!

An ounce of preventative maintenance now can save you major headaches in the coming months. It's still relatively easy to get a roofer, drain clearer, or gutter repair person out to your properties, now. But come October and November, not only will it be tough, it will be expensive! Make sure your owners are aware of this so that they can take care of deferred and/or preventative maintenance on their property while there is still time. It will also make your job easier, no angry tenant calling you and claiming that you had 6 months to fix the leak and nothing was done; now they are withholding the rent. Don't wait until it's too late.



## President 2000

Frank Sinatra once sang "...and now, the end is near, and I must face the final curtain..." This is my "goodbye" column. No more ugly pictures of me invading the upper corner of the column. No more words of wisdom or observations. This year has gone by quickly; faster than I anticipated. I sum up the year by saying that this has been a rebuilding year for NARPM, one in which we have prepared for the future to ensure stability, and our future looks bright. I truly feel we have *Reached New Heights!*

I've met some *great* people during my visits this year, each of whom I will never forget for their generosity. As I will state in my goodbye speech in New Orleans, NARPM is all about the people who make up its membership. I cannot name everyone in this column; there just is not enough space. But to those who have gone out of their way to make my visits special, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I just hope I have returned a small portion of the enrichment I have received by meeting with so many people throughout this year. Whether I met you through a speech I have given, teaching a class, sharing a meal, playing golf, or at a ballgame, I thank everyone for their support this past year.

As all good things must come to an end, this is also a new beginning. Your incoming president, Melissa Prandi, MPM, the entire board of directors and your dedicated staff, led by Executive Director Roy Bohrer and his Executive Assistant Sherri Beck CPS at our National Headquarters in Austin, Texas, are poised to lead NARPM into the New Millennium. But they cannot do it alone! I ask each of you to look within yourself and become involved in NARPM; whether at your local level or on a national level. Each of you possess a talent that you bring to this organization, please share it with others! The organization will be enhanced by your input and there is no greater personal satisfaction than giving back to others. Try it, you just might like it!

All the best!



Raymond Scarabosio, MPM  
NARPM National President



NARPM President Raymond Scarabosio heads to the golf course.

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# The Gauntlet Passes — Can You Help Support It?

By Jean Storms, MPM

The 2000 Convention in New Orleans is nearly here — a much-anticipated event because of this beautiful and charming city and the great program Melissa Prandi, MPM, Convention Chair, has planned. As always, there will be a new slate of directors and the presidency will pass from Ray Scarabosio, MPM, to Melissa Prandi, MPM, and after two years, the editorial gauntlet will pass from me to Rose Thomas, PPM.

I want to take the time to thank everyone who has supported me in this task as editorial chair for the last two years. It has been a challenge! It has been a true learning experience and one I will always value. The *Residential Resource* has often been called the glue that holds our organization together. Actually, it's the members themselves. But the *Residential Resource* is the outlet for members to share their experiences with property managers so they can benefit us all. For the past two years, many members have helped me in this task by contributing articles. Just when I thought there were no more, they would show up on my e-mail. Thank you to all who sent articles — there are too many to name here, but you know who you are.

My question to all members is — can you help support this gauntlet? Help support the *Residential Resource* and keep it the great “resource” that it is. If you have an experience to share or some knowledge that will help another member, put it down and send your contribution. Collectively, we learn from each other.

I know Rose will continue the tradition. And if you do have that great thought or experience, please send it as an attachment by e-mailing it to [tharris@assnmgmt.com](mailto:tharris@assnmgmt.com). Or if you need to discuss it with our new editorial chair, you can contact Rose at 301/694-6900 or by e-mail at [rose.thomas@pmpbiz.com](mailto:rose.thomas@pmpbiz.com).

Thanks again for all of your support and I will look forward to seeing you in New Orleans in September!

*Jean Storms, MPM, is with JSL Real Estate Services, Inc. in Roseville, CA, and is a member of the Sacramento Chapter. She is currently the National Vice-President of NARPM.*

## *Deadlines for Residential Resource*

November	September 26, 2000
December	October 18, 2000
January	November 15, 2000
February	December 15, 2000
March	January 15, 2001
April	February 15, 2001
May	March 15, 2000
June	April 15, 2000

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

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## Affiliate Members Listing By Services

### Advertising:

Homes & Condos For Rent™  
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Rent Connection  
Rental Advisor, Inc.  
Rentalhouses.com  
Rentals.com  
Rental Wizard, Inc.  
Value Rent.com, LLC

### Appliance Sales:

Sears Contract Sales

### Blinds & Drapery Sales:

Dick's Discount Blinds

### Business Products:

Peachtree Business Products

### Communications:

AMI — The Resort  
Telecommunications Specialists

### Home Warranties:

Fidelity National Home Warranty

### Insurance:

Geo. F. Brown & Sons, Inc

### Legal Services:

Law Offices of DeMartini &  
Walker

### Marketing:

Home Management Network  
VIVA.com  
ZAM Development

### Software:

Comtronics Systems, Inc.  
Convenience Living LLC  
Old Forest Software, Inc.  
CMS Inc. (PROMAS)  
Property Automation Software  
Corp.  
Yardi Systems, Inc.

