

Lifestyles

Both parties need to understand responsibility of lease contract

Landlords and tenants have a better chance of seeing eye-to-eye if each understands the responsibilities and rights of the other.

Keep in mind that each of you is free to bargain about the terms of the rental agreement. But once the bargaining is over and you've agreed to a set of conditions, you must carry out those terms. In addition, each of you has certain duties and rights established by law.

If you're a tenant, your duties are: to pay the rent, keep your home clean and safe, and free of damage. If you or invited guests damage the property, it's you, not the landlord, who's responsible for repairs.

You won't be held responsible for ordinary wear and tear or for damage caused by nature or by uninvited people. If something goes wrong that your landlord should fix, let him know in writing. Keep a copy of the letter of memo for yourself. You'll also need to realize that any improvements you make to the property become a gift to the landlord.

If you're a landlord you have certain duties. You must comply with current housing and building codes, make all repairs, and keep rental property in a fit and habitable condition. You must also keep all common areas in safe condition and make any repairs

designated in the agreement.

Except in emergencies, notify your tenants of any breaches they have made in the contract in writing. Keep a copy for your records.

There are laws that deal with security deposits and when the landlord can and cannot keep them. Basically a landlord may keep a security deposit for actual damages only. Actual damages include breakages and other physical damage done to an apartment over and above normal wear and tear, back rent, and the amount of rent the landlord loses if the tenant breaks the lease.

In situations where a tenant breaks the lease, the entire security deposit is not automatically forfeited.

The landlord can only keep the prorated amount equal to the number of days the apartment is left vacant. So if a new tenant is found quickly, the "old" tenant should get all or almost all of the security deposit back.

What recourse do you have if things go wrong? As a tenant you have the right to complain to the landlord and to an appropriate governmental agency. You have the right to exercise your rights under the law and you have the right to join with other tenants to secure your rights.

If after reasonable notice, your landlord fails to carry out the legal

On the Front Burner
Alice Pettitt
Home Economics Agent



duties of a landlord, you have the right to move out. And you have the right to seek relief in court. But unless you have permission of the court -- don't try withholding the rent.

If you're a landlord, you have the right to rent your property to whom-ever you choose at whatever rate you choose. You may not raise the rent during the term of the lease and you must give the renter proper notice if you wish to make changes in the agreement.

You may evict a tenant who violates any provision of your rental agreement. But you do not have the right to use physical force or other breaches of the peace when evicting someone.

You may also reserve the right to enter, inspect and repair your property at any reasonable time and in reasonable manner. And you have the right to expect your property to be returned to you in a reasonable condition.

This message is based on information from the North Carolina Bar Association.

Cream of Broccoli Soup
2 cups chopped broccoli
1 leek or green onion, thinly sliced (white portion only)
½ cup water

Pinch of cayenne pepper
2 cups chicken broth, divided
1 small onion thinly sliced
1 small stalk celery, sliced
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
2 teaspoons salt
3 tablespoons uncooked regular rice

½ cup half-and-half
Cook broccoli in a small amount of boiling water; drain, reserving liquid. Set aside. Combine onion, leek, celery, butter, and water in a 2 quart saucepan; place over

medium heat and simmer slowly for 2 minutes. Add salt, cayenne, rice and 1 cup broth; simmer for 15 minutes. Do not boil.

Bologna Kabobs

1½ tablespoons brown sugar
2 teaspoons soy sauce
1 ring (1 lb.) bologna, skinned and cut into 16 chunks
1 teaspoon cornstarch
1 can (8 oz.) pineapple chunks, drained and juice reserved
½ medium green pepper, cut into 12 pieces (¾ inch)

In 1 cup measure combine brown sugar and cornstarch. Add soy and pineapple juice. Microwave at High 1 to 1½

minutes, or until thickened stirring after ½ of the cooking time. While sauce is cooking, assemble kabobs. Score ends of each bologna chunk with fork tine. On each skewer place 1 bologna chunk, green pepper piece, 2 pineapple chunks, green pepper piece, bologna chunk. Place kabobs on roasting rack. Brush kabobs with half of pineapple glaze. Cover with wax paper. Microwave at High 3 minutes. Turn over and rearrange kabobs. Brush with remaining glaze; recover. Microwave at High 2 to 3 minutes or until bologna chunks are thoroughly heated; green pepper will be tender-crisp.

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