



"NORMAL WEAR AND TEAR"

As you consider renting your home or investment property, you need to keep in mind the term "Normal Wear and Tear". It's not often that a tenant will maintain a property as well as the homeowner. Regardless of how meticulous owners or tenants are in maintaining the property, they cannot escape "normal wear and tear." This principal underlies the inclusion in all lease agreements of the "normal wear and tear" exception.

Some examples of normal wear and tear are:

1. Scuff marks on walls, trim, woodwork, flooring and doors
2. Minor scratches and dings on appliances
3. Overgrown trees and large shrubs
4. Minor stains and visible wear and tear on carpeting in traffic areas
5. Picture hangers (hooks, small nails, molly or other anchors)
6. Deterioration/staining of caulking (kitchen and baths)
7. Loose fixtures (towel bars, toilet paper holders etc) & loose door knobs/locks

Our goal is to protect and preserve your property in a condition that represents how you left it, taking into account normal wear and tear. We complete detailed inspection reports after the owner leaves, prior to the tenant moving in, and again after each tenant vacates. We use these reports as the basis to determine damages. An example of normal wear and tear is, "a window screen that has a fray from age or a hole from a tree limb". An example of property damage would be, "a large red stain on the living room carpet that was not present prior to the tenant's occupancy". We also inspect your property approximately every 6 months to keep you apprised of the current condition.

It is important for you to avoid unreasonable expectations about the continuing condition of your property when placed in the care of a tenant. When we report to you the condition of your property during the course of a lease term, please don't be alarmed about "normal wear and tear". When the tenant vacates we often prepare a list of items that are considered normal wear and tear as well as items that could use updating to keep your home attractive for rental purposes.

Lawn and shrubs are another concern about the property. If you are not providing full lawn care be aware that most tenants will not maintain the yard as well as the homeowner. Tenants are not typically required to mulch or provide chemical treatments for fertilizing, weed or insect control. Lawns and shrubs take quite a bit of time to restore. We recommend that you consider putting in place a program that will provide 4-6 treatments per year for fertilization, weed and pest control and possibly lime and aeration. Additionally, you should consider an annual cleanup to mulch, edge beds, pruning and shrub feeding.

If you have not seen your property in two or more years, we recommend you plan a visit. Check the IRS regulations for possible tax reductions for visiting your property. Keep in mind that not all tenants keep the property looking like the cover of Good Housekeeping. Please remember, normal wear and tear happens to all properties. Carpet, flooring, paint (interior and exterior), appliances, and roofs all deteriorate/age and require periodic maintenance and replacement.

You will be receiving thousands of dollars in rental income. The more consideration you give to upkeep of the property, the more appealing the property is to new tenants and in retaining current tenants.