### Tenant Screening:

Accusearch  
Backgrounds USA  
National Credit Reporting

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



## Checking References

The references you get from the applicant are as important as any other information you can get. There are certain references you must have.

The most obvious and foremost are landlord references. Previous landlords will tell you most about what kind of tenant the applicant was. Even though many are hesitant to say anything bad about a tenant for fear of lawsuits, you can still find out an amazing amount of information simply by asking leading questions. Two questions you want to make sure you ask are "Did you know the tenant is moving?" and "Why are they moving?" or "Why did they move?"

Employer references also can provide information about what kind of person the applicant is. You can also ask questions of the employer you might not be able to ask legally on the application, such as number of children, etc.

Personal references are always going to be friends or relatives of the applicant. If they are hesitant about saying something nice about your prospective tenant, you have a definite reason to suspect that the applicant will not be a good tenant. Also, check the addresses and phone numbers of the personal references to see if they are the same as any of those of the landlord's references or employer references. Some bad tenants would be stupid enough to do that.

Use the phone book and/or directory assistance to verify that all the names, addresses, and phone numbers on the application match — that's for landlords, personal references, employers, etc. I cannot stress the importance of doing this. Consistently bad tenants will have their friends pretend they are landlords and employers. If one thing doesn't match, they'd better have a good explanation. If more than one thing doesn't match, reject them.

If you want to make sure you are talking to the real landlord, call the customer service department of a title company or the county tax assessor's office. Just give them the address of the property, they'll tell you the name and address of the owner of the property. Then make sure the name you get is the same as that of the landlord reference.

If the prospective tenant has just sold his house, ask for the name of the real estate agent who sold it for him. If he doesn't remember, that might make you suspicious. If he sold the property himself, ask for the name and phone number of the buyer.

When you call the real estate agent or buyer, ask about the condition of the property, the sales price, the amount of equity in the property, and anything else you think is pertinent. Ask who the lender on his home was. Call the loan officer as well.

People who are moving from out of town are higher risks (especially if they have no personal references). Find out why they are moving into the area. You can check to see if their references' names, addresses, and phone numbers match by checking with directory assistance. "I would like the phone number of Jim Johnson who lives at 1234 Elm St. in San Diego, California." And call all out of town references; the money will be well spent. Check at the county court house for criminal record and/or eviction record. Or pay \$20 or so and have a tenant screening service pull a public records report as well as a credit report for you. If they have either a felony conviction or an eviction, it could very well end up costing you money to rent to them.

*This is from the landlord manual, Profitable Tenant Selection available from Cain Publications, Inc. For more information on this publication, go to <http://www.rentalprop.com>.*

# M-O-L-D — Another BAD Four Letter Word

By Wallace S. Gibson, CPM, PPM

- *Ron and Melinda Allison moved their family from New York City to Austin, TX, to escape the big city. Their 22-room mansion on 72 acres was their “dream home.” The couple’s 4-year-old son Reese was the first to become ill. He started coughing up blood, his equilibrium was completely shot, and he experienced very bad stomach problems — diarrhea and vomiting. Then Ron became sick — having trouble breathing, coughing up blood. Melinda had trouble staying on her feet. Reese developed asthma and had trouble in school. Ron went back to New York with Reese to see a doctor specializing in the treatment of mold exposure illnesses. Dr. E. Johanning of Albany, NY, found that both Reese and his father had low levels of antibodies that suggested exposure to a toxin. Dr. Johanning indicated that Reese’s lungs had been scarred and that Ron had brain damage.*
- *Ed and Nancy Ajlouny’s house flooded in 1999 after Detroit experienced a blizzard. Their son’s nose began to bleed; their tempers shortened; their memories failed; their heads ached. Nancy was diagnosed with interstitial lung disease a year later. They packed a few bags and left the house filled with black mold — a mold they believe has ruined their lives.*
- *Julie and Richard Licon of Southern California found Stachybotrys (mold) in the walls and floors of their condominium. “All the wood was pretty much black from the mold,” says Richard. The homeowners association agreed to move the Licons and their six children to a hotel while their house was cleaned of mold. Seven months later, the Licons moved back into their condo but became convinced that the mold was still present in their home. During their seven-month stay in the hotel, their children were not sick; however, when they moved back into their home, the kids got sick again. Their 2-year old son, Jordan, had seizures from mold exposure and these resumed when they moved back home, the Licons say. Their other children also experienced a variety of symptoms, from nosebleeds to headaches and dizziness. Their house was retested and massive amounts of Stachybotrys were still in the household air. A spore had grown inside their air-conditioning unit. The Licons moved out again — taking, literally, the clothes on their backs.*

**IN SOME CASES,  
STACHYBOTRYS (MOLD)  
MAY EVEN KILL.**

In some cases, Stachybotrys may even kill. In Cleveland, Rico Thornton almost died from his mold exposure. He had pulmonary hemorrhaging — also known as bleeding lung syndrome — an extremely rare condition.

