

Residential Resource

The Newsletter of the National Association of Residential Property Managers

December 2002

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The Mission of NARPM is to increase the professionalism and ethics of residential property managers.

An Ounce of Prevention

By Mariwyn Evans

Lead, mold, slips, and skips: Protect your property management business from these disasters waiting to happen.

To most of us, the word disaster conjures up visions of explosions or uncontrolled torrents of wind and water. But for property managers, disaster lurks in the dust from a painted-shut window, the mold growing on the bathroom grout, or the pile of autumn leaves wet and slick from last night's rain.



According to the 2001 National Association of REALTORS® Legal Scan of real estate-related court cases, seven out of the 10 highest monetary awards to plaintiffs were doled out in property management cases. "Property managers tend to have deep pockets, which can make them attractive targets," notes Rick Fenton, a partner specializing in litigation with the Chicago office of Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal. Managers are also the logical people to hold responsible, Fenton notes, since they usually have wide discretion in making decisions relating to a property.

Because property managers bear the burden when disasters happen, it's good sense and good business practice to have well-planned procedures in place to mitigate potential problems. Whether these issues are environmental concerns or more run-of-the-mill hassles, it's critical to ensure that site managers, maintenance workers, and outside contractors know and follow your policies.

1. Lead-based paint: Dust off your policy

The single largest damage judgment recorded by the Legal Scan in 2001 was the \$5.35 million awarded to the family of a 13-year-old girl who suffered permanent cognitive dam-

age from lead-based paint dust. Even though the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act (Title X) is a decade old, suits for the improper handling of lead-based

painted surfaces are still being filed regularly by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Judgments against apartment owners now total more than \$19 million. And although

failure to comply with disclosure requirements is still a major cause of litigation, potential disaster can also arise when lead-painted surfaces need repair. Here, property managers too often adopt what one characterized as "the Clinton 'don't-ask, don't-tell' philosophy."

Instead of taking such a passive approach, property managers should follow the law's requirements, which apply to residential properties built before 1978 that are receiving any federal funds or mortgage guarantees, such as Section 8 or FHA financing. A person doing repair work on two square feet of any interior surface must first take an eight-hour certification course and follow lead-safe work practices, says Marvin Fleschman, a National Apartment Association-designated lead-safe work practices trainer. It's prudent for all owners to employ contractors who follow these two practices.

Lead-safe work practices include using appropriate respirators, sealing off work areas with several layers of heavy-gauge plastic, wetting surfaces to reduce dust, and thoroughly cleaning up, first with a high-efficiency particulated air (HEPA) filter-

continued on page 10

President 2002

As I write my last column as your president, I feel very proud of the successes you have accomplished for your association this year.

The **Affiliate Committee** with the help of the Affiliate Council put on two fantastic trade shows this year. The affiliates also helped many members with the additional workshops and user groups that they sponsored and/or taught. **Certification** enlarged the size and effectiveness of the mentoring program, revised and updated the service requirements for the designation programs, produced (with Education) a new brochure highlighting the advantages of designations, and helped many members either obtain or become closer to obtaining their designations. **Convention** put on two excellent events in Portland and Atlanta and has already accomplished great strides towards making our 15th Annual Convention in Hawaii in 2003 an event to remember. **Education** updated several designation classes, and added two well-received new ones, placed the first version of the NARPM Speakers Bureau on the Web site, accomplished or helped others accomplish the awarding of CE credits for attending NARPM property management classes or events in multiple states, and progressed toward the goal of providing Web-based residential property management education. **Finance** worked hard to ensure an accurate and workable budget and is handling the investment and security of our reserve funds. **Legislative** created and/or nurtured relationships with other real estate related associations and with various governmental entities across the United States. They are also working on a call to action team to enable NARPM to react faster to pending or proposed legislation. **Long Range Planning** accomplished and is helping to implement our new Strategic Plan, which will help keep our association on the right track for years to come. This was a huge undertaking and will really lay the foundation for NARPM's future. **Marketing** produced the member decals, the NARPM stickers, updated and expanded the store items, and attended several state and national trade shows to further both the public and real estate industry's awareness of NARPM and residential property management as a profession. **Membership** focused on increasing member benefits, chapter support, and has really worked hard on the upcoming Leadership Conference scheduled for January in Austin. They produced a first-class application and redefined the use of the NARPM logo, greatly expanding the brand awareness of NARPM. **Nominations** worked hard to find and approve a great slate for next year's board of directors and redesigned the nominations procedures to enable NARPM to take the next step in our growth into a mature association. **Professional Standards** changed their name from Grievance and updated all of their procedures to help ensure fair and equitable treatment of all parties in disputes. **Editorial** continues to improve on what is already considered by many to be the best publication in the residential property management industry — the *Residential Resource*, and has produced or updated brochures, pamphlets, and other items to further member benefits. **Headquarters** completed the first official NARPM Policies and Procedures manual, something our association sorely needed. They have also helped streamline and improve our budgeting and financial status to enable NARPM to be extremely stable and ready for the future.

I thank the hundreds who have contributed in *Making A Difference* this year and making all these things happen. I know so many of you that gave way more than the one hour a month I asked for. It feels so great to be a part of an association in which so many members give freely of their time, expertise, and energy. I would like to thank all of you who graciously picked me up and delivered me to airports and meetings, who opened up your homes and offices, and who allowed me to share so many good times. I especially want to thank the board of directors, committee chairs, and the Headquarters staff, and all of you should too, for without their leadership, vision, and hard work, all the above would have been impossible. Finally I have to thank my lovely and understanding wife Bridget, my kids, and my staff, without whose support I could have never undertaken this great opportunity to *Make a Difference*.

Thank you all,



Michael Mengden, MPM®
2002 National President



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Mold: a Mounting Concern for Homeowners, Builders

By Michele Dawson

Although the Center for Disease Control says that a link between stachybotrys and more serious symptoms like memory loss or coughing up blood can't be confirmed, several juries across the country have awarded homeowners millions of dollars in connection with mold-contaminated homes and serious health problems, prompting concern among homeowners and homebuilders alike.

The source of concern centers on stachybotrys, a toxic mold that grows in moist environments and has been found in all 50 states.

While most varieties of mold aren't dangerous, too much exposure to stachybotrys can trigger asthma or hay fever — at least in some people. When inhaled or ingested, stachybotrys can cause nasal and sinus congestion, coughing, wheezing, sore throat, skin and eye irritation, and upper respiratory infections.

