



# ***Housing Nantucket Tenant Handbook***

*November 2008*

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*Dear Housing Nantucket Resident:*

Welcome! Please take time to read the information in this handbook, and store this in a handy place. We hope this booklet answers questions that may arise during your tenancy, but always feel free to call our office with any questions or concerns, in addition to reporting any maintenance problems. We hope you enjoy your new home!

Sincerely,  
*Housing Nantucket (NHA Properties Inc.)*

Contact Information:

Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Address: 15 Teadsdale Circle (Off of Nobadeer Farm Road), P.O. Box 3149, 02584

Telephone: (508) 228-4422

Fax: (508) 228-4915

Email: aaron@housingnantucket.org

*After Hours:*

The quickest way to reach the staff is to email us at aaron@housingnantucket.org. This email will be checked until about 10 p.m. every night. We will be instituting an “after hours” phone number by January 1, 2009. Call the regular office phone number and a prompt will direct you to the appropriate number.

*For Fire, Police and Medical Emergencies call: 9-1-1*

*Other Important Numbers:*

Fire Non-Emergency Contacts: (508) 228-2324

Poison Control: (800) 222-1222

Non-Emergency Public Safety Situations: (508) 228-1212

*Utilities: Not all our residents have the same utility companies. If you are unsure who your service provider is, please call our office. Below is a handy place to keep those numbers, if you wish.*

Oil/Gas \_\_\_\_\_

Electric \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cable \_\_\_\_\_

## ***SECTION ONE: IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR NEW RESIDENTS***

### **1. Rental Agreement**

Your rental agreement is a legal contract obligating both Housing Nantucket and you, the resident, to all terms and conditions contained within it. It is important that you keep this where you keep all other important documents. The renewal of your rental agreement will be dependent upon you meeting all conditions laid out within it. For that reason, it is very important that you read your rental agreement, in its entirety. If you have questions on any of these items, do not hesitate to call the Housing Nantucket office. Outlined below is further explanation of certain rental agreement items we receive many questions on, in addition to other information about your tenancy with Housing Nantucket.

### **2. Rent Payments**

Rent is due on the 1st of each month. Mail or bring your payment to Housing Nantucket's office at 15 Teasdale Circle. All payments must be made by cash, check or money order, made payable to NHA Properties Inc.. For your convenience, we have a mail drop for after hours rent payment. It is located below the window to the left of our entry door. Please remember this drop isn't weatherproof.

*Late payments* – Payments will not be considered late until the 5th of the month. A *Non Payment of Rent Notice* to terminate your lease will be issued on the 10th of the month if the rent is still not paid. Housing Nantucket will file court proceedings if your account is not cleared up by the expiration date on the notice. At no time will Housing Nantucket's acceptance of a late payment constitute a waiver of the right to terminate the rental agreement for failure to make timely payments. Please note that it is the resident's responsibility to have a zero (\$0) balance by the end of each month unless previously agreed in writing.

*Returned checks* – A \$25.00 fee will be charged for checks returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF). If you have two or more NSF checks in one year, you will be required to pay by money order.

### **3. Occupancy**

Only those individuals listed on your lease may live in your home. You cannot assign the lease, sublet your unit, or take in boarders or lodgers without the consent of Housing Nantucket. If your family size increases or someone moves out, you need to report that to Housing Nantucket. Guests may stay in your home up to a maximum of seven days. Guests staying longer than this must have written permission from Housing Nantucket. Hosting unauthorized occupants is a violation of your lease and can result in your eviction.

### **4. Renter's Insurance**

Housing Nantucket is not responsible for loss or damages to your personal property. It is the resident's responsibility to pay all premiums and deductibles for rental insurance. Renters insurance generally is less than \$25 per month.

## **5. Smoke Detectors**

You are required to test your smoke detector at least once every six months. News stations generally remind their audience to test their detectors when we adjust our clocks, twice a year, for daylight savings. It is very important for you to test and maintain the smoke detector. If you cause the smoke detector to become inoperable, you may be fined in accordance with the law and you may be subject to eviction. If your smoke detector starts beeping, you need to change the battery. If you are uncertain about how to operate your smoke detector, please call Housing Nantucket.

