



Owner News

Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership • 125 Lincoln Street • Boston, MA 02111 • (617) 859-0400 • www.mbhp.org

FALL 2006

Save the Date! The Fifth Annual Property Owner Appreciation Evening is November 20

Please join us for our Fifth Annual Property Owner Appreciation Evening on Monday, November 20 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at MBHP.

Each year this event features speakers and special recognition awards for property owners and managers who have gone “above and beyond” to provide the agency’s voucher holders with affordable housing. Award recipients are nominated by MBHP tenants and staff.

We are thrilled to announce that our keynote speaker will be Congressman Barney Frank. Representative Frank is a national leader and steadfast supporter of affordable housing. He has led the charge to prevent disastrous cuts to federal programs, particularly the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). He provides a voice for MBHP’s low- and moderate-income renters and for households throughout the United States. MBHP



is honored to present Barney Frank with the Community Leadership Award.

MBHP works with more than 4,000 property owners who

annually help to provide housing to 7,200 households in Greater Boston. The Property Owner Appreciation Evening provides property owners with a relaxing night out while allowing MBHP to recognize them for their efforts throughout the past year.

Seating for the event is limited. To make your reservation, please contact Jennifer Shaw at 617-425-6637 or jennifer.shaw@mbhp.org. Free parking will be available in the Lincoln Street garage for all attendees.

Energy Savings Tips

- Set your heat no higher than 68 degrees when you are home, and lower it when you’re out or in bed.
- Make sure heat is circulating properly. Keep furniture, draperies and rugs from heat vents. Move chairs and beds away from exterior walls.
- Install storm windows and draft door stoppers.
- Place a sheet of aluminum foil between the radiator and the wall to reflect heat back into the room.
- Have your heating system serviced once a year and regularly replace furnace filters. During the heating season, change or clean furnace filters once a month.
- Set your water heater between 110 and 120 degrees.
- Wash clothes in cold or warm water. Hot water is not needed to get most clothes clean.
- Weather strip and caulk windows and doors and install gaskets behind outlet covers.
- Install insulation in crawl spaces, attics, walls and basements.
- Install low-flow shower heads and fix leaky faucets. Go to www.BWSC.org for a free water saving kit.
- Keep shades and curtains open during the day on south facing windows to allow for solar heating. Close them at night to retain heat.

Contact utility companies such as NStar and Keyspan for more tips and for information on money-saving rebates!

Property Owner Events Schedule

November 14, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Inspections Workshop, presented by Howard Wensley of MBHP and Wendell Phillips of Boston Housing Authority

*Location: Boston Housing Authority’s Inspections Office, 125 Amory Street, Roxbury
Free parking is available in the lot adjacent to the building.*

November 20, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

The Fifth Annual Property Owner Appreciation Evening
Location: MBHP, 125 Lincoln Street, Boston

December 5, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Year-end Tax Planning, presented by Joy C. Child, CPA of Alexander, Aronson & Finning
Location: MBHP, 125 Lincoln Street, Boston

December 12, 6:00–8:00

Fair Housing and Tenant Selection, presented by the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston
Location: MBHP, 125 Lincoln Street, Boston

Reservations are required. Please call 617-426-6637 or email jennifer.shaw@mbhp.org



Ask a Lawyer

Dear Lawyer Leslie,

I am the owner in a three-family home and I am very allergic to cigarette smoke. I want to rent my apartments, but I don't want to rent to smokers. My friend told me that it is illegal to refuse to rent to people who smoke. Is that true?

Signed, Fuming

Dear Fuming:

Your friend is not correct. I am unaware of any law that prevents you from restricting smoking in your apartment or on the grounds of your property. If you intend to limit smoking at your property, I suggest that you notify prospective tenants, in writing, that you do not rent to people who smoke or, if they are smokers, they are not permitted to smoke on your property. You might want to include this policy on your rental application. Also in your rental application, you can ask applicants whether they or any members of their household smoke. Be sure to include any restrictions that you have regarding smoking in your lease or as an addendum to the Section 8 Lease.

— *Leslie C. Sammon*

Adams & Sammon
295 Devonshire Street
Boston, MA 02110
617-451-4241

Submit your questions for Lawyer Leslie to:

Owner News
c/o MBHP
125 Lincoln Street
Boston, MA 02111

Advice From the Inspections Department

Make Sure the Stove Doesn't Tip!

Many property owners don't realize that anti-tip devices are required for units inspected by MBHP. The proper installation of a stove requires the attachment of an anti-tip device. These devices are included with all new stoves, but often are not installed.

Stove tip-overs frequently occur. If a child steps on an open oven door, or if a heavy pot is placed on the door, the door acts as a lever and forces the stove to tip. These accidents can cause serious injury and even death.

An anti-tip bracket is generally attached to the bottom of the wall behind the stove and clips to the rear legs. This allows the stove to be moved for cleaning and maintenance. If you do not have the original bracket that was supplied with the stove, brackets can be purchased at any home center or appliance store.

Door Lock Regulations

Knowledge of door lock regulations can help property owners to keep their tenants safe and avoid inspection violations.

All door locks must be placed 48 inches or less from the ground. This is to ensure that children and people with disabilities can reach the locks if they need to leave an area during an emergency. MBHP will allow locks above 48" in cases of demonstrated need (such as to restrain wandering children), but tenants must sign a statement that they are aware of the danger these locks create.

Pad locks, hook and eye, and slide bolt locks are not allowed on the side of a door that would result in a person being locked in a room. These locks could make it impossible for a person to evacuate during a fire or another emergency.

Double keyed locks (those that require a key on both sides) are not allowed in any location.

Hatchways into common attic space must be secured to prevent unauthorized entry into occupied dwelling units.

Asbestos Removal

Any asbestos removal or encapsulation must be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Abatement Contractor. These firms are listed in the Yellow Pages and at www.mass.gov/dos/forms/la-rpt_list_ac.pdf. *This is not a do-it-yourself job.* Exposure to asbestos fibers may cause cancer or other serious lung diseases. Additional information on asbestos will be included in future newsletters.

For more information about any of these topics, please call the MBHP Inspections Department at 617-425-6658.



Sign up for Direct Deposit!

Direct Deposit is available for your Housing Assistance Payments.

It's faster and easier than waiting for checks.

Payments are issued on the first business day of each month.

To sign up, contact Audra Toop at 617-425-6611
or Harold Resington at 617-425-6681