If you identify problems with a house you are thinking about buying or renting, make sure the seller or landlord corrects them before you move in. Or, you may want to consider starting from square one and revive your search efforts for a different house.

To stay on the safe side, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers these tips when shopping for an existing house.

- Hire a professional to check the heating and cooling system, including humidifiers and vents. Check duct lining and insulation for growth.
- Check for exhaust fans in the bathrooms and kitchen. If there are no vents, the kitchen and bathrooms should each have at least one window. The cooktop should have a hood vented outside. The clothes dryer vent should be outside. All vents should lead outdoors rather than to attics or crawlspaces.
- Look for obvious mold growth in attics, basements, and crawlspaces, and around the foundation. See if there are many plants close to the house, particularly if they are damp and rotting — they are a potential source of biological pollutants. Downspouts from roof gutters should route water away from the building.
- Look for stains on the walls, floor or carpet (including any carpet over concrete floors) as evidence of previous flooding or moisture problems. Is there moisture on windows and surfaces? Are there signs of leaks or seepage in the basement?
- Look for rotted building materials. They may suggest moisture or water damage.

Even if mold hasn't developed, moisture problems can lead to dry rot, which can potentially cause structural damage to your home. And most insurance companies don't cover mold damage, which is considered a home maintenance problem, according to Insure.com.

If you find mold in your home, the Insurance Information Institute says it can be cleaned before heavy damage sets in. The most effective way is to correct the underlying water damage and then clean the affected area.

A solution of household bleach and water (1 part bleach, 10 parts water), combined with a bit of dish soap usually does the trick. Be sure to wear a mask and rubber gloves and open windows. Apply the mix to the moldy area, scrub with a rag, and then dispose of the rag. If the mold returns, you'll need to investigate whether you have a leak. If the contamination is extensive, you may need to consult a mold abatement specialist.

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Affiliate Members Listed By Services

Access Controls:

Marwest Access Controls, Inc.
Risco Lock Box Company

Accounting:

Thomas C. Roberge & Company

Advertising:

Rentalhouses.com

Business Products:

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

Claim Services:

Home Claim Services
Claim Source One

Inspections:

House Master Property Inspections
Service Access, Inc.

Internet Tools:

HomeRentals.net
Mayaco Marketing & Internet

Legal Services:

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

Maintenance

Allen's All-Stars
Handyman Matters
C&G Contracting, Inc.
De Seung Trading Corp.
Mr. Handyman International
Northern Electric, Inc.
Omega Termite & Pest Control

Marketing:

Home Management Network

Software:

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

Telecommunications:

AMI Telecommunications Corporation

Tenant Screening:

Merchants Association of Florida, Inc.
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For more affiliate information, please visit the NARPM Web site www.narpm.org.

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How To Be a More Effective Leader

By Laurel Emrys

“For Fast Relief, Try Slowing Down” — Lily Tomlin

Lily Tomlin’s words sound good, but sometimes we just can’t slow down! At the first **NARPM Leadership Conference in Austin, January 16-18, 2003** (see page 13 for registration form), my presentation will focus on helping you develop one of the skills you need to be a more effective leader. More specifically, I will talk about what it takes to relax into the moment and maintain a low stress, balanced state of mind and body in the course of your everyday activities.

For all too many of us, being overstressed has become a way of life that takes a profound toll on our health, happiness, and prosperity. I will discuss the keys to truly successful relief, so that you don’t end up going from one method to another. Unfortunately, this happens rather often, because being stressed out is actually a habit — a bad habit. And old habits die hard. The good news is that with the right approach, it is surprisingly easy to get relief from short-term and even chronic stress.

Learning to effectively deal with stress is not a luxury, it can save your life! And for those who think that dealing with stress is just too much work, the best news of all is that it’s far easier to relieve your stress than it is to keep on living with it.

Laurel Emrys is a consultant, educator, and artist who has developed and teaches the Stress Relief Mastery Program. Her services are derived from more than 30 years of interdisciplinary training. Emrys has been a keynote speaker and workshop leader since 1983.

Say “Cheese” to Change and Yes to TQM

By Sue Willison

As NARPM’s **Leadership Conference (in Austin, January 16-18)** luncheon speaker, I’ll help you learn to step outside your natural fear of change. My presentation, based on “The Cheese Story,” can help you begin to view change differently. I’ll show you how to act in new ways to help yourself and your organization adapt to, and better yet, create success from life’s inevitable changes.

In addition, I invite you to attend my workshop on Continuous Quality Improvement. Learn about the “Balanced Score-Card,” one of today’s hottest management topics. And, become acquainted with management’s most important paradigm shift of the 20th century, the “Total Quality Management System.” TQM is a system focused on improving a company’s “bottom line” by integrating processes with overarching goals. Expect to gain an understanding of the practical steps you can take to incorporate TQM into your business.

Sue Willison, MBA, is a business and marketing strategist assisting clients in attracting and keeping customers. Her approach is rooted in solid customer service and in creating a positive and profitable work environment. Clients include: Columbia Gas, AT&T, the American Hospital Association, and many others.



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 awards certificate that may be used toward your next years dues or for events for the coming year. 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 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 Leadership Conference or National Convention.
- ★ It must be used in full at the time of use and attached to your dues or registration for Leadership Conference 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 earn only one Award Certificate per 12-month period. However, a member can earn unlimited Recognition Certificates.

Ambassador Program October 2002 New Members

New Member

Dennis Rossman
Jennifer Bowman
Lyndie Metzcus-Sterling
Ricky Ingram
Madison Meadows
Aaron Bosshardt
Patricia Nordlie
Scott McPherson
Michelle Kelly
Linda Austin
Rob Herdt
Caryn Thomas
J.C. Massey
Nelson Zahler

Ambassador Member

Gene Bennett, MPM®
Patricia Sneed
Andrew Barkis, RMP®
Patricia Sneed
Roy Gadley
Gene Bennett, MPM®
Patricia Sneed
Andrew Harrington
Michael Nelson, RMP®
Carolyn Austin, RMP®
Edith (Edie) Walker, RMP®
Dee Bumbarger
Kathy L. Brinkley
Joyce C. Moody, RMP®

Due to the combined September/October issue, the August 2002 Ambassador List did not appear. They are listed below.