Dr. Dorr Dearborn of Rainbow Children’s Hospital in Cleveland has studied pulmonary hemorrhaging in infants and suggests that mold is not only dangerous, but deadly... “Of the 29 cases (of pulmonary hemorrhaging in infants) that we’ve studied in depth, we’ve had 5 deaths. And all 5 of those have come from homes that were contaminated with Stachybotrys.”

The Stachybotrys mold was virtually unheard of in Metro Detroit several years ago, and it was only after modest media attention that one local air-testing company said it had found the mold in more than 150 homes in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. This mold has caused families to abandon their homes, fueled contentious legal battles with insurance carriers, and bankrupted families.

Insurance companies are reluctant to pay mold damage claims because scientific proof of cause-and-effect eludes researchers;

however, experts and doctors from across the country agree that anecdotal evidence of mold-related health risks calls for a better-safe-than-sorry approach, especially when it comes to Stachybotrys.

Stachybotrys mold spores are found in nature and can grow anywhere cellulose-rich materials like wood or plaster remain moist. It can grow behind walls from the basement to the attic. This mold poses a greater danger than common refrigerator mold because it sprays the air with invisible poisons called mycotoxins. Research on this mold has fingered it as a cause of many unexplained infant deaths.

Dearborn points out... “thirty years ago, the U.S. Surgeon General told us we’d get cancer from smoking. But it wasn’t until very recently that we were able to establish a cause-and-effect with absolute medical certainty.”

A Texas State professor, author of a 1998 study that shows a strong correlation between Stachybotrys and public buildings that appear to make people sick, indicates that... “if you’re working with this stuff, you’ve got to wear a

moon suit and a respirator. If you get this stuff on your skin, it’s going to cause sores and rashes, and if you inhale it, it’s going to cause serious health problems.”

The primary source of moisture-related problems in the home is usually in the building “envelope” — in the walls, roof and foundation. Deterioration of sealing materials such as grout and caulking may increase moisture levels and poor ventilation in areas of the home where indoor moisture levels are high is another factor.

## Tips for healthier indoor air include

- Reduce the moisture level of indoor air to prevent flare-ups of allergies and the breathing problems associated with asthma. Moisture encourages the infestation of house dust mites and the growth of fungi — both common triggers of asthma and allergies.
- Reduce humidity by using central air conditioning. Avoid evaporative coolers (swamp coolers) and humidifiers.
- Remove carpets from the rooms of asthmatic or allergic children.
- Cover mattresses and box springs with mite-proof cases to reduce dust mite exposure.
- Wash pillows and bedding in water 130 degrees Fahrenheit, preferably weekly. Wash blankets monthly.
- Avoid keeping warm-blooded pets in the home, including dogs, cats, and small animals, such as guinea pigs and birds, especially if they trigger asthma or allergy symptoms. If pets must be kept, bathe them weekly and keep them out of the bedrooms of asthmatic or allergic people.
- Control cockroach infestations.
- Reduce indoor mold. Clean bathrooms, kitchens, and basements regularly to eliminate indoor molds resulting from high humidity
- Protect children from tobacco smoke — a potent asthma and allergy trigger.

*continued on page 8*



# Software that Works for You — Or Does It?

By Tony Warren

The history of property management throughout the world is filled with software packages that were little more than basic accounting packages with a few bells and whistles thrown in. There has been no full automation of functions and there has been no consideration for any of the needs of property managers, other than their basic accounting needs.

Today's software packages should have more thought for the total job that a property manager must do. It should be able to thoroughly automate recurring events incorporating not only standard letters through a word processing package, but also accessing statistical information held on databases, creating appointments in electronic diaries, uploading information and images onto an Internet site, and much more.

The technology exists, and has been available for some years, but software developers have not taken advantage of it. As an example, once a tenant's vacating date is entered, the following actions could be automatically triggered to occur:

- **Confirmation letter sent to the tenant**  
The software automatically calculates the balance of rent owed to the vacating date and inserts it into the letter. If the vacating date is earlier than the lease expiration date, this is also picked up and a different confirmation letter sent, together with the documentation applicable to a lease break situation.
- **Advice letter sent to the landlord**  
The software searches the database that records rental statistics that have been obtained from various government departments together with the company's own statistical information. The landlord is advised of a suggested rental increase and supplied with information supporting the suggestion.
- **Prevacating appointment made in the electronic diary**  
The software searches for a suitable date and time for the inspection, allocates the time in the electronic diary, and inserts the date and time in the letters to both the tenant and the landlord.

- **Vacating appointment made in the diary**

In the same way, an appointment is made for the final inspection when the tenant is to vacate the property, advising both the tenant and the landlord.

**“WHY HAVEN'T WE, THE  
PROPERTY MANAGERS OF THE  
WORLD BEEN GIVEN THE TOOL  
WE NEED TO CARRY OUT OUR  
WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY?”**

- **Advertising copy is accessed**

The software database holds advertising copy that has been previously used, and if none is present, or it is over 12 months since it was accessed, prompts the property manager to write new copy. This copy is then automatically inserted into the advertising data for the next publication.

The advertising database also prompts the property manager when advertising copy has been used on more than two occasions so that new copy can be written.

