

# Rental Licensing Primer

*As many of you know, rental property is licensed in Minneapolis. We frequently get questions at block club meetings and other events about how licensing works and how it is monitored.*

The Minneapolis Rental Licensing ordinance basically covers two areas; the physical condition of the property and the conduct of tenants / guests on the property. Housing Inspections is responsible for issues related to the physical condition of the property. The SAFE Teams monitor issues related to the conduct of the tenants.

When the conduct of tenants becomes a problem, Rental Licensing becomes a "three strikes and you're out" process. Landlords are sent warning letters as certain types of illegal conduct occur at their property. The **first letter** is considered a warning, a "heads up" for the owner. The owner, who may not be aware of the problems, has been officially advised that problems are occurring.

When another incident occurs within an 18 month period (one to six units buildings) or within 12 months (more than six residential units in the building), from the date of the first incident, a **second letter** is sent. The landlord is required to respond to that second letter within 10 days by contacting the SAFE Crime Prevention Specialist, and submitting a written management plan outlining the steps they will take to address the problems at the property. Failure to submit a management plan is grounds to seek a rental license revocation.

If a **third conduct incident** occurs, SAFE, city rental licensing staff and the city attorney investigate the incident and recommend a rental license revocation hearing be held if the incident meets the ordinance's legal criteria. The owner faces losing their rental license for that property.

**Criteria For Incidents:** Under the ordinance, the following conduct on the part of the tenant(s) or a guest of a tenant qualifies as violations.

- ✓ **Unlawful sale or possession or sale of controlled substances.** State law requires that the owner begin eviction proceedings against the tenant if narcotics are recovered at the property.
- ✓ **Unlawful possession, sale or use of a weapon.**
- ✓ **Prostitution**
- ✓ **Noisy Assembly (Noisy Parties):** The ordinance specifies that three (3) confirmed noisy parties are required to make up one conduct incident. The police normally document noisy parties when they respond to a 911 call about the disturbance
- ✓ **Unlawful Sale of Alcoholic Beverages**
- ✓ **Disorderly Conduct:** Multiple documented incidents of disorderly conduct that disturb three or more neighboring households. Block Club impact statements are crucial in enforcing disorderly conduct complaints.

*It's important to understand that each conduct incident is reviewed independently by the SAFE and the City Attorney before any action can be taken. Each case is reviewed on its own merits. Because of court challenges, the City Attorney will not proceed on rental licensing actions without thorough, accurate, provable documentation.*

