

The Backus Bulletin

"Your Management, Your Way"

February 2013

HANDLING THE UNAUTHORIZED PET

It happens. It is frustrating, irritating, and even maddening. You place a tenant in the property and the rental agreement documents "no pets/animals." You counsel the tenants that this is a binding agreement. Then a vendor goes out to a property to repair something and reports back there is a man eating dog! Or there is a drive-by the property and a cat is spotted sitting in the window. A neighbor reports a dog that is continually barking. Generally, if a tenant moves in an unauthorized animal, the information comes out in some form or another. Now what is to be done?

The first step is to find out exactly what situation is occurring in the property. It could turn out that they are "temporarily" keeping an animal for friend or family. It's possible a stray wandered onto the property and they simply adopted it. They may have decided they wanted a dog or kitty for their children and just think they only have to pay more in a deposit. And, of course, it may be they deliberately planned to move in a pet from the beginning even though they knew the property owner would not accept one. Knowing the

mindset of the tenant is a big key in figuring out what to do.

The next step may be one of the following.

A letter documenting the situation is sent notifying the tenant they have violated their rental agreement and they have to resolve the situation with the property management company ; they are required to contact us to get approval for the animal or schedule an inspection to verify that the animal has been removed.

It is important to find out exactly what type of pet they have moved into the property. It could be something simple such as a gerbil or hamster. It could also be a snake, a parrot, a cat, a small dog, a large dog, etc. Whether it is small or large, any animal can cause damage and it could even be one that is illegal to keep in the residence, such as barnyard animals in residential housing. The zoning of the property determines what animals are allowed in the property as well as the, preferences of the property owner. Often the homeowner's Insurance policy prohibits certain dog breeds.

It could be that it is a temporary problem, a pet that is suitable, or a situation where the unauthorized

pet is simply unacceptable. This dictates what steps need to be taken and every situation is different. Here are some scenarios.

1. The situation is temporary and after receiving a notice from their property manager, the tenant removes the pet. A follow up walk-through confirms this. Our lease agreement

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BACKUSPM.COM

Announcements & Services

WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE OWNING A RENTAL PROPERTY EASIER FOR YOU?

We won't know unless you tell us! Don't forget we have an "Eviction Protection" plan for \$20.00 per month that covers the \$1,000-\$1500 attorney fees if you have to evict a tenant. We also have "Rent Protection" at 2% additional management fee that means we will pay the rent if the tenant does not pay on time or not at all. Call or email Sally: sbackus@backuspm.com or 831-455-2052.

THINKING OF BUYING OR SELLING?

If you are thinking of buying or selling, we can assist you. We specialize in Residential and multi-residential Units and are experienced in Conventional Sales, Purchases as well as Short Sales. Just call and ask for Bill or Amy and we will help you with your Real Estate needs. There is no obligation. Check out your property value today!

On-line Statements

(Contact our office or e-mail Sally at sbackus@backuspm.com to sign up or for further information)

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prohibits any animal (not approved) being on the property, so at the minimum there will be a daily fee for the time the animal was on the property.

2. The tenant, after notification from their property manager, removes the animal because they do not want to incur poor rental history or pay an increase to their deposit.
3. The tenant has chosen a reasonable pet, they are being responsible for its care, it has not affected the condition of the property, and it is acceptable to the property owner. In addition, they are willing to sign documentation with increased security deposit.
4. The pet is not an acceptable situation for whatever reason and a notice is sent to the tenant to remove the pet immediately.

We find that the majority of tenants will respond and work to resolve the issue of an unauthorized pet. There are situations where it can require an eviction. In that case, we normally find that it is in the best interests of the property to take the steps to remove this tenancy and a destructive pet.

