



# HAP CHECK NEWS

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH OWNER NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2

## **New Inspection Checklist for Tenants**

Starting in March, the Housing Authority (HA) plans to mail a "Pre-Annual Inspection Checklist" to all tenants due for an annual review. This proposed new form, a joint effort by HA staff and landlords, is designed to assist both the tenant and the landlord.

According to Saulo Amezcuita, HA Inspections Coordinator, "the proposed new form is being used to encourage a dialogue between the tenant and owner to discuss and resolve issues before they become major problems". In addition, if issues are identified and resolved before an annual inspection, it could reduce the time and amount of abatements against an owner.

Amezcuita also sees the new form as a tool to assist the inspectors by identifying possible problem areas and possibly reducing the amount of time an inspector is in a unit.

A copy of the new form can be found on the HA's website at <http://www.longbeach.gov/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=21658>

If you have any questions, feel free to call Saulo Amezcuita at 562-570-5301 or send him an email at [saulo\\_amezcuita@longbeach.gov](mailto:saulo_amezcuita@longbeach.gov)

## **Common Inspection Failures**

During the past month, the Inspections Unit found the following common items that failed inspection. By being aware of these common failures, you can save yourself some time and money by being proactive and prepared for an inspection.

The most commonly found failed items included:

- Inoperative smoke detectors
- Missing smoke detectors
- Inoperative electrical outlets (reversed polarity)
- Inoperative stove burners
- Inoperative wall heaters
- Inoperative vent system
- Proper ventilation for dryers

- Damaged window screens
- Window frames peeling/weather worn
- Use of water heaters and central heater closets as storage (major fire hazard)
- Keyed door knobs in bedrooms and bath rooms
- Window locks not working/missing
- Exposed exterior electrical wires
- Main electrical circuit breaker missing safety panel
- Worn, torn or ripples in carpet
- Wall tiles missing grout
- Excessive mildew
- Leaky faucets
- Toilet base not secure/loose
- Blockage of fire escapes
- Overgrown vegetation and debris in side alley
- Access to garage (if available)

Again, if you notice any of these items in your units, now is the time to correct them! Do not procrastinate and allow a small, repairable item to turn into a huge and costly problem.

**FRAUD Notice From HUD OIG:  
Rents Exceeding HAP Contract Agreements**

HUD's Office of Inspector General (OIG) has recently noticed a recurring problem regarding landlords charging tenants rents in excess of what is authorized by the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contracts.

According to a recent HUD OIG Fraud Information Bulletin, "Improperly requiring tenants to pay rent in excess of what is authorized by the applicable HAP contract represents both an actionable offense under the False Claims Act and a deplorable behavior towards the very persons whom the HCV program (Housing Choice Voucher) was designed to serve. Additionally, depending on the intent, such an action may qualify as a criminal offense..."

The Housing Authority and the OIG do not tolerate such conduct and will cooperate with each other to bring offending landlords to justice and to remedy their wrongs.

More information on this bulletin can be found on HUD's website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/oig/fraudinfo.pdf>