Once the copy has been accessed (or written/rewritten) it opens an entry in the advertising cost module so that all advertising is accounted for.

- **Images of the property are accessed**

Digital images of the property (normally four of each standard property) are also stored on the database so that when the tenant's vacating date is entered, they are also immediately accessed and are available for use.

As with the advertising copy, if the images have not been accessed for more than 12 months, the property manager is prompted to create new images.

- **Internet site is updated**

The digital images and the advertising copy are automatically uploaded onto the property's entry on the Web site. The availability date and suggested rent are also included, together with inspection arrangements with an e-mail link to the relevant property manager.

Once this has been completed, e-mails are generated to relocation companies, universities, and large businesses in the area with a link to the property.

- **Brochure is prepared**

The brochure is a direct replica of the Internet site listing and is printed and made ready for circulation to the relocation agents who are regularly advised of properties becoming available.

The brochures are also on display within the company for prospective tenants to view and retain.

- **Advertising is prepared**

The advertising copy is prepared, set out in the manner prescribed by the various publications and e-mailed (or faxed) to them. This is done on a predetermined day each week so that the copy and images, where applicable, are held pending submission. It does not rely upon a property manager's memory to advertise a vacant property.

- **Counter List is updated**

The database holds 3 types of copy — one that is used in newspaper advertising (abbreviated copy); one that is used in publications that allow for more copy; and one that is used on the company's internal counter list (more extensive copy).

The counter list also displays images of the properties available but as they are copied in black and white, only one image per property is used, and that's normally the external shot.

- **Statistical data is updated**

The company should maintain comprehensive statistical data relating to its operations. From the tenant's vacating information, the following spreadsheets/graphs should be updated:

- The number of tenants vacated monthly;
- the increase in rent from the beginning of the tenancy to the termination, shown for both the total period and annually as well;
- the company and the individual property manager's vacancy rate;

*continued on page 10*

# Own Your Time

By Ted White, MPM

Immediately, the thought is, “Yeah, right!” In our business, as in most service businesses, the idea that we can have any control over our time seems ridiculous.

As a service business, we have to accept most work interruptions from the public. When a client walks through the door or when there is a serious repair issue going on, property managers have to drop just about everything. While many companies do have some controls in place (reception personnel or voice mail), I would like to focus on “interoffice interruptions.”

The other source of interruptions comes from within our office — our co-workers. How often have we interrupted another person or how often has another person interrupted us with a question or the casual request, “do you have a minute?”

The very worst time-wasting scenario would be something like this: Jane walks up to Paula’s desk (or calls her on the intercom) and asks Paula to change an owner mailing address in the computer. Paula, who is in the middle of adding up a column of numbers must stop, and either make the computer change on the spot or copy down the information with a note to do the job later and then return to the task at hand (saying to herself, “now, where was I? — Oh, yes, I’d better start over...”). Now imagine that Paula walks to Jane’s desk (or calls her on the intercom) to ask, “How did you spell that city?” (Interrupting Jane who afterward says to herself, “now, where was I...Oh, yes, I’d better start over...”). Finally (and we have all done this, too!), Jane stops by Paula’s desk (interrupting her again) to ask, “Did you change that owner address?”

Nearly none of the interoffice interruptions are emergencies. I suggest office policies that result in reducing them:

- Set up office in/out boxes for everyone in a central location. All requests or questions should be in writing and placed in the appropriate in/out box.
- Make a policy (and stand by it) that requests and questions must be in writing and placed in one of the in boxes.
- Rather than stopping by someone’s desk, write a memo and place it in that person’s in box.

Leaving a voice mail or interoffice e-mail message will also serve the purpose of not interrupting a coworker in “mid-job.” If there are lots of numbers or very specific information, it is courteous to write a note rather than to leave a voice mail message requiring transcription. If this is something new in the office, have patience because behavioral changes are always difficult; but stick with it, because the benefits are great.

Image the same scenario as before where Jane wrote a memo to Paula, who picked it up from her in box, read it when she had time, and responded to Jane by writing “done” on the memo, and placing it in Jane’s in box. No one interrupted anyone else and everyone had more personal time control. The bottom line is for everyone to “put it in writing.”

*Ted White, MPM, is owner of Sacramento Delta Property Management in Sacramento, CA. He is the 2000 president-elect for the Sacramento Chapter.*

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## Welcome New NARPM Members

The following is a list of new members from July 18 to August 1, 2000:

Charles Anklam II  
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Professional Home Management  
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Woodland hills, CA 91364  
818/340-8899

Eleanor Crump  
Dwellings Unlimited, Inc.  
6801 Backlick Rd Ste C  
Springfield, VA 22150  
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Lynn Dupuy  
Coldwell Banker Buckhead Brokers  
5395 Roswell Rd NE  
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404/705-1768

Laquita Edwards  
Dusty Edwards Mgmt. & Realty, Inc.  
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501/372-1837

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Westlake Village, CA 91361  
818/889-3983

Harry Englishbee  
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Clearwater, FL 33759  
727/726-2869

Lavonna Hibbs  
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Louisville, KY 40202  
502/581-3150

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Atlanta, GA 30324  
404/892-2405

Howard J. Morris  
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Des Moines, WA 98198  
206/878-5123

Tina Sullivan  
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5503 Steilacoom Blvd  
Steilacoom, WA 98388  
253/581-8575

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### Mold

*continued from page 5*

Symptoms appear to worsen in the winter when indoor air circulation is curtailed. The following tips are suggested:

- Stay away from outdoor areas — dark, wooded — that encourage the mold growth.
- Use kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans to help keep indoor humidity levels below 35%.
- If a humidifier is used, keep it clean with fresh water to eliminate bacteria and molds. Spray central humidifiers with an antimold solution.

