

Dave Poletti & Associates Presents

# The Seattle Landlord Report

A Monthly Publication to Keep Our Clients Informed

Tune Up Your Investment for Spring and Summer

March 2011



There are great reasons to review spring and summer maintenance. The first is preventative maintenance. The second is to keep your investment in tip-top shape to attract good tenancy. In today's rental market, this is particularly important. In addition, providing repairs can definitely reduce an owner's liability.

### **Small Repairs, Big savings**

Many items do not require a large expense, but when handled expediently, can make a big difference in the bottom line.

**Doorstops:** It is amazing that such a small gadget can save so much in preventing unnecessary holes and damage. Putting doorstops on the "tops of doors" when appropriate can keep them from being pulled off or kicked off by children, animals, or even adults.

**Filters:** A clean filter prevents dirty ceilings and walls, not to mention clogged coils, and assists with healthy air. We install them during vacancies and then require tenants to change them regularly.

**Water heater strapping/wrapping:** Strapping the water heater is a safety issue and required in many states by law. Wrapping is also an important energy savings feature for tenants.

**Smoke alarms:** It is imperative to keep smoke alarms in working condition or replace defective devices immediately for tenant safety.

**Deadbolts:** Installing proper deadbolts is another small expenditure for reduced liability.

**Range hoods and exhaust fans:** Clean filters, grills, and wash fan blades to operate properly and to avoid unnecessary replacement.

**Bathroom tiles:** Check grout, caulk, and tile for damage. Caulk or repair as necessary.

### **A Property Manager's Definition of Spring**

When the weather starts to warm, Property Managers know this means the beginning of calls on air-conditioners, insects, and sprinklers. However, these preventative measures can pay off in large numbers.

**Air Conditioning Units:** A yearly service by a professional service, can check the unit, clean coils, add Freon, adjust dampers, and look for any other potential problems. It is also important to remove trees, debris, or trash that can obstruct the unit. These measures can really prolong the life of a heating and air unit.

**Sprinklers and landscape:**

Servicing the irrigation system can be a big savings on water usage, preventing landscape damage, and avoiding standing water – all problems that can lead to potential problems. Pruning can keep bushes and trees in control, preventing damage to buildings and increase safety for tenants and visitors.

**Pest control:** There are times when there are serious situations requiring the services of a professional pest control. This can promote satisfied tenants and again, reduce liability.

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## LANDLORD / TENANT LEGISLATION UPDATE

For a complete description and status on bills in this legislative session view our blog:

[www.DavePoletti.com](http://www.DavePoletti.com) or visit [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov)

| Bill #  | Topic                | Status        |
|---------|----------------------|---------------|
| HB 1526 | Tenant Screening 1   | Dead          |
| SB 5826 | Tenant Screening 2   | Dead          |
| HB 1727 | Service Animal       | Dead          |
| HB 1778 | Utility Sub-metering | Dead          |
| HB 1616 | PUD Lien Authority   | Dead          |
| SB 5050 | Int Sec Dep          | Dead          |
| HB 1126 | Criminal St Gangs    | Dead          |
| HB 1036 | Condemning Prop.     | Dead          |
| SB 5342 | Property Valuation   | Slight Chance |
| HB 1661 | Tenant Vouchers      | Slight Chance |
| HB 1077 | B&O Taxes            | Slight Chance |
| HB 1266 | Changes to RTLA      | Still Alive   |

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# Happy St. Patrick's Day

### Other Important Tune Ups

**Roofing:** Replacing loose or missing roof materials can avoid dry rot and water damage, as well as prolonging the life of the roof.

**Painting:** Painting may promote reduced vacancies and will enhance the value of your property.

**Flooring:** Replacement or repair of dangerous or worn out linoleum, tiles, and carpet can reduce liability and promote good tenancy.

**Plumbing:** Taking care of standing or running water can avoid dry rot, water damage, and prevent the possibility of toxic mold, one of the biggest areas of liability in the housing market.

**Electrical:** Immediately repair any electrical problem to avoid danger for the tenants and the property.

**Gutters and downspouts:** Clean gutters and check the extensions and attachments of downspouts.

**Chimney:** Visually inspect for any damage to the cap, flash, or masonry. Check for bird/wasp nests.

**Get ready for spring and summer with a rental property tune up.** Preventative maintenance limits unwanted surprises, reduces operating expenses, and promotes satisfied tenants.