



# Tenant Handbook

(For 12+ Month Leases)

**Please keep this document in a safe place for future reference.**

Please read this manual carefully and thoroughly as it contains important rights and obligations which are intended to be binding upon you and Iron Creek Properties. This manual is incorporated into your Property Management Agreement and is expressly made a part thereof.

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# Iron Creek Properties Welcomes You

Iron Creek Properties welcomes you as a new resident. ICP is an abbreviation used in lieu of the full company name, Iron Creek Properties, and is used throughout this Handbook.

To achieve a successful tenant/management relationship, we prepared the ICP Tenant Handbook to assist you with your tenancy. We recommend that you keep it in a convenient location so that you can refer to it easily.

You will find maintenance guidelines, rental payment instructions, general information, safety tips, vacation guidelines, emergency instructions, holiday tips, and more.

We have also included forms for you to use when necessary. ICP wants you to be prepared throughout your tenancy. Therefore, we want to provide important information and documents that you may need in the future.

The owner of the property has retained Iron Creek Properties (ICP) as their Property Management Company and representative to manage the property you are renting. Therefore, you need to contact ICP when you need assistance (see contact page).

If you have questions or concerns on any of the information contained in this documentation, contact our office at any time. ICP is here to help you.

**We wish you a successful and enjoyable tenancy in your new residence.**



# Tenant Communication

On the next page you can find our general contact information. Communication makes a difference in any area of life, and it can only enhance your tenancy by letting ICP know what you need.

Use the telephone, email, the ICP website email access, or written correspondence to contact us. What is important is that you DO contact us when you need assistance. Remember ICP is here to help you.

## Telephone Calls During Office Hours

During regular office hours we strive to have a live person to answer your call. Your management team may not be available or in the office, so you may need to leave a voice message. When you speak to someone or leave a voice message, please state the reason for your call, so that someone can assist you with the information you need.

## Voicemail

During the day, if you reach our voice mail system, please leave a message complete with your name and the telephone numbers where ICP can reach you, both day and evening. Someone will return your call as soon as possible. The benefit of a voice mail system is the ability to leave a message twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

## After Hours Calls

Of course, the voice mail system will take all messages after hours. Please refer to our office hours in the following pages.

## Emergency Calls (including after hours emergencies)

During normal office hours, immediately state if you have an emergency. If you reach the ICP voice mail system during office hours, or after the office is closed, please call the Owner at 828-712-9856. If you have not heard from someone within 10 minutes, please dial again.

## Maintenance Requests

Please remember that all maintenance requests must be in writing, unless it is an emergency. This is in your rental agreement. You can access a maintenance request online at the ICP website, [www.IronCreek.org](http://www.IronCreek.org), and in this tenant handbook.

## Change of Information

It is important that you notify ICP of any changes in telephone, fax, cell numbers, or email. An information change form is located on our website as well.

## Email

Email is a great way to communicate and we request that you send your email address to [info@ironcreek.org](mailto:info@ironcreek.org). ICP will put your email address in our database. This enables your

management team to contact you quickly and efficiently, and when needed, send you important information. In addition, you will receive our company email newsletter from time to time.

Please note that although communication by email is encouraged, ICP does not accept notices to vacate by email. ICP requires the Notice to Vacate in writing, and this form is included on the ICP website or you may contact ICP by phone, mail or email to request a form.

## **Iron Creek Website**

ICP stays current with business technology. The ICP website, [www.IronCreek.org](http://www.IronCreek.org), contains important information for tenants. Visit it regularly to use the Tenant Services section.

There, you can easily submit a maintenance request or send ICP an email.

## **General Office Information**

Mailing Address: Iron Creek Properties  
P.O. Box 16454  
Asheville, NC 28816

Communication: Phone: (828) 712-9856  
Email: [info@ironcreek.org](mailto:info@ironcreek.org)  
Website: [www.Ironcreek.org](http://www.Ironcreek.org)

Office Hours (by appointment): Monday - Friday (AM) **9:00am to 1:00pm**  
Monday - Friday (PM) **2:30pm to 7:00pm**  
Saturday - **by appointment only**  
Sunday - **Closed**

Emergencies: Call our emergency line at (828) 712-9856, 24 hours a day/7 days a week. If you have not heard back from someone within 10 minutes, please dial again.

# The Move-In Process

Once you have been approved, you have twenty-four (24) hours to sign your lease and pay the Reservation Fee.

We sign our leases through DocuSign. Your lease will typically be emailed to you for electronic signature, and you will schedule a time to review the lease and our procedures with your Property Manager.