## **6. Repair and Maintenance Requests (Work Orders)**

When you notice any disrepair or a problem in or around your home, it is your responsibility to call Housing Nantucket and place a Work Order request as soon as possible. We will need your name, address, phone number and a brief description of the problem. When placing a Work Order please state whether the staff has permission to enter your premises without further notice for the purpose of making the repairs and if there are any times they should not come. If permission is granted, it is likely that your repairs can be serviced more quickly. As a rule, a technician will call the day before coming out to your home. If you cannot be reached, a voice message will be left if possible. At times, it may happen that a technician has time to add in extra Work Orders for that day. If so, the technician will call and try to notify you that they are coming out that day. If you have given permission to enter, this allows us to service Work Orders more quickly. Your cooperation in giving permission to enter will be greatly appreciated. Residents will be made aware of any charges associated with the repair/requested work that they are responsible for.

Here is how Housing Nantucket processes and prioritizes Work Orders:

- High Priority: Water leaks, clogged toilets, inoperable furnaces, refrigerators and stoves that are not working, and anything involving health and safety. We try to respond to these the day requested or by the following day.
- Mid priority: Broken light fixtures, clogged sinks, loose caulking around tubs, ants, mice, cleaning gutters, etc. These requests we try to respond to within the week.
- Lower priority: These are mainly cosmetic requests such as landscaping issues and the like. These we do as time allows.

The technicians schedule their workdays in advance, so when they respond to a Work Order request they will do their best to help, but they can only take care of that particular request. If there are additional problems that have arisen, please call in and request a Work Order for those and a technician will return.

## **7. Locks, Alarms, Cable and Satellite Dishes**

Locks cannot be changed or added without Housing Nantucket's written permission. If you would like your locks changed, please call the office. There is a charge for this. If, after you get our permission, your lock is changed by someone else (we prefer it not be), you will need to give Housing Nantucket a copy of the key(s) for the new lock(s). If damage results to the premises because Housing Nantucket was not provided with a key for the new or added lock(s), the resident will be charged for repair of that damage.

Housing Nantucket requires that you must get written permission before having a satellite dish installed at your home. The companies are not always asking tenants if they are the property owner, so it is up to you to take care of this in advance of making the installation. Housing Nantucket has specific guidelines for installation of these systems and the staff can help you with this. If you do not obtain permission in advance, you will be required to remove the installation and repair all damage caused by it.

### **8. Painting**

If you wish to paint any portion of your home, you will need written approval from Housing Nantucket before you do so. If you just need touch-up paint, we can often supply that for you. If you paint the walls a different color than what they were when you moved in, you will need to either repaint them the original color before you move out or be charged for Housing Nantucket's cost to repaint.

BECAUSE OF THE POTENTIAL FOR DISTURBING LEAD BASED PAINT, AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU EVER DO ANY SANDING OR SCRAPING OF THE WALLS, WINDOWSILLS OR ANY PORTION OF YOUR HOME. Please call our office if you have any questions regarding this.

### **9. Parking**

Inoperable and/or unlicensed vehicles may not be parked or stored on the property. Any vehicles that are improperly parked, inoperable, or unlicensed may be towed away at the expense of the vehicle's owner. The resident agrees to abide by off street parking regulations and to notify and require guests to abide by parking regulations.

### **10. Trash and Rubbish Disposal**

Residents are required to dispose of all garbage and rubbish in the dumpsters or cans provided for such purpose. You must take your trash to the Materials Recycling Facility or arrange for a hauler. You should make special arrangements with your trash collector for the disposal of large items such as discarded furniture. Any extra charge items such as oversized containers, extra containers, and special pick-ups will be charged to you.

### **11. Lawns and Yards**

All exterior areas of homes should be kept clean, orderly, and free of debris and litter at all times. If you live outside of Miacomet Village, you are responsible for the upkeep of the lawn and yard. Please mow at least every two weeks or as needed. Grass should not get beyond six inches in height, and should never be cut more than 1/3 of its height at one time. If you live in Miacomet Village, you are not responsible for the lawn, but you need to keep the lawn and the area surrounding your unit residence free from rubbish and debris.