According to the American Lung Association, most Americans spend over 90% of their time indoors, where they are often exposed to indoor air pollution at levels 2 to 5 and sometimes 100 times higher than outdoor levels.

For more information, visit the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology at [www.aaaail.org](http://www.aaaail.org) or the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America at [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org). For information on air duct cleaning, visit the EPA Web site at [www.epa.gov/iedweb00/pub/airduct.html](http://www.epa.gov/iedweb00/pub/airduct.html)

*Wallace S. Gibson, PPM, CPM, is the owner of Landlord Tenant Services and Gibson Management Group, Ltd., in Charlottesville, VA. She is legislative chair for NARPM.*





# 2000-2001 National Committee Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Years of real estate experience \_\_\_\_\_ Years of property management experience \_\_\_\_\_  
 Year you joined NARPM \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Local offices held (year and title) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently a chapter officer? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What role will you have next year? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Prior national committee participation (list committee, projects completed and years of service)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Committee interest:

- Certification                       Convention                       Education                       Legislative
- Marketing                               Membership                       Publications
- I am willing to serve on a subcommittee if the committee is full.

NARPM designations \_\_\_\_\_ Other designations \_\_\_\_\_

Membership and contributions to other organizations \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Professional or business skills and expertise \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate sheet of paper please let the committee know why you would like to serve and how your appointment would benefit NARPM.

*Appointment to a national committee is made based on experience and space availability. Committee appointments are held for a one-year period. There are two official meetings each year, in conjunction with the Annual Convention and Midyear Conference, as well as teleconferences throughout the year. Expenses are not reimbursable.*

Please send your completed application to NARPM, P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647 or fax to 512/454-3036. If you have any questions, please call headquarters at 800/782-3452.

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for electronic  
file placement.

## Software

*continued from page 6*

- the bench life of the property — the time taken to lease; and
- company monthly/annually advertising costs and recoveries.

Property management comprises many procedures that allow for total automation of the processes. The same level of automation as described above could also be applied to:

- **Listing a property for management** — accessing testimonials of similar properties; creating the follow-up letters until the authority is received; uploading landlord's information and instructions, etc.
- **Leasing a property** — sending copies of advertisements placed and costs to date; compiling a report on tenant response sheets and forwarding the information; reviewing similar properties advertised; etc.
- **Rent arrears** — automatically generating 5 and 10-day notices (where that applies legislatively) and a Notice to Vacate, as well as an Application for a Hearing; informing the landlord of the action taken; electronically lodging the Application\*; etc.
- **Repairs and maintenance** — generating work orders; informing both the tenant and the landlord of the action taken; follow-up quotes at a predetermined delay period; etc.
- **Routine inspections** — selecting suitable times from the electronic diary; advising the landlord and tenant; preparing a report based on the previous report's information; etc.
- **Termination of tenancy** — making an Application for a Hearing; notifying the landlord and tenant; electronically lodging the Application\*; etc.

All of the above procedures could be fully automated utilizing the communication forms of e-mail, fax, or just plain old snail mail. Each process would automatically occur unless the operator specifically instructed the software not to proceed, and in this case, there would be a record of who stopped the process and when and why it was stopped.

The question must be asked, "Why haven't we, the property managers of the world, been given the tool we need to carry out our work more efficiently?"

Some software developers have gone down the path of automation, but their major problem is that the level of computer literacy required by the property manager/bookkeeper to utilize the facilities available far exceeds that of mere mortals.

Today's software packages should aid property managers and automate many of the monotonous, and often forgotten, procedures. We should all be banging on the doors of the software developers demanding they provide us with the one major tool we need.

\*"electronically lodging the Application" refers to electronically sending the Application for a Hearing to the relevant Court or Tribunal and this allows for a time and date to be selected for the Hearing.

*Tony Warren is a Director of Real Estate Advisory Service Pty Ltd, a Melbourne-based company specializing in the development of property management systems and acting as a consultant for many of Australia's real estate agents wanting to develop their property management departments further. The author of Managing Residential Property and A Systems Guide for Residential Property Managers, Tony is well-known throughout Australia as its foremost property management trainer.*

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGERS 2000 ANNUAL CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW



**SEPTEMBER 21-23, 2000  
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**

## LAISSEZ LES BONS TEMPS ROULER!

We hope you will join us as we “*let the good times roll*” in the heart of New Orleans at the 12th Annual National Association of Residential Property Managers Convention and Trade Show, September 21-23, 2000 — our first Annual Convention in the new millennium — in a world-renowned, fun convention city.