Judy Munz
Mark Jaworsky
Chana Sky,
Michael Muldrow
Frank Rivera
Scott Hales,ott
Jean Storms
Ed Mercel
Lori Voeltz
Larry Daly
Linda Dillon
M. Ingraham
Dolores Cobb, S.
Kevin Funchess

Lambert Munz, RMP
Matthew Jaworsky
Cindy Van Mater, MPM
Michael Hodges
Jock McNeill
Kelly Hales
Sally Backus, MPM
Wendell D. Davis, MPM
Patricia Sneed
Roger Staggs
Jennifer C. Oswalt
Carl W. Rische
Sandra Burkhamer, MPM
Suzanne Winter

Convention Corner

2003 Leadership Conference

January 16-18, 2003 • Austin Marriott at the Capitol

By Andrea G. Caldwell, MPM®, Convention Chair

A new year is just around the corner, and a new opportunity is presenting itself from NARPM to you! On January 16-18, 2003, all members of NARPM who wish to increase their management skills and develop their leadership abilities will be meeting in Austin, TX, for the first ever Leadership Conference.

You should have received the registration brochure in the mail weeks ago. It is also available on the Web site at www.narpm.org. Let headquarters know you will be attending by returning the registration by December 31, 2002, and your \$50 fee will be returned to you as a NARPM gift certificate upon attendance at the conference.

By attending the Conference, you will receive **free**

- two lunches with keynote speakers,
- installation dinner also with a keynote speaker,
- a choice of 12 workshops,
- two general sessions, and
- committee meetings.

NARPM is hosting this event as an introductory offer for 2003...join us in Austin, TX to Motivate, Inspire, Lead, Succeed!

See y'all there!

How To Think Like a Hedgehog — a Review of Jim Collins' Good to Great

By Rose G. Thomas, MPM®, Leadership Conference Committee Chair

“The real path to greatness, it turns out, requires simplicity and diligence. It requires clarity, not instant illumination. It demands each of us to focus on what is vital — and to eliminate all of the extraneous distractions.” Is there anyone who isn't immediately entranced by the ideas conveyed in these words of *Good to Great* author Jim Collins?

In an article* he wrote about his then upcoming book, *Good to Great*, Collins goes on to say “after five years of research, I'm absolutely convinced that if we just focus our attention on the right things — and stop doing the senseless things that consume so much time and energy — we can create a powerful Flywheel Effect without increasing the number of hours we work.”

Now you'll want to know about the Flywheel Effect, but I'm not going to tell. I'll keep you in suspense in the hope you'll rush to get a copy of *Good to Great* and read about it yourself. In his book, Collins uses other interesting metaphors, such as eggs, hedgehogs, and buses, to describe the principals he's uncovered.

He gleaned these principals from five years of intense research on American corporations, but as Collins himself says, “I'm also convinced that the good-to-great findings apply broadly — not just to CEOs but also to you and me in whatever work we're engaged in, including the work of our own lives.”

Wow. How can you resist? You can even read the book twice or three times between now and January. Why January, you ask? Well, it so happens we're holding a meeting of the *Good-to-Great* minds at the **January Leadership Conference, January 16-18** in Austin, TX. Melissa Prandi, MPM®, one of our beloved

past presidents, and a long-time fan of Collins' book, will be leading a bound-to-be-lively discussion of *Good to Great* at this first-ever meeting of a NARPM book club.

Some of you may know Collins from his previous book *Built to Last* or from his many articles for national publications such as *Fortune*, *The Economist*, *Fast Company*, and *USA Today*, among others. If you would like to learn more about him and *Good to Great*, visit his Web site, www.jimcollins.com You might get lucky and find a copy of *Good to Great* actually in the library. But no worry, you can purchase *Good to Great* at just about any book store. It's also available on CD and cassette tape; I found cassettes at Borders. You can buy used copies at Amazon.com that cost a bit less than the new, and they also have an online Reading Group Guide with a synopsis of the book and a list of questions we may use in the discussion.

Happy reading everyone. Hope to see you fellow aspiring Hedgehogs at the Leadership Conference in January. Don't forget to pack your copy of the book!

Rose G. Thomas, MPM® is owner and founder of Property Management People, Inc. in Frederick, MD.

* *Fast Company* March 2000

Maintenance & Management Corner

Fire Safety — It's a Decision We Can Live With

By Rick Ebert, MPM®

The Uniform Building Code (UBC) was first published in 1927, and it and the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) have been attempting to make buildings, including residential real estate, safer from the spread of fires. By the way, most blazes occur between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. To slow the spread of fires in our rentals we should keep our eyes wide open when we take a property into property management and look for any tell-tale signs that could cause a fire to spread from one area of the building to another. In homes the property manager should look for drywall that is at least 5/8" thick on attached garage ceilings on those walls of an attached garage that are common with the living area. To be in full compliance with the UBC and NFPA the folding pull down stairs to attic area should have 5/8" drywall and the door leading to the home should have a solid core. Let's face it, most homes do not comply strictly with these regulations as

local building authorities do not require them. However, as professional property managers, we are in an excellent position to recommend these simple upgrades to our owners, especially during times of upgrading or renovation. In multiple unit dwellings a fire partition of 5/8" drywall over the studs between the units will provide a fire rating of 1-1/2 hours. This, in most instances, is sufficient protection to save the building from a complete loss. It has the added benefit of providing the possibility of keeping tenants on *their* side of the duplex and not “dropping in” for an unannounced visit to their neighbor.

Rick Ebert, MPM®, is a founding NARPM member and has been an instructor of the RMP® Maintenance Class for several years. He has authored over 100 hours of property management classes and is a frequent lecturer, instructor, and author.

Two Distinguished NARPM Board Members Complete Terms

Time has a way of always moving forward and with it comes change. Each year the NARPM board has personnel turnover, and this year two NARPM members end their time on the board. Elizabeth Mowry, RMP®, spent three years on the board of directors and quickly established herself as a director that had a “can do” attitude. She was the leader of the very successful NARPM Midyear Conference in Denver, CO, and played a prominent role within the Convention Committee as the stage manager, timeline coordinator, and speaker for several national conventions. She was a true ambassador of NARPM while on the board, and NARPM wishes her continued success in the future as a property manager in California.