### **12. Noise and Disturbances**

Continued tenancy requires that you take responsibility at all times for yourself, your guests and all others in your control. Loud noises and other disturbing acts in the unit or on adjoining property that interfere with the rights, comforts, or convenience of other residents and neighbors are prohibited at all times.

### **13. Annual Inspections**

At least twice a year, Housing Nantucket will inspect all of its rental units for conformance to health, safety, and lease regulations. Any needed repairs will be noted and scheduled. You will be notified approximately two weeks before the inspections take place.

### **14. Violence**

Violent behavior will not be tolerated and is grounds for immediate eviction.

### **15. Income Verification and Re-Certification**

Because Housing Nantucket is an affordable housing provider, there are certain income guidelines our tenants must conform to. To meet Housing Nantucket's income eligibility guidelines, household income may not exceed 80% of area median family income (MFI) as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Some of Housing Nantucket's properties are under different programs and require an income level even lower than this. We include all legal sources of income such as wages, public assistance, child support, and food stamps when calculating your household income. Your household income must be verified annually. You will be notified approximately one week before this date and an appointment will be made for you to document your annual verification forms.

### **16. Move-Out**

**You must give at least 30 days advance notice in writing to Housing Nantucket when moving.** If you fail to give notice or give an improper notice, you may lose your security deposit. The notice becomes effective the day it is received and date stamped in Housing Nantucket's office. Verbal notices over the phone only indicate your *intention* to move. It is not official until placed in writing. When you move out, Housing Nantucket will inspect your unit to note and document its condition. You may be present at this inspection if you wish, since you will be charged for any damages beyond normal wear and tear caused by you or your guests. It is expected that you will leave your unit in substantially the same condition as when you moved in.

*Security Deposit* – Your security deposit is not rent, but a refundable deposit to ensure the fulfillment of lease conditions and as a contingency against any damages to the property. If you fulfill your lease according to its terms, only charges for damages, excluding normal wear and tear will be deducted from your security deposit and your security deposit will be refunded as provided by Massachusetts State Law. Conditions for the return of your security deposit include but are not limited to the following:

- You must make sure all rent and other fees are paid in full according to the terms of your lease.
- You must give a 30-Day Written Notice of Intent to Vacate the Premises stating your move-out date. · You must give a forwarding address so that any refund of your security deposit can be returned promptly.
- After you have moved all of your belongings from the residence, you must completely clean the entire unit, including, but not limited to the stove, refrigerator, bathroom, any ceiling fans, closets, cabinets, walls and floors, shampoo all carpets. Basements and garages will need to be cleared and cleaned as well. Mow the lawn if you live in a single family home. The unit must be returned in rentable condition or you will be charged for restoring it to that condition.

- If you are a pet owner, remove all pet debris, and deodorize and de-flea the residence.
- Send your change of address and call utility companies to confirm that the transfer of utilities has been completed.
- Turn off lights, secure the doors and call the office to schedule a move-out inspection.
- Return all keys to Housing Nantucket. You will be charged \$20 for each set of keys that are not returned. Don't forget to leave your forwarding address!

*Utilities* - Utilities are never to be shut off, especially in winter.

## **17. Eviction**

Eviction is a serious and costly matter. No one wants this to happen to you! If you are experiencing any problems that you feel will put you at risk of being evicted, please bring them to the attention of Housing Nantucket immediately. Careful consideration will be given to the situation and, if possible, help will be offered. However, the responsibility for final resolution of the problem is yours.

*Some examples of actions that can result in eviction if they are not corrected:*

- Non-payment of rent and past due monies.
- Failure to pay service charges or to reimburse Housing Nantucket for repairs or services.
- Inability to take care of yourself or your apartment and refusal to seek outside help.
- Creating a danger to the health and safety of others.
- Unsanitary housekeeping.
- Disturbing the peace of neighbors and other residents.
- Causing damage to your unit, common hallways, exterior or grounds.
- Displays of public drunkenness, use of illegal drugs or violation of drug laws.
- Substantial violation of your lease or management policies; or repeated minor violations of management policies.
- Use of your unit for activities other than as a residence.
- Permitting unauthorized persons to stay on the premises without the permission of management.
- Giving false information regarding income or other factors considered in determining tenant rent.