If it is more than 2 weeks prior to move in you may pay your security deposit and/or rent online at [www.ironcreek.org](http://www.ironcreek.org). If it less than 2 weeks you might be able to pay for the expedited online processing, or you must pay by certified funds. In any case all move in funds are due prior to move in in certified funds.

If the property was occupied when you made application you understand that it is being rented cosmetically in "AS-IS" condition. Once the tenant has vacated, we will perform a walk through and will ensure the unit is professionally cleaned and that items are performing the function intended. Unless agreed to in writing, we cannot promise cosmetic upgrades.

At move in you will complete a Move-In Form to notate cosmetic deficiencies for your protection at move out, as well as any items needing repairs that are not performing the function intended. Once turned in, we will submit a service request for necessary repairs. We perform a standard make ready in between tenants. This means that we ensure the unit is clean and items are performing the function intended. It does not mean that we will paint, replace carpet, etc...

Everyone has different standards of clean. We use a professional cleaning service that cleans to our standards. If something of importance was missed, we will send the cleaners back to touch up. Because some time may have elapsed between us having the unit cleaned and you moving in, a little dust or dirt may accumulate on the floor - this is not cause to send housekeeping back out.

Iron Creek does it's best to accommodate your desired move in date. If it is a back to back turnover and the vacating tenant leaves the property neat, clean and in good repair, it is usually not a problem. However, if the unit is not left up to our standards, we will need time to make it ready. We apologize for any inconvenience or delays and promise to do everything we can to expedite the process.

You will have 7 days to return the Move-In Report. Please notate any cosmetic deficiencies for your protection at move out as well as any items needing repairs. Once turned in, we will submit a service request for necessary repairs. This is the proper channel for you to submit your request. Unless it is a true emergency, please DO NOT call about repairs until you have submitted your report. We will not address items (unless an emergency) until you submit the report. This is for your protection.

If you have any questions not answered here, please contact the ICP office.



# Protect Your Rental and Credit History

At some point down the road you will move out of the property. It is important that during your residency you care for your credit and rental history. Most likely, you will either rent again or purchase a home. In either case, you will need good rental references and a good credit report. Avoid late rent payments, care for the property, and move out properly. Give ICP the pleasure of being able to provide a good reference for you when you vacate the property.

## Rental/Lease Agreement

You received a copy of your rental/lease agreement, including maintenance instructions, move in checklist, and any other necessary documentation. We recommend that you keep this paperwork with this Handbook for easy reference. Please always remember a rental/lease agreement is a binding agreement. If you have any questions regarding your lease, please call your ICP management team.

## Moving Checklist

When you provide the Notice to Vacate, we will supply you with a move-out packet.

## Utility/Cable Companies

When you rent the property, ICP cancels the utilities, in the owner's name, on the 1st day of your rental agreement (provided any were on at the time of move-in). To avoid discontinuation of service or billing confusion, contact the utility companies immediately.

Progress/Duke Power:	(800) 452-2777	French Broad Power:	(800) 222-6190
Haywood Electric:	(800) 951-6088	Asheville Water:	(828) 251-1122
Woodfin Water:	(828) 253-5551	Waste Pro:	(828) 684-7790
PSNC Gas:	(877) 776-2427	Blossman Gas:	(828) 667-0593
Suburban Propane:	(828) 252-4733	Charter:	(800) 955-7766

## Rental Payments

Rent is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and late if not received by the close of business of the 5<sup>th</sup>. If you know that you will have a delay or problem paying by the due date, contact your management team immediately. Lack of communication can affect your payment record.

ICP receives rental payments by:

- US Mail
- By PayLease through [IronCreek.org](http://IronCreek.org)
  - You can pay with your bank account, debit card or credit card. PayLease deposits your payment directly into the ICP bank, saving you time while also providing you with a receipt for your rent payment.

ICP does NOT accept rental payments in:

- Cash
- Rolled coins
- Post-dated checks

## **Fees/Charges**

If you fail to pay rent on time and in full, you could incur the following charges:

- Late Fee - the ICP late fee is 5% of the monthly rent.
- Maintenance Charge - ICP will bill you if you made an appointment with a vendor but failed to meet them at the scheduled time. If ICP receives a service call billing, you are responsible for reimbursement.
  - There will be a 20% override added to the bill for any expense that is the responsibility of the tenant, including move-out items.

## **Maintenance Reimbursement**

Generally, ICP assigns a vendor to perform work you request in your residence. However, if you have contacted ICP and requested to perform a minor maintenance item and ICP has agreed to reimburse you:

- Pay the bill and send the receipt to ICP. ICP will reimburse the amount due to you.
- Do NOT deduct the amount from your rent.
- Tenant will not be reimbursed for unauthorized work.

