

RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS **BEWARE !!!**

We've had a lot of complaints this year from owners who have had real problems with others. We know that this article does not apply to most of you (although you may find yourself nodding in agreement as you read it). This article is not directed at anyone in particular, but is simply to make everyone aware of these issues.

With the shift in the economy, more and more places up here are for sale – and are taking much longer to sell that might have been hoped. In response to this, a lot of owners who have their places listed for sale are opting to rent them out in the meantime. Also in response to the economy, many owners are choosing to rent out their places in an effort to keep from losing them. Some are just renting them out on their own, while several are using a service that takes care of the details for them. Whichever way an owner decides to go, there are a few things that need to be considered before entering into this type of business.

INSURANCE: Does your insurance company know that you are renting out your property on a daily or weekly basis? They'll probably need to have this information in order for your home and property to be fully covered. Most insurance companies will insist upon a type of coverage, or a special rider, that will differ from your ordinary homeowner's policy if you are going to have other people using your place. So talk to your insurance agent beforehand, and know for certain that you're fully covered.

LIABILITY: Some of the owners who are renting out their property have a liability waiver that they have renters sign. The premise of this is to relieve the owner of any liability for anything that might be caused by the renter- supposedly, when the renter signs the waiver. He or she is assuming liability for anything that might occur during their stay. In most cases, regardless of anything the renter may have signed liability ultimately falls back on the property owner. This has included cases of renter injuring themselves

On the rental property, renters causing damage to the rental property and even renters causing damage to neighboring properties. Just because you have someone sign a liability waiver that does not exclude you from either liability or future lawsuits.

And if you do have someone sign a liability waiver, what proof do you have that they are truly covered in the event of an accident? Do you ask for their proof of insurance and check out their policy to make certain

that it will cover any damage to property or persons? Will it cover damage to neighboring properties?

FIRE HAZARDS: We keep mentioning damage to neighboring properties. That's because fire hazards are one of the biggest hazards we all face up here on the mountain. No matter how much literature you give out to a lot of these renters, and no matter what kind of waiver you have them sign, most of them have NO IDEA about fire safety, and aren't the least bit concerned about it. It's really scary to live next to a rental property and watch what goes on over there.

We're talking **HUGE** fires, many of them not even in fire pits that have been inspected for code compliance, and lots of them left completely unattended!! This is not only dangerous for the property, but just as much so for the owners of the residence as far as liability is concerned. None of us wanted to lose our homes to a fire, but to have it be due simply to complacency or negligence would be unnecessary and avoidable!

So here are some things you need to consider. Do you have a designated fire pit? Has it been inspected for code compliance by the Cedar Mountain Fire Protection District? (If you need an inspection, or simply to have it rechecked, call 682-3225 and arrange to have this done). Have you, the responsible party, made certain that your renter has all the fire rules and that they know how critical this information is? Also make sure they know your street address – just in case they should need to call 911 for ANY reason.

It's easy to see how someone could make the mistake of being unconcerned about fire issues. Anyone who doesn't live here year-round could be understandably unaware of on-going conditions such as the current fire hazard level, the amount of moisture in the soil, the dryness of the trees and undergrowth, etc. Especially for those coming up here from the desert, all you see is green everywhere-so you can't possibly imagine it being DRY here. You're here to have fun-but you just can't treat the forest the same way you would the open desert. You can't build a fire and leave it unattended, even for a short period of time.

One bit of information **everyone** on the mountain needs to know is that the recommended size limit for **any** fire-even if it is a certified fire pit is 2 ½ feet tall by 2 ½ feet wide.

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This might seem small to many of you, but here are the governing considerations: 1) a flame any taller creates the chance of heating the surrounding tree limbs, causing them to ignite due to moisture loss. 2) If combustibles are in the area, long periods of heat nearby can cause items to ignite, and 3) flying embers can reach and ignite trees, undergrowth and other combustibles as far away as 100 feet or more-depending on the conditions!

Meadow View Heights has over 500 lots, and you would probably be surprised at the large number of places here that is being rented out.

Now we're not claiming that renters are the only ones who make mistakes, What we are saying is that people who are only renting usually have a lot less knowledge of the area and the special cautions required here, and they certainly have less of a stake in the welfare of the area than someone who actually owns up here.

NOISE, FOUL LANGUAGE AND OTHER DISTURBING BEHAVIOR: While certainly not life-threatening like an out of control fire, would you want this going on right next to your home? Would you want your visiting parents or grandchildren to be exposed to this?

One of the things that people who are not familiar with the mountain may not know is how amazingly voices carry up here. They may not realize how loud they are or clearly the neighbors can hear every word-so please give them a heads up.

We try to be tolerant - we understand that most of these renters are on vacation and here to have fun. But what they, nor perhaps even the property owners who are renting out to them, have stopped to consider is that for many of us, this is our HOME. We live here year round and have to get up and go to school or work. How would you like to have Party Central in the house right next to you – **ALL SUMMER LONG?!**

So for those of you considering renting out your property, or even loaning it out to friends or relatives, please consider how you would like to be treated by your neighbors - and ask your visitors to **BE AS CONSIDERATE**. Your neighbors will appreciate it.

It would be great if the property owners would make their home and cell phone numbers available to the neighbors. That way, if their renters are creating a problem, the neighbors could immediately apprise them of the situation, thus allowing the property owners to handle it themselves. This would avoid the

neighbors becoming involved in a confrontation with the renters and would hopefully also avoid anyone having to involve the Sheriff's Office. Or, if the owners are renting out through a rental agency, perhaps the neighbors could have the home and cell number for a contact from the agency. That way the agency could check the situation out and handle it themselves.

UNDERAGE DRIVERS AND TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS:

Yes, this is a problem with many property owners themselves, but it is especially true with renters. Either they aren't made aware of the rules and guidelines for this area, or perhaps they just don't think they apply to them. Either way, everyone knows how aggravating it is to come up here for a peaceful weekend, only to have it ruined by noisy OHV's racing up and down the roads. And who among us hasn't had the heart-stopping experience of slamming on our brakes to avoid tiny tykes riding vehicles they are barely big enough to climb onto, much less actually control?

PETS RUNNING LOOSE: For some strange reason, many people seem to believe that just because this is the "wilderness" pets do not have to be controlled. This is just NOT TRUE. First, there's the animal's safety. Who in their right mind would let their pet out to get lost, run over, caught in a trap, get shot or simply killed by a wild animal? It is LEGAL in the state of Utah to shoot any domestic animal that is seen chasing a deer. A lot of the people up here like animals, but that doesn't mean they want someone else's pet roaming in their yard, using it for a toilet and molesting their wildlife. How would you like to be sitting on your front porch with your small children and have several large unknown dogs come right up on the porch with you? Or walking your small dog and have a larger dog, running loose, run up, grab your dog and kill it? These things **HAVE HAPPENED** right here in Meadow View Heights. Finally there **IS** a leash law in Kane County, which states that your pet must be under your control at all times.

Be aware
When renting your property