What can be said about Melissa Prandi, MPM®, that hasn’t already been said? After eight years of dedicated service on the board of directors, Melissa retires to an extremely successful property management career in her hometown of San Rafael, CA. She will still be active within NARPM on the Convention and Membership Committees. Membership has always been her first love, and it could easily be said that she was the “people’s president,” having brought in many new NARPM members during her many chapter-in-formation meetings throughout the United States. We’d be willing to bet that many of you who are reading this became NARPM members after hearing Melissa speak at a meeting! She was an outspoken and driven board member that always had NARPM’s best interest at heart, and NARPM has become a better organization through her tireless dedication. She will be missed.

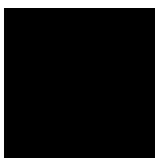
Ad not available
for online
purposes

NARPM Works Trade Shows

By John Taylor, RMP®, Marketing Chair

The NARPM Marketing Committee, in conjunction with local chapters, participated in state REALTOR® Convention Trade Shows in Florida and Colorado along with the National REALTOR® Convention Trade Expo in New Orleans, November 8-11, 2002.

Thousands of REALTORS® from across the country were exposed to NARPM and given information about our organization and the importance of referring property management leads to NARPM members. Many thanks to those who volunteered their time this year. We are looking forward to visiting more state conferences next year along with the National REALTORS® Convention in San Francisco.



Happy Holidays
From NARPM Staff

Filing HUD Fair Housing Complaints Online

By Judy Cook

Did you know that if you believe you have been the victim of housing discrimination, you can file a complaint with HUD on the Internet?

HUD's Web site at http://www.hud.gov/complaints/house_discrim.cfm contains an online complaint form.

The Web page states in part,

Federal law prohibits housing discrimination based on your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, or disability. If you have been trying to buy or rent a home or apartment and you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a fair housing complaint.

Housing discrimination includes not only rental and sales activity, but lending, appraising, insuring, and other services to the housing consumer.

Look for HUD Form 903 on the Web site. The form is an abbreviated version of a full complaint form, but gathers the basic information about the parties and circumstances involved. Interestingly, the same Web site contains a renter's "kit," and "Ten Tips Every Tenant Should Know," among other consumer aids.

There are also quick links to filing other types of complaints

HUD handles complaints in several categories:

Housing discrimination: Federal law prohibits housing discrimination based on your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, or disability. If you have been trying to buy or rent a home or apartment and you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a fair housing complaint.

Bad landlords in federal housing: Hundreds of landlords have been fined and/or debarred from doing business with the federal government as a result of failing to provide safe and decent housing for the poor, while enriching themselves on taxpayer-funded subsidies. Find out how to report a bad landlord.

Manufactured housing: If you have a problem with your manufactured home, learn how to solve the problem.

Land sales: The Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act protects consumers from fraud and abuse when buying or leasing land from developers. If you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a complaint by writing to HUD.

Deceptive contractors: HUD insures loans to help people renovate and repair their homes through a program called Title 1. If you have problems with a contractor who is performing work for you under this program, find out how to report it to HUD.

Fraud, waste, and abuse: If you are aware of fraud, waste, and abuse in HUD programs and operations, report it to HUD's Hotline in your area!

Once a housing discrimination complaint is submitted via HUD's Web site, it is forwarded to the closest regional office for review. What happens when a HUD investigator receives a housing discrimination complaint? The investigation and conciliation process will be the subject of next month's Fair Housing Corner.

NARPM Members, if you would like to submit questions or comments for discussion in an upcoming column of "Fair Housing Corner," please send your suggestions to judy@cookcompany.net. DISCLAIMER: Judy Cook is not an attorney, but a speaker and trainer in property management issues. This article is written from that perspective and is not to be construed as legal advice.

Five Questions to Improve Your Result

By Dr. Jeanette S. Cates

If you have ever attended a conference, you've probably had the same experience as most people. You left full of great information, strong resolve, and lots of notes! But by the time you got back to the office, you were overwhelmed by immediate issues. A week later, you may have thought about the conference and your notes, but couldn't remember what you were going to do. Besides, you were too busy to take on anything new!

Since you are investing your time and money in the upcoming **Leadership Conference January 16-18, 2003, in Austin**, why not plan to make the most of it with these five questions.

- What do I need to know to make my job easier? Write down your questions.
- Who do I need to meet? Write down a list of people or positions.

- What can I anticipate learning from each speaker? Review the program for ideas.
- How can I apply this knowledge? Keep this question in mind as you attend each session.
- What single action step should I take as a result of this session? Keep a running Action Plan list during the conference and write down just one idea from each session.

With just a little preparation and follow through, you will find that both your conference experience and your productivity will be improved.

Dr. Jeanette S. Cates, The Technology Tamer, is the founder and CEO of TechTamers, an Austin-based Internet strategy firm for small business owners. Dr. Cates is a professional speaker and author of Online Success Tactics: 101 ways to build your small business. She will be speaking Friday evening at the Leadership Conference General Session. The session is titled "Become an Enlightened Millionaire: Creating Wealth and Success in Your Life."

Slaying Spam

By Mike Anderson

If you've used e-mail, you've seen spam. Spam is that annoying e-mail that you didn't ask for, you don't want, you have no use for, but you get it anyway. It is irritating, time wasting, and worst of all, it interferes with the flow of legitimate e-mail communication.

How do spammers find me?

Spammers are generally unscrupulous businesses that sell products that most people don't want or need. By sending e-mail advertising to millions of people, they realize they are bound to find one or two who will send in money for a useless product. For them, it's a sheer numbers game — the more e-mail addresses they send to, the more people will fall for their deal.

In order to accumulate all these e-mail addresses, they employ a number of tactics.

Auto-generating guesses at e-mail addresses at known domains.

A list of auto-generated e-mail addresses might look like: Joe@abc.com, JoeA@abc.com, JoeB@abc.com, and so on. While the vast majority of auto-generated e-mail addresses are invalid, a few actually are valid and get through. The spammer's software records the addresses that didn't get through and keeps the rest as the list they send spam to in the future.

Harvesting looks in places where email addresses are recorded.

These can be your Web site, online directories, records of posted e-mail messages or newsgroups, and the like. Harvesting software recognizes the format of an e-mail address and indiscriminately records addresses in the spammer's database.