Your rental agreement and Massachusetts Landlord/Tenant law protects you from being unjustly evicted from your house or apartment. Housing Nantucket must follow certain procedures in order to terminate a lease and evict a tenant. If you receive a notice that your tenancy is to be terminated, it will state the date your lease is to be terminated and what you need to do to correct any problems that have caused the notice to be issued. If you have any questions about your rights as a renter, a good contact is the Housing Assistance Corporation (Hyannis). Their regular office phone number is: (508) 771-5400.



### **18. Resident Grievance Policy**

If you have any questions or concerns as a Housing Nantucket resident, you should bring those issues to the attention of Housing Nantucket's Executive Director. You may call and ask to speak to the Director and if this issue cannot be resolved over the phone, you will be directed to outline the issues/circumstances/concerns in writing and submit this, along with any supporting documentation to the Director. Once the director has received the letter and any documentation, the matter will be analyzed. A determination will be made and you will receive notification from the Director in writing. This notification will also include an invitation to contact the Chair of the Board of Directors in writing if you are unsatisfied with the determination.

The Board will then review your letter and any supporting documentation and can overrule any decision made by the Director. You will receive written notification of the Board's decision which will be final.

### **19. Over Income Policy**

In the event a resident's household income rises over the allowable amount per the housing designation (usually not to exceed 80% MFI) while living in a Housing Nantucket property, the resident, through rent payments, must cover Housing Nantucket's associated cost of owning and managing the property they are renting. The rent increases shall be in increments sufficient to address this cost, which will include annual property taxes. The increase can be less, but shall not be more than \$100 per month for the first two years, and rising to 30% of total household income by Year 3 of their over-income status. If these increases in rents do not keep pace with the cost of owning and managing the property, Housing Nantucket may choose to subsidize the unit with other income sources rather than displacing the resident. Board approval will be required for such a decision.

In the event the resident's income fluctuates and returns to a lower level and within the stated income limits, Housing Nantucket will reevaluate the resident's household income and take appropriate action to make an adjustment to the rent according to the change in household income. Residents must substantiate any reported change in income. Rent adjustments will only be made once a year beyond the normal rent review and annual recertification process, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by the Executive Director. In situations where residents are residing in units designated for incomes lower than 80% MFI (such as 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, etc.), and their income rises beyond the designated amount, but remains under 80% MFI, Housing Nantucket may look to relocate that household to a unit within Housing Nantucket's portfolio that is appropriate for their household income. The Executive Director may review situations on a case-by-case basis. At times, Housing Nantucket may have no alternative but to discontinue a tenancy to avoid jeopardizing a housing program designation. Sometimes relocation may be necessary to avoid jeopardizing a housing program designation.

## ***SECTION TWO: MAINTENANCE and SAFETY TIPS***

### **1. Appliances**

The best way to maintain and care for the appliances in your home is to clean them regularly. Here are some helpful hints for preventing problems we see frequently:

#### ***ELECTRIC STOVES:***

Do NOT wrap tin foil around the drip pans. This can cause the stovetop heating elements to short out. The best way to keep the drip pans clean is to wipe spills as soon as they happen. You can also let them soak in warm, soapy water. After you have been cooking with grease, pull out the stovetop heating elements and clean off the contacts. A greasecutting dish soap should work well.

#### ***REFRIGERATORS:***

Please clean the gaskets around the rims of the refrigerator and freezer doors regularly. Again, if a spill happens, it is best to wipe it up as soon as possible. If dirt builds up on the gaskets, they will deteriorate, allowing outside air to be drawn inside. This will cause ice build up in the freezer, and since your refrigerator will have to work harder, it uses more electricity, thus increasing your utility bill. Also, do NOT overload the condiment shelves as they will snap off!

### **2. Sinks**

Do NOT put anything other than soap and water down any of your sinks or tubs. If your home is not equipped with a garbage disposal, putting food down the drain will cause the sink to clog. It is also unacceptable to throw grease down the drain. To properly dispose of grease, pour it into a glass container with a lid and place in your refrigerator until it solidifies. You can use the same container until it is full. Once solid, you may dispose of this in your trash.