## **Care of the Property**

### **Getting to Know your Residence**

When you move into a property, it is helpful to know where important items are located. Take the time to know or locate the:

- Main circuit breaker in the event power goes out,
- Gas shut off valve - turn off during emergencies/disasters for safety,
- GFI plug(s) - so you can check them if your plugs or appliances in the bathroom, kitchen, patio or garage fail to work,
- Electric and/or gas meters to check your utility bills,
- The main water shutoff valve in case of major flooding,
- Water shutoff valves below the sinks and behind toilets in case of water leaks,
- Method of cleaning for the oven so you use the right products - DO NOT use regular oven cleaner on a self-cleaning oven. This may permanently damage the oven. DO NOT leave the racks inside the oven when running the self-cleaning cycle.

If you are uncertain about any of the above items, contact your ICP management team for help.

## **Iron Creek Pet Policy**

Iron Creek is happy to welcome well-behaved family pets. We require our tenant's to be responsible pet custodians. As a company, we promote responsible pet ownership and are supporters of animal welfare programs in Buncombe County. Our standard pet deposits are

refundable. Should your pet become a nuisance, you will be given 72 hours to rectify the situation or remove the pet from your home. We STRONGLY advise that you have renters insurance which provides you with liability protection should your pet harm anyone or cause damage. If you have a pet you agree to the following:

1. That the pet will be allowed out of the pet owner's unit or yard only under the complete control of a responsible human companion and on a hand-held leash or in a pet carrier.
2. That any damage to the exterior or interior of the premises, grounds, flooring, walls, trim, finish, tiles, carpeting, or any stains, etc., caused by the pet will be the full financial responsibility of the resident and that resident agrees to pay all costs involved in the restoration to its original condition. If, because of any such stains, etc., said damage is such that it cannot be removed, then resident hereby agrees to pay the full expense of replacement.
3. That the resident will provide adequate and regular veterinary care including, but not limited to, all required shots, as well as ample food and water, and will not leave pet unattended for any undue length of time. Resident will diligently maintain cleanliness of litter boxes as well as pet sleeping and feeding areas. Resident will prevent pets from engaging in behaviors or creating excessive noise at a level that disturbs neighbors, including, but not limited to, barking, jumping, and running.
4. That if property is in Buncombe County, the resident shall provide an unaltered animal permit if any pet(s) are not spayed/neutered.
5. That if property is in the City of Asheville, the resident shall provide evidence that pet(s) has a city license. See the "Pets" section of our website for an application.
6. That, if there is reasonable cause to believe an emergency situation exists with respect to the pet, and if efforts to contact the resident and emergency caretaker are unsuccessful, the rental manager may contact the local animal control authority and assist its staff in entering the resident's apartment. Examples of an emergency situation include suspected abuse, abandonment, fire or other disaster, or any prolonged disturbance. If it becomes necessary for the pet to be boarded, any and all costs incurred will be the sole responsibility of the resident.
7. **That the resident agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend rental manager against all liability, judgments, expenses (including attorney's fees), or claims by third parties for any injury to any person or damage to property of any kind whatsoever caused by the resident's pet(s).**

# Maintenance

When you rented the property, your lease contained detailed maintenance instructions. Please review them before requesting a work order. ICP has more tips in this handbook.

## Tenant Renovations/Alterations

It is the ICP policy that tenants do not do repairs or alterations. You agreed to this in the ICP rental agreement/lease. If you do want to make a special request for renovation or repair to the property:

1. Submit your request in writing before making any changes.
  - a. Do not proceed with any work until you are notified by ICP.
2. ICP will consult the owners to see if the request is acceptable to them.
3. If the request is acceptable to the owner, tenants must do one of the following prior to vacating the property:
  - Leave the alterations if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair, or
  - Return the property to its original state if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair, and pay for any necessary repairs to restore the alteration/repair to its original state.

You MUST sign an ICP agreement regarding the alteration/repair before doing anything!

## Tenant Maintenance Responsibilities

The property owner has a duty to maintain your residence to uniform codes of safety for landlord/tenant law. Therefore, ICP has provided you with a maintenance request form when there are legitimate repairs. We want you to report maintenance items.