Purchasing or buying lists of e-mail addresses. This is probably the most common method employed by professional spammers. Every time you subscribe to an online newsletter, fill out an online form, or reply to an e-mail, you are potentially sending your e-mail address to someone who might turn around and sell it to a spammer. This works in the offline world too — when you include your e-mail address on an application for a grocery discount card or a magazine subscription your e-mail address is likely to be sold to spammers.

Spammers really like e-mail addresses with substance and are willing to pay a premium for them. You may have received an e-mail message that may not seem to be spam, but asks you to reply. It may appear to come from an old friend, or the wife of the assassinated president of an Arab country. It may be a message so disgusting you are driven to reply to tell the sender to stop sending such messages to you. All these messages are bait — when you reply the spammers know the e-mail address is valid, and they know that you read your spam mail. These spammers can then use and sell your e-mail address with the confidence that you will receive and read the mail they send to you.



E-mail addresses with real user data behind them are even more valuable. If you've filled out some sort of online questionnaire indicating your preferences and interests, you've made your e-mail address very spammable. If you've provided your e-mail address with any sort of a grocery or discount card, you're likely providing spammers with all the information they could possibly want on your purchasing habits, approximate income, vices, and more.

How do I stop spam?

The bad news is there is no way to stop spam. The good news is that there are ways to reduce spam and the headaches it causes.

Some automated tools exist to block or redirect spam. However, like an automated vegetable peeler, these tools are likely to kill a lot of your good e-mail as well. If you cannot afford to miss and lose business e-mail, don't depend on an automated tool to block your spam. These tools can be useful, but should be configured as 'loose' filters, only blocking the extremely obvious spam. When configured to block all spam, you'll suddenly find yourself barraged with phone calls informing you of legitimate e-mail sent to you, that you never received.

continued on page 16

Chuck Cordero
Sales Support Specialist

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An Ounce of Prevention

continued from page 1

equipped vacuum and then a detergent-based water solution.

“It’s essential to hire plumbers, electricians, and other contractors who can show that they have lead-certified workers. And even though clean-up is the contractor’s responsibility, you should inspect the site to be sure that all lead dust has been removed. Otherwise, the liability can come back on you,” says Len Frenkil, CPM®, whose company, The Time Group, manages 5,000 housing units in the Baltimore area. Keep careful records of all work done, Frenkil stresses, as well as copies of a signed acknowledgment that tenants were notified about the potential lead hazards of the work. Of course, if the repair is for something urgent, such as a leaking pipe in a wall, you can postpone notification. But you can’t close up the wall until you notify your tenants.

Frenkil has found that the difficulty of maintaining records makes remediation a much more attractive alternative. It doesn’t have to be too expensive, he notes, since in many properties only certain building components actually have lead paint. He advises testing individual components in random units; then, when you find lead in a component, test that component in every unit. “In one of our properties, we discovered that the lead was in only two closets and the front door moldings of 15 units. Once we replaced those moldings and encapsulated, or sealed in, the closets, the property was lead free and we didn’t have to worry any more about lead liability.” The work cost about \$4,500 (\$3,000 for testing and \$1,500 for remediation) but it was well worth it, says Frenkil.

2. Mold: It’s everywhere

If lead is a problem only in older homes, mold contamination is everywhere — inside and out. In fact, a recent study cited in the April 2002 issue of *Journal of Applied and Environmental Microbiology* found that mold levels outside were typically higher than the levels in most homes. But a few highly publicized mold lawsuits have raised tenants’ awareness and thus managers’ potential liability.

“Unless you see mold penetrating the walls and growing on surfaces within the living area, you don’t need to be unduly concerned,” says Ronald E. Gots, MD, with the International Center for Toxicology and Medicine in Rockville, MD. Mold is a health hazard only to those with mold allergies. Furthermore, says Gots, you can generally remove mold by washing walls with a bleach compound, HEPA-vacuuming, and treating fabric surfaces with a biocide. No special training is required, but seal off the work area to prevent spreading.

Prevention is the best cure for mold problems. “You have to educate tenants about how mold develops and encourage them to alert you immediately of any water leaks that could produce mold growth,” says Robert Griswold, CPM®, president of Griswold Management, San Diego, and author of *Property Management for Dummies*. Griswold also suggests adding an addendum to leases requiring tenants to report leaks or malfunctioning HVAC equipment promptly.

Taking prevention a step further, Martin Fleischman has developed

a handout of housekeeping tips for tenants which explains the use of windows and exhaust fans to vent humidity; cleaning procedures and products for tile, kitchen counters, and other moisture-prone areas; and proper dusting and vacuuming practices. He also inspects all his units twice a year to catch mold and other repair problems before they get out of hand.

Yet even prevention doesn’t always keep disaster at bay, as Mike Klein of Baltimore’s Metro Property Management Inc., learned all too well. When residents at a condo property called to say they heard running water in a vacant unit, he wasn’t too concerned. There was no water leaking into other units, and he assumed that the water was running from a faulty tap down the drain.

In fact, that proved to be the case when Klein gained access to the apartment four days later. But he also found that the constant flow of hot water in the closed unit had created a mold disaster. “It was everywhere,” he recalls. Klein brought in an industrial hygienist to test the air in the unit, in nearby units, and in the hall, which had been contaminated when his team entered the apartment.

To eliminate the mold, Klein had all the drywall removed and the walls treated with mold-retardant chemicals. The carpets and furniture were shampooed in the unit, the hall, and a unit above whose tenant complained of an allergic reaction. Workers sealed off the affected unit with plastic during the cleaning and used negative pressure fans to suck the air contaminated with mold spores outside.

After these efforts, all areas of the property once again had mold levels comparable to the outside levels. Nonetheless, Klein’s company is still facing a suit from the upstairs unit owner, who alleges that the property isn’t habitable and has declined in value.

One major litigation hurdle for managers is that there are no federal- or state-mandated standards for acceptable levels of mold, notes Kerri Barash, an environmental attorney with the Miami office of Greenberg Traurig, LLP. “What’s toxic for one person may not affect someone else; it depends on your susceptibility,” she says.

If you’re faced with mold in a building, as was Wayne Schulze, commercial division manager with Century 21 Paul & Associates in Burbank, CA, all you can do is respond promptly and “hope that you have good enough relations with tenants that they call you before they call an attorney.”