### **3. Toilets**

Housing Nantucket's staff receives many calls for clogged toilets. Most often these are in homes with "low consumption" toilets. These are recognizable by their smaller water tank size. This type of toilet saves water by only using half as much water as other toilets when flushed. These toilets require one flush for liquids, but often two flushes for solids. By remembering to flush twice when necessary, you can help prevent your toilet from becoming clogged. Keep a good toilet plunger on hand, as well.

### **4. Light Fixtures**

NEVER use any bulb brighter than 60 watts. Your light fixtures should have a label stating the allowable wattage. Higher wattage bulbs generate more heat and can cause the insulators to melt off the wires, increasing the possibility of a fire. If you have any questions as to whether or not you have purchased a suitable light bulb, please call our office. You may also want to consider installing Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs (CFL's), which will help save you money on your electric bill.

### **5. Extension Cords**

Extension cords should be used ONLY on a short-term, temporary basis. Using these on a regular basis could cause the cords to overheat and start a fire. If you do not have enough outlets to meet your needs, please use surge protectors, not extension cords. If you have any questions about this, please call our office.

## **6. GFCI Outlets**

Some units are equipped with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupt (GFCI) outlets. These will be found in rooms with water such as your kitchen or bathroom. These outlets have a red and black button on them. If you are not receiving any power from one of these outlets, please push the reset button before calling Housing Nantucket. This will usually return the supply of power back to the outlet.

## **6. Breaker Box**

It is important to know where your electrical breaker box is in case you blow a fuse or in case of a fire. During your move-in process, a Housing Nantucket staff member will point out where you can find your electrical breaker box. If this has not been shown to you and you are unable to locate it, please call our office.

## **8. Flammables**

You should not store any combustibles, gasoline, or other flammable liquids inside your unit including basements, on the sidewalk, porches or patios except as permitted by the Fire Department and insurance regulations. It is also important to keep the area surrounding clothes dryers and furnaces clear. Do not store any items, particularly cardboard boxes and rags, near these fixtures as they could cause a fire. SPECIAL NOTE: Clean out any lint filters on your dryer, they can cause fire to occur.

## **9. Bar-B-Ques**

You may not operate a bar-b-que or similar equipment within 10 feet of the building. Please make sure that the bar-b-que is fully extinguished before leaving it unattended. If you are using a bar-b-que, please be sure to get the appropriate permit from the Nantucket Fire Department.

## **10. Cigarettes and Candles**

If you or any of your guests smoke, please be extremely careful and responsible and make sure that all cigarettes and matches are extinguished fully and properly in an ashtray. Also be certain to take extra care with candles and make sure they are fully extinguished before going to bed or leaving your unit. Do not leave candles unattended. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the maximum length of time to burn the candle and how often to trim the wick.

## **11. Plug-In Air Fresheners**

Please do not use any brand of plug-in air fresheners. These devices are a common cause of costly and deadly residential fires.

## **12. Pest Control**

If you see any pests, such as roaches, ants, mice, etc., please call Housing Nantucket as soon as possible. You can help prevent pests from appearing by rinsing all recyclables, wiping up grease spills, cleaning sugary spills, and in general, keeping your kitchen and other rooms clean. Soda pop bottles attract ants, so please rinse these well! Do not leave food outside your home as this can attract many pests.

## ***SECTION THREE: HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME CLEAN AND HEALTHY***

### ***HOUSEKEEPING AND CLEANING***

It's important to take care of your home, to keep it clean and pest-free, and to clean it using safe products, in order to help protect your health and maintain a pleasant living environment. Here are some recommendations on general housekeeping practices, cleaning products, and clothes cleaning.

