

PEST CONTROL—PREVENTION IS KEY!

Pests can be a problem *any* time during the year and are a common occurrence in the property management industry. Especially in the winter months we'll see increased activity for little pests trying to find new homes from the cold. Therefore, it is important to keep ivy, trees and other shrubbery from overgrowing. In Marin there are many areas that rodents are prone to, we see spider issues in the Fall, and bird/bee nest issues in the Spring/Summer.

There are varying definitions for pests—pests can not only be a nuisance to your tenants, make the property uninhabitable, and damage your property:

1. An insect or other small animal that harms or destroys garden plants, structures, trees, etc.
2. An annoying or troublesome animal or nuisance
3. A deadly epidemic disease, especially a plague; pestilence

The problem could be **ants, spiders of all kinds, bees, wasps, termites, mosquitoes, bed bugs, mice, rats, rat mites, roaches, voles, moles, gophers, snakes**, and much more. It may seem that the third definition is not applicable but problems such as the West Nile Virus, caused by a certain type of mosquito can happen nearly anywhere, causing severe illness or even death.

The question is—who is responsible for handling the infestation—the property owner or the tenant? When it comes to pest control maintenance, many owners think this topic is straight-forward and should simply be a tenant problem.

However, this is not always the case. Investors should always take pest control seriously to minimize their liability.

The more common pest problems are ants, mice, spiders, etc. So where does your property management company come in? We can

counsel tenants and require them to do minimal maintenance, which can often solve these problems and most residents will accept this responsibility. The most practical approach we use is to counsel them on how to use preventative maintenance to avoid problems in the first place. This includes basic housekeeping such as immediately cleaning up food, removing pet food in areas that attract pests, keeping garbage receptacles clean and out of the house, wiping countertops, and other hygienic practices.

For example, if a tenant calls reporting they have rats or a major infestation of ants or wasps, this is no longer a simple pest control problem. It is now time to contact a pest control professional. *When it can affect the health and welfare of tenants, it definitely becomes an owner responsibility.* This comes under the URLTA, the Uniform Residential Landlord Tenant Act. Many property owners have paid high fines and/or settlements because they ignored necessary pest control measures.

The owner should protect their property first and foremost and be concerned with costs afterwards, as pest can seriously deteriorate your property and cause other major issues with wiring, ducts, yard areas, and water lines.

What is the best way for property owners to approach pest control?

- **Consider a quarterly or semi-annual pest control service.** If the rental property is prone to certain pests, this can save a lot of headaches with tenants in the future and avoid major infestations.
- **Keep all problem areas free of potential pest problems.** For example, resolve areas where water collects and attract mosquitoes, etc. Clear out areas that might encourage pests to set up a habitat on the property.

- **If a pest control situation occurs, listen to your property management professionals and allow use of professional pest control services to remove the problem quickly and effectively.**
- **Weigh the costs of professional pest control services against losing good tenants (and rent) or incurring a costly legal problem.** Consider the costs to release the unit, commission fees and turnover maintenance costs as well.

As your property management company, we will always work to minimize the problems at your property. We will advise you of the best way to handle any pest control situation. A pest control problem may seem like an annoyance but you do not want this annoyance to turn into a liability. Using common sense can reduce your risks concerning pest control.



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PRANDI Property Management, Inc. proudly holds the Prestigious Certified Residential Management Company (CRMC®) designation, from the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM).

Vision Statement...

To be the most trusted name in property management services in Marin County by offering unparalleled customer service through effective communication, technology, and continued education. The PRANDI Team will continue to be the most respected leader in the industry and strengthen our presence in Central and Southern Marin.

NEWS & UPDATES

Just this month we've finally gotten rain in Marin County! Unfortunately, that has brought on many rain-related issues with many of our properties. Our maintenance teams treat water intrusion issues with the quickest and most efficient care possible, as they are categorized as emergencies. Due to the urgency of the matter in many instances we may not be able to reach you prior to making a decision to proceed with a repair—especially when water is involved because it can cause excessive damage. If you have questions about the process of maintenance reporting or what is categorized as an emergency please contact your property management team.

Accounting Department Update: 2011 Annual Summaries were just posted to your owner portals under the "Documents" tab, and are now are downloadable. 1099 Tax forms will be mailed by the end of the month. Included with the 1099 you will receive a printed 2011 Summary. For those of you we pay mortgages for, your form 1098 (Mortgage Interest Statement) has been uploaded to your portal, and you will receive the original in the mail.

Thank you & Happy Valentines Day!

—Your PRANDI Property Management Team



QR Codes:

Embracing Technology

If you haven't used the widely popular QR coding on your smart phone you are in for a real treat! Futuristic as it may seem, QR codes are gaining popularity and making their way into property management companies everywhere.

This month PRANDI will be unveiling our own QR codes and begin placing them on our rental signs for prospective tenants to have quick access to the corresponding advertisement on our website. There they will be able to see photos of the inside of the property, as well as price and amenities from the sign.

This innovative technology will change the way prospective applicants and current tenants receive information on current property listings; even the tenant newsletters, move in packets and other forms of communication with your tenants.

We're very excited to start using this new technology and embrace this form of communication!

HOW TO DOWNLOAD & SCAN QR CODES:

Step 1: You must have a Smartphone with web capabilities!

Step 2: Download QR code software, search "QR code" in the downloads section or "app store". Don't purchase one, it should be FREE

Step 3: Launch the app, then point your camera at the code to see the page or link



Once you scan the QR code above you may be surprised where you end up!