

WAUKEGAN ORDINANCE

The Waukegan City Council adopted a new ordinance that requires all non-owner-occupied housing to be licensed by the city. The narrative of the ordinance is as follows:

ORDINANCE 94-0-

WHEREAS, there are residential building units in the City of Waukegan that are not owner occupied and whose owners do not make available to their tenants the name of a responsible custodian or repairman in case of fire, or in the event of failures in the building structure, mechanical, or other difficulties; and

WHEREAS, these buildings may become public nuisances which contribute to the overall decline of neighborhood continuity and property values, as the tenants in these buildings cannot arrange for repairs, and because the owners of these buildings fail or refuse to make necessary repairs to their buildings.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Waukegan, as follows:

Section 1: ARTICLE V, HOUSING, is amended to add the following:

Sec. 6-177. Supervision of non-owner-occupied rental units.

- (a) The owners of all non-owner-occupied rental units in the City of Waukegan Shall provide the name, address and telephone number of a person responsible for 24-hour custodial care and repairs, which shall be set out on the form available from the City of Waukegan Building Department. This information shall be provided both to the tenant and the City of Waukegan Building Department, which shall keep such information of file. The same information shall also be posted on the inside of the front door in each rental unit. The owner shall be responsible to see that all information on file is current and correct. Failure to provide such information to the City of Waukegan Building Department shall result in the building not being approved for occupancy until such time as the required information is provided.

- (b) Penalty. The general clause of the City Code of the City of Waukegan, found in Ordinance 92-0-105, Section 4, (the adopting ordinance for the Omnibus City Code, passed September 21, 1992) shall apply to this Section and in addition any person convicted of a violation of this Section may be subject to imprisonment for not more than six (6) months for each offense, but must serve a minimum of one (1) day.

Section 2: Any Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 3: This Ordinance shall become effective from and after the date of its passage, approval and publication, as required by law.

AN EDITORIAL

by Dennis E. Eash

I couldn't believe it. Now on the inside door of each rental unit I have to put a sign that provides the tenant my name and address. I guess having all that information on my lease and giving tenants a magnetized business card for the refrigerator isn't enough.

I called the building commissioner today to ask about the new ordinance. Mr. Murphy was very defensive, but explained to me the situation that brought this about. I learned that this winter a building was without heat and no one knew who the owner was. The city authorized heating repairs and ended up catching the bill also. Mr. Murphy believes this information gathering and filing system will make sure that never happens again. He will have each owner's name and address on file so he can contact them should he need to.

Mr. Murphy went on to explain how happy I should be since there is no licensing fee attached to this new ordinance and how this may delay the "really strict ordinance the council is working on." He also explained how he was able to present this ordinance to council and get it passed very quickly. I tried to explain that there was an Illinois civil procedure that already required posting

the "name, address, and telephone number of the person responsible for managing a building," but Mr. Murphy hadn't heard of that and didn't feel it would accomplish the same things as his ordinance.

Well, now in Waukegan I know that "Murphy's Law" prevails. If we keep this up I'll have to stop listing my rental properties as private property.




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