



CAPS TIPS

*Brought to you by the Chicago Police Department
Your Partners for Safe Neighborhoods*

SAFE BUILDING TIPS FOR LANDLORDS

One bad building can destroy a block; a bad block can destroy an entire neighborhood. To help break this cycle, the City has enacted the Gang and Drug House Ordinance. The ordinance, being enforced by the Police Department, the Building Department and the Law Department, contains new tools to deal with problem buildings. Landlords need to be partners in preventing buildings from becoming havens for gangs and drugs. These tips are designed to help you keep your buildings safe and profitable.

Know Your Building.

Under the Gang and Drug House Ordinance, building owners can be held responsible for criminal activity in and around their buildings if they do not take action to prevent or deter such activity. Therefore, you must know what is happening at your property. Talk to tenants, neighbors and beat officers to find out if criminal activity is a problem at your property. Spend time at your property or employ managers who can be there to watch for signs of gang and drug activity. Look for constant traffic of a suspicious nature at the building, be aware of groups congregating at your property, and report specific criminal activity.

Know Your Tenants.

Building owners must be aware of whom they rent to. Thorough screening can detect individuals who may be engaged in criminal activity or who may bring such individuals to the building. Don't let convenience stop you from screening. In the long-term, renting to someone without thorough screening could cost you more than leaving an apartment vacant while you find a qualified tenant. Consult with an attorney or professional property manager to determine proper legal steps to help screen out bad tenants. If you do have problem tenants, move quickly to begin eviction proceedings. Letting bad tenants linger in your building can drive your good tenants out.

Make Your Building Unattractive for Crime.

If a building is poorly maintained, easily accessible, or dark, it could become a crime magnet. Once a building attracts crime, it is only a matter of time before it and its owner's investment are lost. Make your building as unattractive to crime as possible. Install secure lighting systems, entry doors and gates, provide door peep holes, keep shrubs and trees trimmed to decrease hiding spots, and remove graffiti -- particularly gang graffiti -- immediately. These actions will attract good tenants and will let criminals know that someone cares about the building and will be willing to act to prevent illegal activities.

Find out more about how you can get involved in making your neighborhood safer by calling 311 or visiting the CAPS home page on the World Wide Web at www.cityofchicago.org. To find out more about the City's Landlord Training Program, call 311. Join the CAPS team of police officers, residents, and City Departments working together for a safer Chicago

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