However, there are items that are the tenant's responsibility and we have listed them below (please refer to the maintenance addendum):

- Replacing smoke alarm batteries
- Replacing light bulbs with the correct size, shape and wattage
- Replacing furnace filters regularly (frequency depends on filter used, but monthly is recommended)
- Reporting non-functioning smoke alarms immediately if batteries do not solve the problem
- Reporting all necessary repairs
- Professional steam cleaning and spot cleaning of carpets while residing in the property
- Landscape cleanup if a service is not provided
- Reporting lack of landscape cleanup if a service IS provided in your rental agreement
- Landscape watering unless you live in a four-plex or larger
- Reporting malfunctioning irrigation systems or sprinklers
- Disposal of all garbage in the proper receptacles and using the weekly pick up service
- Removal or treatment of common household bugs (ants, spiders, etc.)
- Trapping and removing an individual rodent (if you have an infestation we will hire a professional)
- Disposal of animal feces on the property even if you do not have a pet

- If the residence has a fireplace, use caution and care when operating the fireplace and disposing of ashes or coals. Do not dispose of coals in the fireplace until they have cooled outside for a week in a container designed to hold hot ashes and coals.
- Check to see if damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace.
- Disposing of toxic waste properly in accordance with local and county laws

## **Procedures for Requesting Maintenance**

### **Before Calling ICP**

- Determine if there is a true emergency or a non-emergency.
- Check to see if you can determine the cause of the problem that you are experiencing, unless you have an emergency. Read examples of various problems in your maintenance addendum.

### **Non-Emergency Maintenance – Follow These Steps Carefully**

1. Fill out a tenant maintenance request form. Fill out and submit the form online, fax, or mail. A maintenance request form was included in your move-in documents, but is also available on the ICP website.
  - a. ICP representative will assign a vendor to contact you directly.
  - b. ICP does not give vendors keys to the residence unless the tenant makes prior arrangements for that to happen.
2. Call ICP to verify receipt of your maintenance request. Do not assume we have your maintenance request, make certain!
3. Vendors are required to make appointments with tenants. Remember, this is a NON-Emergency item and in most cases, the vendor will not be immediately available.
4. Failure to show at a scheduled appointment can result in a charge to you. Therefore, be certain to call the vendor as soon as possible if you are unable to make the appointment.

### **If You Don't Hear From a Vendor w/i two (2) Days**

Call the ICP office and inform your management team or a staff person that a vendor has not contacted you within 2 business days of submitting your maintenance request. ICP will contact the vendor to find out the cause of the delay, and then inform you when to expect the vendor to call. If you fail to report a vendor has not contacted you, you may be responsible for the cost.

### **If the Repair Doesn't Fix the Problem**

A recent repair means within the last 60 days and pest control work means within 30 days. If you fail to report an unsolved recent repair, and there is further damage or expense, you may be responsible for the cost, per your rental agreement.

After a repair has taken place, if you have trouble, call ICP and state you had a recent repair but there is still a problem.

### **Fuel Policy**

For properties having propane gas and/or oil burning furnaces or appliances, tenant will be responsible for insuring the tank is at least 25% full at all times during the term of the Residential Rental Agreement and at move out. Failure to maintain a sufficient volume of fuel

will result in a tenant charge for furnace maintenance services that may result. Tenant is solely responsible for initial fill of fuel beyond 25%, and for any amount less than 25% at move out or the disposal of any fuel in excess of 25% remaining at move out, if they so desire. Neither agent nor owner will be held liable for any refund for the value of fuel remaining in the tank at move out. Check the tank to see if there is a sticker of a fuel company, if so that is the company you must use. If not, generally tenant may use the company of their choice. Tenant must contact Fuel Company to initiate and end service.

## **Utilities Policy**

If landlord pays for electricity (or other applicable utilities), a/c units, space heaters & other high utility usage items are prohibited unless approved in advance in writing. Items may be approved with a utility surcharge as additional rent. If landlord pays for any utilities, any additional occupants must be approved in advance in writing and will require a utility surcharge as additional rent. Should violation occur, tenant will have 72 hours to remove offending equipment or occupants and/or will automatically be charged a minimum of \$50 per month as additional rent.

## **Personal Property**

There may be personal property left in your unit by the owner or former tenant. Landlord is not responsible for maintaining those items. This may include but is not limited to washers, dryers, window a/c units, dehumidifiers, counter top microwaves, grills, lawn equipment, furniture, etc... It is your responsibility to maintain and care for such items unless agreed to in writing prior to move in.

