**November 6, 2015**

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**Watermark Rental Group**

Those of you who attended the Renter’s Group meeting in October heard of plans to experiment with a "rental inspector" – a second set of eyes to go into each the discussion unit behind the cleaning lady after each party of renters leaves. This person would look for cleaning and breakage issues, out-of-place or missing contents, and would notify the manager of any extraordinary wear and tear. The group has approved a $5 increase to the cleaning fee to pay for these inspections. The manager has recruited someone to do the inspections, and we are ready to implement this change effective with new bookings. But before we start, we want you to be familiar with how we see this working, the goals, roles and procedures

**What exactly is the Inspector’s job?**

To enter rental units after cleaning, to go through the unit and identify any issues out of place or missed by the cleaners, such things as breakage, missing contents and damage above normal wear and tear. A set of photos of the interiors of each unit will be available for reference if the inspector is not sure of the condition found on inspection. If a problem is identified, the manager would be contacted, would attend, and they would jointly confirm the problem. The manager would then contact the owner, get an estimate of the costs to repair or replace, and follow up with the previous renter.

**Why are we doing this?**

In the busier summer months, there’s precious little time for the cleaning people to thoroughly clean the units, much less provide a thorough inspection… so things do get overlooked. Also, it is a problem throughout the industry getting tenants to own up to damage that occurred during their stay. It often makes proving responsibility for damage a task worthy of Inspector Clouseau. Regular post-stay inspections should help us determine tenant accountability. Another reason to do these inspections: By going in after the cleaning, the inspections will serve as a regular backstop of the cleaning that was done by pointing out things they may have been missed.

**Does the “inspector” relieve the cleaning people of their responsibility**

**to look for and report damage in a timely way?**

No.

**Have other condos had any success with the ‘inspector’ system?**

Watermark resident and rental group member Tom Wall (#603) has seen it give Holiday Cove North owners the peace of mind of knowing someone is regularly involved in spotting issues. Tom says that the HCN inspector does miss some things, however overall the program has worked very well. [Unlike the Watermark, HCN does not take a security deposit so the only recourse is to contact the renter and ask to pay for repairs. If renters don't pay they don't get back in.]

**Who will be conducting the inspections?**

Rick and Mary have lined up Joann Desvousges of Edgewater to handle these inspections. Some of you will remember Joaan from the time she filled in as acting manager when our managers were away on vacation. A former accountant for the *News-Journal*, she is 68 and has lived in Volusia County since 1971.

**How much time will she spend in each unit?**

Roughly 5-10 minutes (longer if a problem is found).

**What photos will be used to represent my unit? Where can I see them?**

**Whose responsibility is it to update those pictures?**

A representative set of interior photos was shot for each rental unit. These pictures currently exist on a CD and will eventually be printed and kept in a binder in the manager’s office. Photo updating (after an extensive remodeling, for example) is the owners’ responsibility. Owners may either take the new photos themselves and forward them to the Manager… or ask the Manager to arrange to have new photos shot. In either case, for this purpose, roughly 10 photos per unit is ideal. The most useful photos would be well-lighted, wider-angle views that show a variety of furnishings.

**When we rent out our places, breakage, damage and stuff disappearing are just part of the cost of doing business (and a tax-deductible part at that). Is this additional step overkill?**

All of us in the Rental Group are absentee landlords unable personally to be at the Watermark every Saturday after renters leave, to inspect our own rentals for damage. So we welcome this step as a way of safeguarding our more valuable furnishings. Presumably, the inspections would not include counting every washcloth or piece of Tupperware, but would focus on issues that go well beyond normal wear and tear.

***Bill & Sandy***

#203

**November 9, 2015**



**Rental Group Newsletter**

Attached is a revised copy of the housekeeping notice to renters that was passed around and discussed at the Rental Group meeting. It was originally written as an intro for the notebook that renters get at check-in. It serves as a friendly welcome from the managers, sharing some of most basic aspects of checking into and taking care of a condo rental. It is NOT designed to cover everything there is to know about the Watermark. That is the purpose of the rental notebook. An optional use of this welcome letter is to display a duplicate in a "can't miss" location inside your rental unit.

***Bill & Sandy***

#203

Welcome to the watermark

When you vacation at a condominium -- unlike a hotel – you’ll be enjoying all the comforts of someone else’s vacation home. Our owners truly hope you enjoy your stay… so much so that you’ll plan to return and pass the word to friends back home. The owners ask for your cooperation in making these housekeeping items a priority during your stay:

* Smoking is not permitted inside any vacation rental.
* Upon arrival, please childproof the complete interior, putting out of reach anything that could become a hazard to children or easily broken by little hands.
* If anything is not working as it should, let us know as soon as you discover it, so that we may promptly schedule a repair.
* Accidents happen. If anything is inadvertently damaged during your stay, let us know --right away, so we can let the owner know that a repair or replacement will be needed.
* Guests (little ones, big ones and in-between ones) using suntan lotions or oils should rinse off any residue before sitting on upholstered furniture.
* Protect your valuables -- and ours -- by locking your door whenever your rental is unoccupied. Theft has not been a problem here, but we don’t want to make it one.
* If in doubt about using items our owners have in their garages, please check with us.
* Taking items from your rental into another unit (or elsewhere on the property) and leaving them there makes it nearly impossible for the owner of your rental to retrieve them. Please make certain that things taken out of this unit -- kitchenware, food containers, towels, books and DVDs – have been returned.
* Rental guests should leave vacation rentals much as they found them, with dishes cleaned and put back. No more than two loads of bedding for the cleaning folks. All rentals undergo an inspection after check-out; any charges resulting from excessive wear and tear will be billed to the security deposit. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Rick & Mary Trudeau, Managers**

428-3793