#### **General Housekeeping Tips**

- Sweep the floors of your apartment regularly (preferably at least once a week), and mop the hard surface flooring whenever it starts to get dirty or sticky.
- Vacuum the carpet regularly. Dirt and dust get trapped in carpet, and they can trigger allergy symptoms and asthma.
- Wash any dirty dishes daily and clean kitchen surfaces with a damp cloth whenever they are dirty.
- If water or any liquid is spilled on the carpet, sop it up immediately with a dry towel or rag. Mildew and mold can develop in carpeting that stays wet too long.
- Wipe up any puddles of water from your bathroom or kitchen floor.
- If your toilet overflows and you can't get it to stop, report it to staff immediately.
- If you see discoloration on surfaces (white, orange, green, brown, or black), see cracked or discolored grout, or smell a musty odor, it might be mold or mildew. Clean the areas with baking soda or borax. If the discoloration does not go away or gets worse, notify the building maintenance/management staff, as mold can cause serious health problems if it is not addressed.
- Open windows whenever there are odors, cigarette smoke, fumes from cleaning products or other chemicals, or excess moisture in your apartment. Also use a fan to help air out the room.
- When you are using your stove, turn on the range hood fan if the cooking is creating any smoke or odors.
- Clean the grease filter on your stove's range hood when any grease builds up; if you have questions about how to clean the grease filter, please ask the staff.
- Don't use bristly brushes or other abrasive products when cleaning, as they can leave scratch marks.
- Throw out and replace used sponges and cloths/rags if they're dirty or smelly.
- When using a cleaning product, read its label and follow the instructions for using and storing the product.
- Don't mix different cleaning products together (unless specifically recommended or unless they are benign, non-reactive, non-toxic substances).
- If you need to dispose of a container of a chemical cleaning product that is not completely used up, it should be taken to a hazardous waste collection day. (See the next section on Trash and Recycling for more information on hazardous materials disposal.)
- Glues, adhesives, paints, and other household products often contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which contribute to indoor air pollution (as well as to outdoor smog). Try to choose products that are labeled as "low-VOC" or "non-toxic," whenever possible.

## Cleaning Products

Cleaning your home is important because it helps remove harmful contaminants, such as mold and bacteria. But many conventional cleaning products can also cause health problems. The use of toxic cleaning products can be a particular problem for people who have health conditions such as asthma or allergies or who have chemical sensitivities or weak immune systems. Some cleaning products can cause headaches, dizziness, skin irritation, respiratory irritation and asthma, eye irritation or worse; some contain cancer-causing substances, reproductive toxins, central nervous system toxins, and endocrine system/hormone disruptors.

Fortunately, many alternative, non-toxic cleaning products are now available. And you can find some good, inexpensive products that aren't even located in the cleaning products aisle at the store. Some very basic and multi-purpose household substances can be used as safe and effective alternative cleaning solutions for most household cleaning jobs; these substances include **baking soda, white vinegar, lemon juice, and salt**, as well as **hydrogen peroxide and borax**. Borax and baking soda are especially versatile household products; they can be used for a variety of purposes. For example, baking soda will clean and deodorize all kitchen and bathroom surfaces (just dissolve a few tablespoons in some warm water, or use the baking soda directly on a damp sponge). A combination of baking soda, hot water, and vinegar can clear drains. And borax, baking soda, or hydrogen peroxide can remove stains and mildew. Alternatively, using a mild soap (like **dishwashing detergent or a liquid/Castile soap**) with some water will clean most surfaces adequately.

Here is one recipe for a non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner (for cleaning countertops, floors, walls, etc.); but these ingredients can be used separately, as well:

- 1 quart warm water
  - 1 teaspoon liquid soap
  - 1 teaspoon borax
  - ½ cup undiluted white vinegar
- Mix ingredients and store in a spray bottle.

If you're selecting a more conventional cleaning product (from the cleaning products aisle) at the store, look for products that are labeled as **non-toxic, low VOC or zero VOC**, and/or **biodegradable**. Also look for unscented products (some people are allergic to certain fragrances) and products with recyclable packaging/containers.

### *Products to avoid:*

Avoid the use of chlorine bleach unless it's absolutely necessary to use such a strong disinfectant. Hydrogen peroxide is a good alternative to chlorine bleach. *Never* use undiluted chlorine bleach or ammonia; both of these can cause major respiratory irritation. Also avoid most "anti-bacterial" and "anti-microbial" products; use of such products can cause germs to become resistant to antibiotics.

Read product labels, including the small print. As a general rule, you should avoid all products that are labeled "Danger—Poison." (Products with "Warning" labels are also dangerous, but less so, and products labeled with "Caution" are the least harmful of the three, though they can still be hazardous.) Also avoid products that are labeled as "Corrosive," "Severely Irritating," "Highly Flammable," or "Highly Combustible." And avoid aerosols when possible; they often contain substances that are

flammable and that can contribute to indoor air quality problems.