3. Slips and falls: Clear the way

If it seems impossible to eliminate mold, it’s just as hard to completely avoid another common property management disaster — slips and falls. “They’re probably the number one lawsuit for most managers,” says Griswold. A combination of regular inspection, prompt repair, and documentation is the key to heading off liability, advises Fenton.

And although it’s not foolproof, prevention pays in reducing slips and falls. “Most slips and falls are caused by man-made errors that can be eliminated with proper care and training,” says Bob Miata, president of Consolidated Risk Service Inc. of West Hempstead, NY, a safety adviser to many large real estate management companies. Good work practices, such as washing only

half of an entry floor at one time and keeping electrical cords from snaking across walkways, can go a long way to reducing accidents, says Miata. He advises developing a checklist for repair workers to ensure that tools are put away, drain and other conduit covers are properly replaced after work, and debris is removed promptly.

Inspections are also important. Look for loose railings and heaved pavement caused by freeze-thaw cycles in the spring, sprinklers that create puddles on walks in summer, and burned-out lights and icy spots in the short days of winter. “So many of my readers think it’s great when they don’t get a maintenance call in six months, but that can mean small problems have time to turn into big problems,” says Jeffrey Taylor, former property manager and editor and founder of Mr. Landlord (www.mrlandlord.com), a newsletter for small property owners and managers. He suggests inspecting every property twice a year and driving by each rental once a month to look for faults that could lead to accidents. In addition, encourage your tenants to call you if they see a problem.

To reduce icy slip-and-fall accidents, Frenkil instituted a “winter event” policy. His guidelines describe who would be responsible for snow and ice removal, the priority order of what will be cleared first (steps, walks to parking and exits, handicapped parking), and the time that work would begin. The manager at each property keeps a log to record the work. Since plaintiffs often have two to three years to file a claim, proper documentation is critical. Frenkil also keeps tapes of local news and clippings from the paper to document the timing and severity of each storm. This level of care has helped Frenkil eliminate slip-and-fall claims for four years.

If you’re faced with a high number of slip-and-fall accidents, analyze past incidents, look for factors that cause the majority of your problems, and then train workers to eliminate them, advises Miata.

4. Skips and late pays: The dog ate the rent

Careful monitoring is also an effective way to reduce skips and chronic late payers. Again, no amount of vigilance will totally eliminate this problem, but early warning signals can help you reduce your exposure.

“Thoroughly screen tenants before they lease,” advises Taylor. Among the red flags he looks for are tenants who have moved out of their last apartment without proper notice and those who need to move in quickly. (They may be expecting to be evicted soon.) His lease application also asks tenants for the name of a person who could help them in case of a financial emergency. “It’s not legally binding, but if applicants can’t offer that, it may mean that they’ve already had to call on their friends and have used up that resource,” he says.

Another possible sign of a growing financial problem is a significant increase in late notices in the last year or a credit report that shows a recent trend toward slower payment of accounts, says Howard Levin of Property Owners’ Exchange in Baltimore. Levin, whose company provides comprehensive tenant screening for private landlords, also suggests looking beyond the obvious questions to find misrepresentations. “It isn’t enough to get the name of the last landlord. You need to check tax records and be

sure the person you’re calling is the bona fide landlord, not just a friend of the applicant,” he warns.

In the same vein, Levin verifies with the current landlord that the applicant has given a move-out notice. Sometimes, he says, even solid citizens will pose as a prospective renter to help out a friend or family member who can’t qualify for an apartment. Levin also accesses court records — often available online — for past eviction cases and criminal background checks. “Landlords have to be aware of whether a tenant could pose a threat to the safety of other residents,” he says.

Applicants’ work histories should get similar scrutiny. Levin’s company verifies employment, length of time on the job, salary, and prospects for continued employment. And again, be sure that the person’s boss isn’t just a friend, especially if the employer is a small company.

“We also try to ask every question several ways,” says Levin. “Most people want to be honest in references but will answer only the question they’re asked. So if you ask a former landlord, ‘Did you ask this person to move out?’ and, in fact, he just told the prospects not to expect a lease renewal, you may not get a true picture of the situation.”

Once the tenant is in place, avoid future payment problems by enforcing the rent collection policy strictly and collecting late fees without exception, advises Griswold. He favors a \$5-a-day charge, up to a \$50 maximum. “By keeping the penalty minimal if a tenant is only one or two days late, you won’t be tempted to waive the fee for a good tenant,” he says. Griswold also warns that regularly accepting late rent payments sets a pattern that may make eviction more difficult in the future.

Instead, if the rent isn’t paid on the due date, issue a warning notice at once, and don’t wait to institute eviction proceedings, advises Taylor. “If good tenants experience temporary financial problems, locate a church, charity, or state agency that might help pay their rent for a month or two.”

And to protect yourself from tenants who just sneak away, be sure your security deposit is at least as high as one month’s rent, says Schulze.

In the end, of course, no amount of care can totally protect property managers from some form of disaster. But with a little luck — and a lot of prevention — you’ll survive to rent another day.

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National Association of Residential Property Managers
2003 Leadership Conference Registration Information

January 16-18, 2003 • Austin Marriott at the Capitol • Austin, TX

THIS IS A NARPM FIRST!

We hope that you will join us at something new for NARPM:

THE FIRST ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

January 16-18, 2003, in Austin, TX.

The conference is for NARPM leaders at every level, all committee members, chapter leaders, future leaders, and all members interested in learning more about NARPM leadership. We welcome everyone who wishes to attend!

REGISTRATION COST

Because we want you to attend, there will be **no registration cost** for the conference, if you get your registration in by December 31, 2002. There is a very minimal \$50 registration fee, but it will be refunded when you come to the conference in the form of a NARPM gift certificate, usable for any NARPM expense. (If you do not get your registration in by December 31, or if you do not attend the conference, you will not receive the gift certificate refund.) NARPM is assuming the cost of the entire program, speakers, expenses, lunches, dinner, and refreshment breaks. Attendees will only be responsible for their own hotel, travel, and other costs.

LOCATION

Our 2003 Leadership Conference will be at the Austin Marriott at the Capitol, 701 East 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

The Austin Marriott at the Capitol is in full view of the Texas State Capitol in downtown Austin. The hotel is within walking distance of the University of Texas, minutes from the LBJ Library, the Governor's Mansion, and Town Lake, and 10 minutes from the airport. It is just five blocks from Austin's famous Sixth Street entertainment district, with many clubs and restaurants.

