Great Falls Housing News

Clean Up

Clean up your garbage!! Garbage is accumulating in yards and outside of the units. YOU are responsible to clean up paper, dog poop, cans, glass...anything considered garbage in your yard!! Your yard is located directly in front of, and directly behind your apartment. The only part of the complex that are not considered tenants’ yards are the common areas. Common areas are used by all people. YOUR YARD IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!!! Even if it is not your yard, be a responsible adult or teenager and pick up litter. Renters will be responsible for the condition of their yards and lease violations can occur.

SCHOOL IS STARTING

School is back in session. Please remember that the little ones don’t always look when they are running to or from the bus or school.

Remember to observe quiet hours from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Upcoming Holiday Office closures: Labor Day, September 2nd
Veteran’s Day, November 11th and Thanksgiving, November 28 & 29th.

Mail Call

Attention: New tenants. When you move in, there should be an orange card in your mailbox. Please fill it out and put it back in your mailbox. This way, the mail carriers will know who lives in each unit.

You need to be sure and list every person in the household, even the kids. They have mail addressed to them sometimes too.

If you are moving out, please make sure you submit a “change of address” to the Post Office. Otherwise, your mail will pile up.

Voice Mail

When leaving a voice mail at the office, please leave your name, the name of the person listed as head of household on the lease, and your FULL address. When you only leave your house number but not the street name, we don’t know if it’s Valeria Way, Chown Springs Loop, 7th Ave South, etc.
PET OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Housing Authority has a pet policy in which they dictate a pet policy deposit ($300) and size of the animal (up to 25 pounds). The pet must have required shots and tags, be neutered or spayed and a contact person must be listed in case of emergency.

The owner or person in control of an animal is required to remove any mess left by the animal. When you are walking, take some baggies with you to pick up after your pet. It is also the law that cats and dogs cannot run at large. They must be on a leash not more than 10 feet long and securely fastened or held to prevent the animal from running loose.

See your Housing Manager for Rent Adjustments!!!

If you have a change in income, it may affect your rent. Please make an appointment with your leasing manager as soon as you are aware of a change in your income. If your income has increased and you delay reporting it, you may end up with a back charge for those months. If your income has decreased, your rent may be reduced. Also, not reporting income may be considered fraud and strict actions will be taken.

Safety First

If your smoke detector is beeping or chirping, the battery is probably low. Please call the office to have the battery changed if you cannot replace it yourself. It is very important that all smoke detectors are operating correctly at all times.

Our newsletter is changing...... It will only be printed 4 times a year now and hopefully we can keep giving you updated information for the Housing area and also keep you informed of our Housing Authority policies for tenants. And again, we will try to throw in some recipes for the culinary people out there!! Have a great fall season!!
Parking Reminder!

Just a reminder, each housing unit is allowed to park one vehicle with a valid parking permit in the parking lots. If you have a second vehicle, or visitors, they must be parked on the streets. Remember the Parking Policy is a 24 hour policy. If a car is found in violation of this policy it will be towed.

THERE IS NO ASSIGNED PARKING FOR TENANTS!!!!

If you have a handicap tag and a handicap sign close to your unit that means anyone with a handicap tag can use this spot. It would be nice if you could have this parking area all the time but sometimes another person who is handicap will need it as well. Be courteous to your neighbor!!!

If a tenant requests that a handicap parking sign be placed on the street, a form which is available at the Housing Authority office must be completed, and Housing Staff will send it to the City of Great Falls. We will need a copy of your handicap tag or registration. The City Street division will be responsible for placing the sign.

If you are requesting a handicap parking sign in one of the Housing Authority parking lots, Housing Staff will require a Reasonable Accommodation form to be filled out by your Doctor or other Medical Professional. Again, we will need a copy of your handicap tag or registration.

NEW STAFF AT GFHA

We have had several changes in our office over the last year it seems. Of course, most people know by now that Kevin Hager and Linda Guinan retired last December. Their replacements are Greg Sukut as Executive Director and Donna Randles as Housing Specialist. Donna was in maintenance before taking this office position.

One of our other housing specialists, Casey More, left last November and we now have Chris Peck who has experience with housing. Both of these young ladies are doing a great job. Since Greg has moved over to the Executive Director position, that left his Program Supervisor job open. But we had someone in the office who could fill that position quite nicely, Donna Halbleib has stepped in to this role as Program Supervisor now.

And of course that change made another opening for Donna's position as housing specialist. We hired Kandice Ehler, who has experience with Neighborworks Loan Department. She is learning a lot and is doing a great job!

The other part of Greg's job was also Deputy Director. This position has went to Chris Tinker who is also the Accounting Supervisor.

Last but not least, we hired Kevin Weir as a new maintenance person to fill a vacant position we had in that department. Everyone is doing a great job in their new positions and we hope we don't have anymore changes for a long, long time!
“Rent is Due!”

“Rent” means all payments to be made to the landlord under the rental agreement. When rent is paid the tenant is entering into a contract where they give up money and the landlord gives up the use of property. When rent is not paid at the designated time, as stated in the rental agreement, the landlord has the legal right to ask for possession of the property as well as rent money that is owed through the court system. If the judgment is found in favor of the landlord a date will be established for the landlord to take possession and at this time he can get assistance from law enforcement to remove the tenants and change locks. The tenant must work with the landlord to get their personal items out of the residence. Rent will be owed until the tenant gives possession of the property back to the landlord, usually when the keys are returned.

When rent is not paid, it not only impacts the tenant’s rights to live in the residence but also the landlords’ ability to pay their bills and do required repairs.

The Great Falls Housing Authority is not in the business of evicting tenants. The eviction process requires hours of work for leasing managers, staff, our community police officers, legal staff and the court system. It is a “lose-lose” situation for both parties.

This problem is being addressed by staff in that if a tenant receives three (3) 14 day notices within a six month period the tenant will receive a 30 day notice to vacate the premises.

NOTE: Rent is due on the first (1) of the month and late on the sixth (6th).

What is the impact on a Great Falls Housing Authority tenant that pays rent late or does not pay rent: extra cost in late fees and court cost; a bad landlord reference; loss of eligibility for subsidized housing; stress of the eviction process.

Bottom line: work a budget so the rent is paid on the first day of the month. If an emergency happens where funds are not available discuss the situation immediately with your leasing manager.