Avoid using most “air freshener” products, especially if their labels say that they contain para-dichlorobenzene. Ingredients like this can cause headaches and other health problems. Also avoid using mothballs; instead, store wool items in plastic bags or airtight containers, and if there is a moth problem, you can kill the moth eggs by washing the affected garments in hot water or putting them in the freezer for a few days.

### **Clothes Cleaning**

Choose a laundry detergent that is labeled as **phosphate-free, biodegradable, and/or non-toxic**. (Also consider selecting an unscented product.) Such products include borax and Arm & Hammer’s Washing Soda. Only a small amount of detergent is necessary; do not use more than the amount that is recommended in the instructions on the box/container.

When you are done drying your clothes, please clean the lint out of the dryer’s lint filter. This will help the dryer work better for the next person who uses it (and it also prevents the lint from becoming a fire hazard).

## TRASH AND RECYCLING

Please separate recyclable materials from the trash and only use clear trash bags. Before putting recyclable bottles and cans into a clear plastic bag, please **rinse them out** with water, so that they don't attract pests. You should wash out your recycling can and trash can as often as is necessary to remove sticky residues that might attract pests.

The materials that can be recycled are:

- **Paper:** All types, including newspaper, cardboard (unwaxed), paperboard (e.g., cereal boxes without the lining bag), office paper, envelopes (plastic windows OK), junk mail, magazines and catalogs, milk cartons, paper egg cartons, phonebooks, wrapping paper, etc.
- **Aluminum** cans and foil
- **Glass** bottles and jars
- **Plastic bottles** (#1 through 7)
- **Plastic tubs** and lids
- **Tin** (steel) cans

As of May 1, 2008, all household trash, whether picked up by a private trash hauler or dropped off at the landfill, must be separated into three categories: clean glass, co-mingled recyclables – plastic & metal, and trash, non-recyclables This is being done in an effort to reduce the amount of recyclables being thrown away improperly and to conform to the existing mandatory recycling by-law.

Materials that **cannot** be recycled include: juice boxes, light bulbs, plastic bags, styrofoam, ceramic dishes, and waxed cardboard. Check about mirrors and window glass. Do not put these types of items or any trash into recycling bins.

### Hazardous Waste Disposal

Hazardous waste materials may not be thrown in the garbage. They must be dropped off on the appropriate day for safe disposal or recycling, so that they don't contribute to the contamination of the air, water, or soil.

Hazardous waste materials include:

- chemical cleaning supplies
- batteries (all types)
- fluorescent lamps/light bulbs
- paint, paint thinners, primers, stains and other finishes
- toxic glues and adhesives
- medical/biohazard waste (including needles)
- pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizer
- computers, TVs, and other electronic equipment
- printer/copier ink/toner
- used motor oil
- compressed gases

As of May 1st, the DEP mandated restriction on mercury products that will no longer be permitted to be disposed off at the landfill takes effect. All mercury products such as: florescent lamps, batteries, pesticides, mercury switches and thermostats, basal thermometers, barometers, flat panel computer monitors, flat panel TV's, handheld gaming devices, portable DVD players and toys containing nonremovable button batteries are to be dispose in special container provided at the recycling center at the landfill.

Call the Department of Public Works at 508-228-7244 for more information. If you have hazardous materials to dispose of and cannot arrange to drop them off at this facility, let a building manager know. A staff member might be able to drop the items off for you, along with the building's maintenance materials.



## *PEST CONTROL*

It is important to keep your apartment free of pests (such as cockroaches, rodents, etc.), as pests can carry disease. If you find bugs, ants, rodents, or other pests in your apartment, report it to the building's maintenance staff right away.

Please do not use toxic pesticide products, such as Raid spray. Most pesticides are poisons, and they are often poisonous to humans, as well as to pests. Studies have linked some pesticides to cancer, birth defects, neurological disorders, and immune system disorders, as well as allergies. Pesticides should only be used as a last resort and in very small amounts. As a general rule, avoid products that are labeled "Danger—Poison." If ants are in your apartment, try sprinkling borax where they are coming in; ants do not like boric acid. If you decide that you must use some chemical pest control products, consider using only baits (for cockroaches and ants). And for rodents, traps should be used rather than poisons.

