



Monthly Newsletter

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Clean landscaping is an important part of maintaining a property and tenants often make poor landscapers.

One of the most noticeable things from the street about a property is its landscaping. Clean landscaping is nice for neighbors, attracts better tenants, and generally conveys the message that a property is well maintained.

Good landscaping does not need to be fancy or involve lots of maintenance, it just needs to be neat, clean, and appropriate for the surroundings. In fact, less maintenance is better as long as the property does not look barren.

The issue, of course, is who should pay to maintain clean landscaping since some maintenance is always necessary. For multi-family properties and condominiums, the answer is fairly clear since it is unrealistic to expect tenants to maintain common area landscaping. We recommend that property owners pay for landscaping at the multi-family properties that we manage.

For single family homes, though, the issue is a bit more complicated. On the one hand, it is reasonable to expect tenants to not abuse the landscaping and we can make tenants responsible for landscaping as part of their lease agreements. Many of our property owners choose to go this route. However, that said, we always encourage our clients to have reasonable expectations even if the lease agreement does say that tenants must maintain a yard.

It is important for property owners to realize that tenants will not always care for a property in the same way that a property owner would care for the property nor as well as a professional landscaper would care for the property. Also, some tenants will see it as a benefit if the property comes with professional landscaping.

In short, we encourage our property owner clients to have reasonable expectations about how well the landscaping at a property will be maintained if they choose to put that responsibility on the tenant. We also suggest that if it is really important to that the landscaping be consistently well maintained then including a professional landscaper in the rent is often a wise decision.

Pre-leasing season begins on April 2 in San Luis Obispo.

As in previous years, we begin our pre-lease season at the beginning of April. To this end, on Monday April 2 we will publish our list of units that become available from late June through early September. We have already completed our renewal process with the exception of only a few properties.

The first properties to be pre-leased are always large houses, then smaller houses/large apartments/condominiums, then medium size apartments, and finally smaller apartments. Properties that can accommodate more roommates are more affordable on a per person basis and therefore are more attractive for tenants who can put together a group of 3-5 people.

The factors that we consider to be most important for student applicants in San Luis Obispo are excellent co-signer credit history, proof of assets owned by co-signers, and good tenant references for the students.

Once Cal Poly lets out for the year in mid-June, it is no longer realistic to put together a group of 3-5 people so the demand for those larger properties diminishes greatly and the market for smaller units picks up. We also see the market for smaller units pick up as some groups of students are unable to select the large home that they prefer because securing those large homes is quite competitive early in the season.

Often, groups who apply for larger properties but who are not selected by our clients for those properties will then roll over their applications to other smaller properties that we manage. Since we have already processed their applications, there is no need for the applicants to pay additional processing fees or wait for additional processing because much of the approval work is already complete. This makes it an attractive proposition to simply find something on our list that may not be a first choice but which will still work.

For students wishing to rent larger properties, the factors that we consider to be most important are excellent co-signer credit history, proof of assets owned by co-signers, and good tenant references for the students. Often, the difference between a group that is selected and one that is not is that the selected group will have rented an apartment in the previous year without causing noise problems and with good payment history.

Groups coming directly from the dorms or from their parents' homes will be at a disadvantage to ones coming from off campus living with verifiable references because we prefer renting to groups who have a proven ability to avoid problems.

That said, with the San Luis Obispo market being what it is, renters of apartments and smaller condominiums will often be coming directly from the dorms or from their family's residence and for those tenants we generally recommend to our clients that they require strong co-signer credit history and assets. We like to see co-signers who own a home because such persons do not generally wish to have a blemish on their credit report if there is a problem that arises.

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