

## **DR CASH FLOW: How Can I Get My Tenants to Clean When They Vacate?**

**by Nick Sidoti, R.A.M.**

The most effective way of getting an apartment clean is to get the right people to clean it. On the top of the list should be the vacating tenant! Next hire someone who knows how to clean. You have more valuable things to be doing with your time.

Now, I know that most landlords find that their tenants don't leave their apartments clean when they move. Certainly they don't leave it in the condition you want it for new tenants. Well, part of the problem is that most landlords are ineffective at telling their tenants what they expect. What do you want them to clean, and how do you want them to clean it? And what happens if they don't?

When the tenant gives you notice that they are planning to move, you should respond in writing that you received their notice. Include a sheet with cleaning instructions so that your tenants will know what you expect them to do. Here are some examples of things that you might include in your instructions:

- All storage areas should be emptied and left in broom clean condition.
- Floors should be washed and waxed.
- Windows should be washed.
- Carpets should be vacuumed and shampooed.
- Walls should be washed.
- Refrigerator should be defrosted & cleaned.
- Stove should be cleaned. (The best way to get a stove cleaned is to give them a deadline of two weeks before they move. No one can clean a stove, pack, and move all at once.)
- All bathroom fixtures should be cleaned.
- Do not remove phone jacks or curtain rods.
- Do not use harsh detergent on no wax floors.
- Etc., Etc., Etc.

One way to ensure that your tenants follow your instructions is to tell them how much will be deducted from their security deposit for each item on the list if it is left undone. You will be amazed at how much cleaner your apartments will be.

Here are a few cleaning tips:

**Dishwashers** - Clean stains out of a dishwasher by running it through a cycle with Tang in the soap dispenser.

**Rags** - The best thing to use for cleaning rags is terry cloth bath towels, If you buy them on sale, you can buy inexpensive towels for less than the cost of a roll of paper towels. Cut them in quarters and use them as rags. When they get dirty throw them in the washing machine. If you have any old cloth diapers available these work great too.

**Pails** - save your old joint compound buckets. They work great as cleaning pails.

**Cleaning Supply Tote** - Use a laundry basket.

**Powerful Wet/Dry Vacuum** cleaners work great for vacuuming apartments.

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