## LOCATION

Our 2000 Annual Convention and Trade Show will be at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Orleans, adjacent to the Superdome and Shopping Center, minutes from the French Quarter, Bourbon Street, and Mississippi Riverfront. The Hotel boasts four restaurants, a Top of the Dome Steakhouse, New Orleans’ only revolving-rooftop restaurant, swimming pool, whirlpool, fitness center, business center, with free hotel shuttle service into the French Quarter every 30 minutes.

Conference attendees will enjoy the New Orleans special rate of \$164 single/double or \$189 triple/quad, plus tax, by calling the Hyatt Regency at 504/561-1234 or 800/233-1234 by the group cut-off date of August 21, 2000 and mentioning the NARPM Convention. After this date, reservations will be on a space and rate available basis. Ask the Hotel for Regency Plan, Business Plan, or Suite rates. Check-in time is 3 pm, and check-out is 12 noon.

## AIR TRANSPORTATION

Continental Airlines and Southwest Airlines are pleased to offer discounted airfares to the NARPM Annual Convention.

**Continental Airlines** offers 5% off the lowest applicable fare, 10% off the Y8/H8 refundable fares, and an additional 5% discount when ticketing 60 days prior to travel. Call Continental Airlines Meeting Works Department at 800/468-7022 or your local travel agent and give them reference number **OP2TKP**, with code **ZB7K**.

**Southwest Airlines** is offering a 10% discount on most of its already low fares for air travel. You or your travel agent may call Southwest Airlines Group and Meeting Reservations at 800/433-5368 and reference I.D. Code **A4793**. Call 8:00 am - 5:00 pm M-F, or 9:30 am - 3:30 pm Saturday and Sunday. You must make reservations five or more days prior to travel to take advantage of this offer.

**Please use one of these airlines and reference numbers to help us obtain free tickets for the Association!**

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

### Monday, September 18, 2000

8:30 am - 4:00 pm PPM and MPM Certification Classes  
*(see page 15 for more information)*

### Tuesday, September 19, 2000

8:30 am - 4:00 pm PPM and MPM Certification Classes  
1:30 - 4:30 pm Swamp Tour with National President  
*(optional — additional fee)*

### Wednesday, September 20, 2000

8:30 am - 4:00 pm Committee Meetings  
6:30 - 8:00 pm Welcome Reception for All

### Thursday, September 21, 2000

8:00 - 9:15 am Opening, Welcome, and Breakfast  
9:30 - 10:45 am Workshop Sessions I  
11:00 am - 12:15 pm Workshop Sessions II  
12:30 - 1:30 pm Membership Recognition Lunch  
1:30 - 2:15 pm Grand Opening of Trade Show  
2:15 - 5:00 pm “Super” Sessions  
2:15 - 3:30 pm Workshop Sessions III  
3:45 - 5:00 pm Workshop Sessions IV  
6:00 - 9:30 pm Cajun Festival at Michaul’s — Off-site event  
*(additional fee)*

### Friday, September 22, 2000

8:00 - 9:00 am Breakfast with Keynote Speaker  
9:00 - 9:30 am Say “Good Morning” to the Vendors  
9:30 - 10:45 am Workshop Sessions V  
11:00 am - 12:15 pm Workshop Sessions VI  
12:30 - 1:45 pm Certification Recognition Lunch  
1:00 - 4:30 pm Garden District Tour *(optional — additional fee)*  
1:45 - 2:30 pm Visit the Trade Show  
2:30 - 4:30 pm “Super” Sessions and Expert Panels  
4:30 pm - evening Free Time to Explore New Orleans

### Saturday, September 23, 2000

8:00 - 9:45 am Continental Breakfast and State Meetings  
8:00 - 9:45 am Visit the Trade Show  
10:00 - 11:15 am Workshop Sessions VII  
11:15 - 11:45 am NARPM Mini Sessions  
Noon - 2:00 pm NARPM Annual Meeting Luncheon  
2:00 - 2:45 pm Farewell to Trade Show — Prize Drawings  
2:45 - 3:45 pm Convention Committee Wrap-Up Meeting  
2:45 - 4:15 pm Workshop Sessions VIII — “Hot Topics”  
6:30 - 7:30 pm Cocktail Reception  
7:30 pm - 1:00 am *An Evening of Elegance* — Installation Dinner, Entertainment, and Dancing (Masked “Mardi Gras Ball”)

### For additional information contact:

Sherri Beck CPS, Executive Assistant  
P.O. Box 140647 • Austin, TX 78714-0647  
800/782-3452 or 512/381-6091  
Fax: 512/454-3036  
E-mail: narpm@assnmgmt.com  
Web site: www.narpm.org



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGERS**  
**12TH ANNUAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM**  
**September 21-23, 2000, Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Orleans, LA**

**1. REGISTRATION** (Please type or print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name for Badge \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check your designation  PPM  MPM  CRMC  
 NARPM Chapter or CIF \_\_\_\_\_  
 Are you a Chapter leader?  Yes  No If yes, what position do you hold \_\_\_\_\_

NARPM Member?  
 Yes — Member # \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