But the best strategy is to keep pests from coming into your apartment in the first place, rather than having to get rid of them later. Many pests are attracted by grease, sweets, other types of food, and standing water. If your apartment is clean and dry, it isn't likely that pests will want to live there. The following are some specific steps that you can take to keep pests from finding food, water, or hiding places in your apartment.

### **Pest Prevention Tips**

- Clean up any open, unsealed food, crumbs (wrap and seal any leftover food and put it in the refrigerator, or in a cabinet if tightly sealed).
- Do not leave dirty dishes out overnight.
- Clean up spills or sticky substances from all floors and surfaces.
- Keep your kitchen clean (counters, cabinets, sink, floors, stove, microwave, etc.); be sure to clean up any grease with soapy water, and dry off any wet areas.
- Sweep, mop, and vacuum regularly.
- Rinse bottles, cans, and containers before putting them in the recycling bins. Clean out the recycling bins to remove sticky residues.
- Take your garbage and recyclables to the trash room at least once a week (or every evening, if there are any pests in your apartment).
- Minimize clutter and paper piles that can provide hiding places for pests.
- If you notice any water leaks or moisture-damaged materials in your apartment, report the issue to building maintenance staff immediately.

## ***SECTION FOUR: HOW TO SAVE ENERGY AND WATER***

Conserving energy and water resources benefits the environment in a variety of ways. For example, using less electricity reduces power plants emissions (from burning fossil fuels), which reduces air and water pollution, and that helps protect everyone's health.

In addition, for those residents on town water, the less water that is used in the building, the less money the owner will have to pay for these utilities. And the more money the owner saves on utility bills, the more funding will be available to support services and programs that could benefit you and the other residents of the building.

### **Saving Energy**

#### **LIGHTS**

- Turn off lights (and any electronic equipment) whenever you're leaving your apartment or when you do not need them to be on.
- When the light bulbs burn out in your apartment, notify staff; they will attempt to provide energy-efficient replacement bulbs for you. Be careful not to break the fluorescent bulbs; they contain small amounts of mercury, which is a hazardous substance. Do not throw away fluorescent light bulbs; they should be taken for proper disposal.
- If you are going to bring lamp(s) into your apartment, avoid using halogen lamps. Halogen lamps are major energy wasters and pose a significant fire hazard.

#### **HEAT**

- Make sure that the temperature in your apartment is comfortable and the heater is not set too high. During cool months, usually the highest temperature that a thermostat needs to be set for is about 68-69 degrees, and it should be set at a lower temperature or turned off when you are not at home, during warm times of the year, and at night. If the building temperature is too hot or cold (or if your heater will not turn off), notify the building management.
- Do not leave the heat on when you have the window open, or open the window when you have the heat on (unless you just need to open the window while smoking or to air out the room for a short time). Heating and cooling the room at the same time wastes energy.
- Keep your heater clean and dusted.
- Do not place furniture next to the heater, as that can block the heat from entering the rest of the room.

#### **OTHER**

- Clean the dust off of your refrigerator coils twice a year. (Remove the grill at the bottom of the refrigerator and clean the coils in front and back; pull the refrigerator out to sweep and dust behind it.) If you would like to be shown how to do this or if your refrigerator is not working properly, contact staff.
- Clean out lint from dryer lint filters before or after each load of laundry. This helps the machines run more efficiently and prevents the lint from becoming a fire hazard.

## **Saving Water**

- When using a sink or the shower, don't run the faucet longer than is necessary for your task. When you turn a faucet off, make sure that it is all the way off.
- If you hear the sound of dripping or trickling water in your apartment or notice that your faucets are leaking or your toilet is running (too long after it has been flushed) and you can't get it to stop, notify the building's maintenance staff right away so that they can fix the leak.
- Try not to take really long showers; keep shower time under 10-15 minutes.
- When using a clothes washer, try to clean fairly full loads, when possible (or select a light-load setting for small loads, to use less water than would be used for a full load, if that's an option on the washing machine).



*P.O. Box 3149  
Nantucket, MA 02554  
508-228-4422  
508-228-4915 (F)  
[aaron@housingnantucket.org](mailto:aaron@housingnantucket.org)*