Conference attendees will enjoy the special rate of \$124 single/double/triple and \$134 quad, plus tax, by calling the Austin Marriott at the Capitol at 800/228-9290 or 512/478-1111 before the group **cut-off date of December 27, 2002**, and mentioning the NARPM conference. After this date, reservations will be on a space-and rate-available basis. Check-in is 4pm, and check-out is Noon. Hotel parking is available for \$5 for local attendees.

TWO CERTIFICATION COURSES AVAILABLE PRIOR TO CONFERENCE

The Austin Chapter of NARPM is sponsoring two preconference certification courses, so that you will be able to work on your designations on this trip. Sign up on the registration form.

Wednesday, January 15, 9am – 5pm and

Thursday, January 16, 9am – 5pm

MPM® Owner/Client Relations

Instructor: Wallace Gibson, MPM®

This course will be interactive and is designed to achieve rental property owner's goals by understanding their financial and personal requirements so that the property manager can provide them with the results needed to make their ownership profitable and enjoyable.

Thursday, January 16, 9am – 5pm

RMP® Habitability Standards and Maintenance

Instructor: Rick Ebert, MPM®

Course materials will cover specific information including the Uniform Housing Code concerning basic habitability standards that govern local codes, policies of insurance companies, and our own Standards of Professionalism. Maintenance techniques regarding the handling of service requests, maintenance coordination, and implementing preventive and corrective maintenance will also be learned.

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES TO AUSTIN

Continental Airlines is pleased to offer discounted airfares to the National Association of Residential Property Managers Conference — 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 given them reference number UYQZWM, with code ZV1G. If you are a OnePass member, be sure to give your number, or if you are not yet signed up for this frequent flier program, tell the agent and start accumulating mileage. Please use this method and reference number to help us obtain free tickets for the Association!

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES TO AUSTIN

(now including ticketless travel)

Southwest Airlines is offering a 10% discount on most of its already low fares for air travel to and from the NARPM Conference. You or your travel agent may call Southwest Airlines Group and Meeting Reservations at 800/433-5368 and reference ID Code J8197. Call 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday – Friday or 9:30am – 3:30pm Saturday and Sunday. You must make reservations five or more days prior to travel to take advantage of this offer. Please use this method and reference number to help us obtain free tickets for the Association!

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Super Shuttle is available from the airport for \$10 per person. Upon arrival, proceed to the lower level baggage claim area to purchase your ticket. Taxicabs are also available for approximately \$18 – \$25.

CONFERENCE DRESS

Appropriate dress for the NARPM Conference is always business casual.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sherri Beck CPS, Executive Assistant

PO Box 140647, Austin TX 78714-0647

800/782-3452 or 512/381-6091

Fax: 512/454-3036

info@narpm.org

www.narpm.org



National Association of Residential Property Managers 2003 Leadership Conference Registration Form

January 16-18, 2003 • Austin Marriott at the Capitol • Austin, TX

1. REGISTRATION (PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT)

Name _____ Name for Badge _____

Company Name _____ Title _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Check your designation: RMP® MPM® CRMC® or Candidate: RMP® 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 Conference?

Yes No



SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

I will require special assistance

I have special dietary needs

Specify: _____

2. REGISTRATION FEES

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

NARPM Member \$50 \$ _____

SPECIAL OFFER: All registrations received by December 31, 2002, will be refunded in the form of a NARPM Gift Certificate for \$50 upon attendance at the Conference.

Join NARPM & Register *

Professional member \$245 \$ _____

Support staff member \$150 \$ _____

3. CERTIFICATION CLASS FEES

	MEMBER	NONMEMBER	FEES PAID
	(received by Dec 16)	(after Dec 16)	
<input type="checkbox"/> MPM® Owner/Client Relations (Jan. 15-16)	\$395/450	\$450/505	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> RMP® Habitability Standards & Maintenance (Jan. 16)	\$195/225	\$250/280	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> RMP® Retake (list below)**	\$97.50/122.50	N/A	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> MPM® Retake (list below)**	\$197.50/252.50	N/A	\$ _____

**List Retake: _____

4. TOTAL FEES

\$ _____

5. 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 of Cardholder _____

I authorize NARPM to charge my credit card.

FEES PAID

Preregistrations must be postmarked, faxed, or e-mailed by December 31, 2002.

***Join & Register** — Not yet a member? For an additional \$195 for Professional Members or \$100 for Support Staff members, you can become a NARPM member and register for the conference. Check the "join and register" option on the registration form and we will send a membership application.

CANCELLATION POLICIES

Conference

Cancellations must be received in writing by December 31, 2002. If cancellation is received by December 31, 2002, there is a 100% refund less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation is received after December 31, 2002, there is NO refund.

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.

THREE EASY WAYS TO REGISTER

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

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

3. INTERNET: Find the registration form on the NARPM Web site at www.narpm.org. Credit card payment only.



Welcome New NARPM Members

The following is a list of new members who joined NARPM from October 1 to October 31, 2002.

