



Monthly Newsletter

December 2015

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The mandatory fee to register for San Luis Obispo's Rental Housing Inspection Program will be \$65.00 per unit per year.

San Luis Obispo's new Rental Housing Inspection Program requires registration and a \$65.00 fee.

Beginning in 2016, owners of residential rental properties in San Luis Obispo which have less than three attached units are required to register with the City's Rental Housing Inspection Program.

According to the City's website (www.slocity.org/rentalhousing), there will be informational workshops regarding this program on January 13, February 11, and March 4. Basically, this new program requires that units must have an inspection every three years.

Those units which pass an initial City conducted inspection and which have no code violations at the end of the three years can apply for a self-certification program thereafter. The mandatory fee to register for this program will be \$65.00 per unit per year and is supposed to cover the City's cost to administer the program.

Another part of this program is an amnesty feature which allows owners to legalize existing unpermitted work on rental units prior to registering for the Rental Housing Inspection Program. There is a one year timeframe to bring a use or construction into compliance and this program allows occupants to remain in units that do not present an immediate life safety hazard. However, there is no guarantee that units will be legalized(!).

For property owners whose investments are subject to this new ordinance, we are including the registration form with this month's financial statements as a convenience. There is a section on the form where the property owner can designate California West as a point of contact for the City. We anticipate working with the City's Code Enforcement Officers, who will be conducting the inspections, to ensure access to the properties and to address any possible issues which may arise during the inspections.

This is a new program and its exact workings are still unknown to us but we will continue keeping our clients informed as the program unfolds.

Cal Poly students are already looking for housing for the 2016-17 academic year.

At California West, our San Luis Obispo office is already fielding telephone calls from Cal Poly students and their parents who are looking to secure housing for the 2016-17 academic year.

As a result of this early demand, we have begun taking names and e-mail addresses on our website and will send out an e-mail blast reminding these people when we begin our pre-leasing program.

As in previous years, the larger apartment buildings that we manage will begin pre-leasing on March 1 and we will begin pre-leasing everything else on April 1.

Reports are that other managers in town have already begun pre-leasing with strong results so far.

Our philosophy at California West, which is different from some other managers in town, is to wait until February and March before sending renewal letters to existing residents.

The reason for waiting until February or March, which still seems ridiculously early to us, is because we want to minimize turnover while still starting our pre-lease program early enough that we won't have trouble renting units for next year. In our experience, sending renewal letters in February and March works well.

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New Year, new smoke alarm law in California.

The New Year is upon us which, of course, means that California has, yet again, changed its rules on smoke alarms in rental units.

As of January 1, 2016, smoke detectors are now required in all bedrooms and other rooms where people sleep. Previously, smoke alarms were required only on each floor and in the immediate vicinity outside of bedrooms (i.e. a hallway).

At California West, we have been preparing for this change and believe that all the units we manage are currently in compliance with the new law.