Is this your first NARPM  
 Convention?  Yes  No

**SPECIAL ASSISTANCE**  
 I will require special assistance  
 I have special dietary needs  
 Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. REGISTRATION FEES**

		Fees Paid
<b>Conference Registration</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> NARPM Member	\$425	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Join NARPM & Register*	\$620	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonmember	\$500	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Team Discount**	-\$50	\$ _____
<i>One Day Only:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$175	\$ _____
<b>Additional Event</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Off-site Event	\$45	\$ _____
<b>Guest Tickets</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday Reception	\$15	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Opening Breakfast	\$20	\$ _____
<i>Breakfast:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$10 each day	\$ _____
<i>Lunch:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$30 each day	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Reception, Dinner & Mardi Gras Ball	\$60	\$ _____

**3. CERTIFICATION CLASS FEES**

	Member	Nonmember	Fees Paid
<input type="checkbox"/> PPM Marketing (Sept. 18)	\$225	\$280	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> PPM Maintenance (Sept. 18)	\$225	\$280	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> PPM Operations (Sept. 19)	\$225	\$280	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> PPM Technology (Sept. 19)	\$225	\$280	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> MPM Risk Management (Sept. 18-19)	\$450	\$505	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> MPM Personnel (Sept. 18-19)	\$450	\$505	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> PPM Retake (list below)▼	\$97.50	N/A	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> MPM Retake (list below)▼	\$197.50	N/A	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Ethics Class (Sept. 21)	\$15	\$20	\$ _____

▼List Retake: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. TOTAL FEES**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**After September 5, 2000, please register on-site.**

\* Join & Register — Not yet a member? For an additional \$195, you can become a NARPM member and register for the conference at the reduced member rate. Check the "join & register" option on the registration form and request/include a membership application.

\*\* Team Discount — When two or more NARPM members from one office register for the full conference, the second and additional registrants receive a \$50 discount. Registration forms and payment must be received jointly.

**CANCELLATION POLICIES**

**Conference**  
 Cancellations must be received in writing. If cancellation is received 30 days prior to September 17, 2000, there is 100% refund less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation is received 15-29 days prior to September 17, there is a 50% refund. There is NO refund if cancelled 1-14 days prior to September 17.

**Certification Classes**  
 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.

**MONETARY POLICIES**

If rebilling of a credit card is necessary, a \$25 processing fee will be charged. A charge of \$25 will apply for all nonsufficient fund checks. Checks not in U.S. funds will be returned.

**After September 5, 2000, please do not mail or fax this form to NARPM. Present this form to the registration desk to register on-site.**

# Is that Vacant Property Uninsured?

By Doug Klein, PPM



Many owners (and property managers) are unaware that some rental insurance policies do not provide coverage beyond the first 30 days of vacancy. One of Golden West's clients recently found out the hard way. She had called us to rent her property after it had been for sale and vacant for the previous 90 days. We spent \$2,500 of her hard-earned money putting it into showable

condition, taking about two weeks. A few days later, while showing the property to a prospective tenant, we discovered it had been vandalized. Normally, insurance covers vandalism, but her property had been vacant for over three months, well beyond her policy's 30-day vacancy limit. This unfortunate owner spent \$1,200 out of her own pocket repairing her property.

## Vandalism Can Be Costly

Insurers put such limits in policies for the obvious reason that vacant properties are much more "accident-prone" than occupied properties. Limits may vary with companies, some providing coverage for up to 90 days of vacancy.

As a result of this unfortunate incident, we now advise owners that their property may be uninsured during the vacancy period, which often occurs between tenants, and we recommend that they contact their insurance agent to verify coverage. This recommendation is contained in the form letter we send to owners notifying them of a tenant's 30-day notice to move. We also notify them verbally during the first contact, when we discuss turnover repairs.

Most owners are not aware that any lapse of coverage occurs on vacant properties. You will be performing a valuable service by notifying the owner of this responsibility.

*Doug Klein, PPM, is with Golden West Properties in Sacramento and is current president of the Sacramento Chapter.*

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## Running a Maintenance Company — MPM Certification Class

There have been some inquiries about this class. Why isn't it being offered? Quite simply, there have not been enough people signing up at one time; two classes have been cancelled. Due to the specific nature of the content, not all property managers are interested. If you are one of those interested in this class, please send an e-mail specifying your preference of taking it at either the Mid-year meeting in Denver or at the next Convention in Kansas City to [narpminfo@narpm.org](mailto:narpminfo@narpm.org). When the waiting list gets to 12 for either location, it will be scheduled, and you will be notified. If you have questions, please call Sylvia Hill at 408/997-7100 (x104).

### Class Description

This two-day course provides an in-depth study of the business skills and procedures necessary to operate a residential maintenance company. You will learn about starting a company as well as operating, evaluating, and controlling the business. Other topics to be discussed include accounting, record keeping, and inventory. Participants will analyze the operations of a faltering business.