Steve Anton Hallmark Properties, Inc. 3316 Sul Ross Houston, TX 77098 713/666-3400	Kevin Conner Conner, Inc. 2711 Main Street Extended Elizabeth City, NC 27909 252/338-7598	Dawn Josemans Snow & Josemans Property Management 4026-C Plank Road Fredericksburg, VA 22407 540/548-3700	Dennis Rossman Rossmaner Realty Group, Inc. 1630 SE 47th Terrace Cape Coral, FL 33904 239/542-2084
Linda Austin AIS 4208 Hill Road Boise, ID 83703 208/384-9710	John Ferguson Precision Realty & Management 13135 Champions Drive #203 Houston, TX 77069 281/866-7400	Michelle Kelly Excalibur Group LLC 2745 Davenport Road Duluth, GA 30096 678/825-1400	Basim 'Sam' Shaath Global Advantage Real Estate 12651 Briar Forest #162 Houston, TX 77077 281/920-5658
Daisy Borba Pleasanton Properties 459 Main Street Pleasanton, CA 94566 925/846-4663	Ron Herdt CityScape Real Estate, LLC 1499 Blake Street #1F Denver, CO 80202 303/615-9595	J.C. Massey LaRay Properties 2700 S Fort Hood Road #F Killeen, TX 76542 254/547-0054	Marilyn Singer List Right Realty, Inc. 2116 Mae Street Orlando, FL 32806 407/896-7022
Aaron Bosshardt Bosshardt Property Management 5532 NW 43rd Street Gainesville, FL 32653 352/371-6100	Kenneth Holmes The Holmes Company, Inc. PO Box 50385 Columbia, SC 29250 803/252-9940	Scott McPherson All County Property Management 2898 66th Street N St. Petersburg, FL 33710 727/541-2578	Leroy Skubis All-West Properties PO Box 14665 Albuquerque, NM 87191 505/831-3973
Jennifer Bowman Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty 2111 Thomas Drive, Ste. 6 Panama City, FL 32408 850/230-0110	Otis Ingram Ingram Properties 964 Georgia Avenue Macon, GA 31201 478/742-8423	Madison Meadows The Excel Company 221 S 174th Street Spanaway, WA 98387 253/531-3811	Sam Stinnett HGP Management Company, LLC 3493 High Grove Way Atlanta, GA 30319 404/229-7973
Melanie Butler Fox Properties 3107 E Victory Drive Savannah, GA 31404 912/352-2747	Ricky Ingram Century 21 Beach Realty, Inc. 11 Miracle Strip Loop Panama City, FL 32407 850/234-9865	Lyndie Metzcus-Sterling Hometown Property Management 221 SE Highway 3 Shelton, WA 98584 360/424-6154	Caryn Thomas Watson Property Management 1111 Glynlea Road Jacksonville, FL 32216 904/249-3801
Jill Childs-Mynarcik Trade Wind Investments 6350 W Cheyenne Las Vegas, NV 89108 702/247-6558	James Johnson Johnson Rentals 8750 Highway H Agency, MO 64401 816/253-9219	Larry Neal Hodges Commercial Real Estate 606 Columbia Street NW, Ste. 104 Olympia, WA 98501 360/943-5079	Cynthia Thompson Housing Solutions RE & Property Mgmt. 1318 S College Avenue Fort Collins, CO 80524 970/224-1411

Contribute to the Residential Resource

<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Submission Due Date</u>
February, 2003	December 15, 2002
March, 2003	January 15, 2003
April, 2003	February 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@assn mgmt.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.

Patricia Nordlie Abbott Realty Services, Inc. 225 Main Street, Ste. 15 Destin, FL 32541 850/837-4818	Nelson Zahler Sunshine Management Corporation 178 Thomas Johnson Drive, Ste. 201 Frederick, MD 21702 301/663-8383
David Ritchie Golden Gate Realty & Development, Inc. 12435 Collier Blvd. #106 Naples, FL 34116 239/455-1003	

2002 RMP®/MPM® Certification Classes

Date	Location	Class	Instructor
January 15-16	Austin, TX	MPM® Owner/Client Relations	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
January 16	Austin, TX	RMP® Habitability Standards & Maintenance	Rick Ebert, MPM®
February 20	Longmont, CO	RMP® Tenancy	TBD
February 19-20	Longmont, CO	MPM® Personnel Practices & Employee Relations	TBD
May 20-21	St. Augustine, FL	MPM® Owner/Client Relations	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
May 21	St. Augustine, FL	RMP® Office Automation	Jean Storms, 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.

Please find out more by calling Marc Banner, MPM®, at 208/377-8889 or e-mailing him at mbanner@fiberpipe.net. Marc 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

	Preregistration*	On-site†
RMP® Classes		
Member	\$195	\$225
Nonmember	\$250	\$280
MPM® Classes		
Member	\$395	\$450
Nonmember	\$450	\$505

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

† Attendees must pay the on-site fee when registering on-site or sending payment in less than 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. I understand that my billing statement will read "NARPM."

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.



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

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AUSTIN TX
PERMIT NO. 2714

Computer Source

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The best cure for spam is an ounce of prevention. Try to keep your e-mail address a secret from spammers. While you cannot keep it totally hidden, you can avoid using it in the ways described above, making it very difficult for spammers to get a hold of it. If you must use your e-mail address in places where it's exposed to spammers, use a different, nonbusiness e-mail address. There are plenty of services that still provide free personal e-mail. Sign up for one of these accounts, and use that e-mail address any time a nonbusiness contact requires your e-mail. This way your business e-mail will not get much spam, and when you get ambitious you can sort through your personal e-mail for legitimate messages, deleting the rest.

Be sure you don't respond to spam e-mail, even if it's to purportedly unsubscribe. Unless you're dealing with a reputable company, the unsubscribe option on a spam e-mail message is usually a utility to capture and verify your e-mail address as valid. The best way to get nonstop porn e-mail is to reply to a porn message, telling them you don't want to receive any more porn!

Don't get bamboozled into believing that a spammer is doing certain things in accordance to the law. While there is currently no federal law universally prohibiting spam, there is neither a federal law saying that conformance with certain criteria makes a spam message acceptable. A disclaimer stating that a message was sent in accordance with a certain legislative bill or federal regulation is a dead giveaway that you're being swindled.

To reduce the amount of spam in your inbox, separate your e-mail into likely spam and likely legitimate. This can often be done with the processing rules in your e-mail program. Characteristics that are usually indicative of spam are punctuation in the subject line, the letters "adv" or "advr" on the subject line, and mail sent from free services like Hotmail and Yahoo! However, these traits also exist in perfectly legitimate e-mail, so be sure to monitor your likely spam mail to weed out the legitimate messages. Some e-mail programs allow you to record a list of "junk senders," but since spammers change their e-mail addresses so frequently this generally does not help much.

If you have e-mail that must get through, but you don't want any other e-mail, require that people who e-mail you put a special code on the subject line of each e-mail message. Then set up your e-mail program to delete or redirect all messages that do not contain the special code. For example, tell your clients to include "[Joe]" on the subject line of messages, and redirect those messages to a special folder. Be warned, however, that while this is a convenience for you, it is a huge annoyance for your clients and friends, and they are unlikely to send all e-mail this way without some special incentive!

I wish that I could have provided a magic solution to eliminate spam, but until we eliminate spammers their spam is something we have to deal with. Hopefully by reducing your spam to a manageable level, your life will get just a bit easier, and opening your e-mail each morning will not be so formidable!

Mike Anderson of HomeRentals.net prepares this column. If you have a question you would like answered, e-mail him at mike@homerentals.net.