## *Ambassador Program*

NARPM's goal this year is to achieve 2000 members in the year 2000! You can help achieve this goal and reward yourself at the same time. Recruit five new members this year, and you will receive an awards certificate, which you can use toward paying your dues or for events for the coming year. To do this, do the following:

- ★ 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 Awards 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 Awards Certificate can be used to pay NARPM annual dues, or like amount can be applied toward National Midyear Conference or National Convention.
- ★ It must be used in full at the time of use and attached to your dues or registration for Midyear or Convention. The value of the Awards Certificate is equal to what the national dues were at the time the Awards Certificate was issued. It also must be used within 12 months of the issue date.
- ★ A member can only earn one Award Certificate per 12-month period. However, a member can earn unlimited Recognition Certificates.

The program started November 1, 1999.

## 2000 PPM/MPM Certification Classes

Date	Location	Class	Instructor
Sept. 14	Sacramento, CA	PPM Maintenance	Rocky Maxwell, MPM
Sept. 18	New Orleans, LA	PPM Marketing	Fred Richter, MPM
Sept. 18	New Orleans, LA	PPM Maintenance	Rocky Maxwell, MPM
Sept. 19	New Orleans, LA	PPM Operations	Peter Meer, MPM
Sept. 19	New Orleans, LA	PPM Technology	Jean Storms, MPM
Sept. 18-19	New Orleans, LA	MPM Risk Management	David Holt, MPM
Sept. 18-19	New Orleans, LA	MPM Personnel Practices	Sally Backus, MPM
Oct. 20	Jacksonville, FL	PPM Tenancy	Robert Machado, MPM

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.

### 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.

Please find out more by calling Sylvia Hill at 408/997-7100 or e-mailing her at sylvianarpm@aol.com. Sylvia can provide you with the details you need to make a Certification class a successful venture.

## PPM/MPM Class Registration

### FEES

PPM Classes	Preregistration	On-site
Member	\$195	\$225
Nonmember	\$250	\$280
MPM Classes	Preregistration	On-site
Member	\$395	\$450
Nonmember	\$450	\$505

### CLASS INFORMATION

- On-site registration begins at 8:00 am. Class hours are 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.
- PPM 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 Association Headquarters to charge my credit card. I understand that my billing statement will read "Association Headquarters."

### Two Easy Ways to Register

**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.

# What Is a Domain Name and What Will It Do for My Web Site?

*By Mr. Internet*

A domain name, as it pertains to the Internet, is something like [www.NARPM.org](http://www.NARPM.org). It is your own name on the Internet. “Generic” domain names include names that end in .com, .net, and .org. “Country specific” domain names are normally two-letter extensions, like .ca, .ws, .cc, .tv, and the like. We’ll discuss the country specific domains later.

Many Internet Service Providers (ISPs), such as Earthlink and AOL, provide their users with space on the Internet. This space is usually at an address such as [members.aol.com/jjohn146](http://members.aol.com/jjohn146). This is not a domain name, it is a folder (or directory) at the aol.com domain. Alternatively, many providers offer subdomains as an add-on, which would make your address look something like [jjohnhomes.earthlink.net](http://jjohnhomes.earthlink.net). While this is closer to a domain name, it still can’t give you some of the benefits that a domain name can.

Your own domain name would be something like [JJohnHomes.com](http://JJohnHomes.com). Having your own domain name provides you with a plethora of benefits.

First, it is your own. The first two examples indicate domain names owned by other companies — AOL and Earthlink. If you ever decided to switch to a different provider, you would have to give up that name. Not so with your own domain name. When you switch your ISP, you simply move the domain name to the new provider.

Second, it improves credibility. While anyone with an Internet account can have a Web site address, a domain name indicates to the world that you are really in business. Studies have shown that people are much more trusting of a Web site’s content when that Web site has its own domain name and are much more likely to

provide personal information to a Web site with its own domain name.

Third, it is directly related to your business. In the above examples, when you direct people to your Web site, you are promoting AOL and Earthlink at the same time. People who see an address like that don’t really know what your business is or does. By having your own domain name, people know your company, and your company name is brought to the forefront every time they see your Web site address. A domain name related to your business is also much easier for your Web site visitors to remember.

Fourth, it allows you to receive e-mail at the same address as your Web site. With a domain like [JJohnHomes.com](http://JJohnHomes.com), your Internet Service Provider is able to provide you with e-mail addresses that end with that domain. For example, you could have [Susan@JJohnHomes.com](mailto:Susan@JJohnHomes.com), [Info@JJohnHomes.com](mailto:Info@JJohnHomes.com), and the like. In fact, some providers can even set you up so that you receive e-mail sent to any address [@JJohnHomes.com](mailto:@JJohnHomes.com). This provides an association with your company, as well as with your Web site.

As you can see, your own domain name is a huge asset for your Web site and your property management business. Next month, to help you obtain your domain name, we’ll discuss tips and pitfalls in registering domain names.

*Mike Anderson of [HomeRentals.net](http://HomeRentals.net) prepares this column. If you have a question you would like answered, e-mail him at [Mike@HomeRentals.net](mailto:Mike@HomeRentals.net).*

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The logo for NARPM (National Apartment Rental Property Managers) is displayed in a bold, red, stylized font. The letters are thick and blocky, with a slight shadow effect.

P.O. Box 140647  
Austin, TX 78714-0647