# **Emergency Maintenance Issues**

## **In Case of Emergency**

There are few emergencies. An emergency is a life-threatening situation such as a fire, flood and/or uncontrollable water, electrical problem, smell of gas, etc:

- Emergencies causing immediate danger such as fire, call 911
- Emergencies involving gas call the gas company and if necessary, 911
- Emergencies involving IMMEDIATE electrical danger, call the utility service or 911
- After contacting one of the above sources, then call the ICP office and report the problem.
- Emergencies such as backed up plumbing, flooding, call the ICP office and listen for emergency instructions and if necessary, call 911.
- An emergency is NOT being without heat when temperatures are expected to be above freezing, but ICP recognizes this is important and will make it a priority with vendors to have the heat working as soon as possible.
- An emergency is not an air-conditioning outage, non-working dishwasher, sprinklers, etc.

# Preventative Cleaning Tips

## Preventative Cleaning Tips

Cleaning is easier when you use a “preventative approach.” Here are some tips:

- Always put away food and wipe up food debris.
- Clean pet bowls regularly to avoid attracting ants and other insects.
- Do not allow grease to build up in kitchens; use a sponge and soapy water regularly on counter tops, stovetops, and hood filters.
- Avoid cooking with very high heat. This will add to more grease build-up and cause damage to appliances. It can also be dangerous.
- Avoid mildew by venting rooms and bathrooms properly, particularly after baths and showers.
- Clean bathroom tile or other surfaces regularly to prevent the buildup of grime.
- Clean toilets regularly to avoid buildup of grime, rings, and mildew.
- Mop tile, wood, and vinyl to avoid “dust bunnies” and the buildup of grime.
- Do not use wax or strip the finish on vinyl or tile.
- Do not use “cleaning products” on tile.
- Vacuum all flooring regularly, particularly carpets. This will save in carpet cleaning bills.
- Regularly pick up debris and pet feces in outside areas.

## Additional Cleaning Tips

It is not always necessary to purchase expensive cleaning products. Vinegar, baking soda, ammonia, and salt are some inexpensive cleaning products with many uses. They also are helpful for people who have allergies to cleaning products. They can be better for the environment than commercial products

- Air Freshener:
  - Place a bowl of vinegar in the kitchen or bathroom to absorb odors
- Drains
  - For a great once-a-month drain cleaner, pour 1/2 cup baking soda into the drain, follow with 1/2 cup white vinegar -- it will foam. Cover and let sit 30 minutes and then flush with cool water.
  - For stubborn, slow-running drains, pour 1-cup baking soda and 1-cup salt down the drain. Follow this with 2 quarts boiling water. Let sit 30 minutes, and then flush with cool water.
- Tile Countertops:
  - To clean ceramic tile, where mold and mildew accumulate, use a combination of 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup white vinegar, 1-gallon warm water, and 1-cup ammonia.
  - Alternatively, regularly clean kitchen surfaces by using a spray bottle mixed with ½-cup vinegar and a quart of water.
- Glass Cleaner:
  - When glass-cleaning products leave residue on bathroom mirrors, mix 3 tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a clean plastic spray bottle.
  - Spray glass and wipe with a clean paper towel.
- Dishwasher:

- Empty the dishwasher, pour in a ¼ cup of vinegar, and run the dishwasher again.
- Even if you prefer not to use the dishwasher, run at least once a week to keep seals from becoming hard and cracked.
- Refrigerators:
  - Clean regularly and place a cup of baking soda in a bowl on a refrigerator shelf to absorb odors.
  - A cup of dry unused coffee grinds can also absorb odors when placed on a refrigerator shelf.
- Washing Machine:
  - A half cup of baking soda can be added to the washing machine with regular detergent to help with mild odors.
- Toilets:
  - Remove waterline marks in the toilet bowl by pouring in 2 cups of white vinegar. Let soak overnight, then flush to rinse. If this does not work, rub the waterline mark with a wet pumice stone.
- Carpet Stains:
  - Vacuum the carpet if the stain is dry.
  - If the stain is still wet, blot gently to remove excess - blot, do NOT rub.
  - Lightly soak the carpet stain with clean water first to remove the stain - blot, do NOT rub.
  - If the stain remains, mix a 3 Tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a spray bottle and spray the stain; blot again; do NOT rub.
  - If this fails, consult a professional carpet cleaner immediately; the longer you wait may mean the stain may not come out.
- Carpet Odor:
  - Regular vacuuming cures most carpet odors, but if carpet odors persist, lightly sprinkle the carpet with baking soda and vacuum thoroughly, removing all baking soda from carpet. Repeat if necessary.

## Energy Saving Tips & Insurance

Saving water is important for the environment and can mean a lower utility bill for your residence as well:

### To Lower Water Bills:

- Always report water leaks to ICP as soon as possible.
  - Report water dripping under sinks.
  - Running toilets are big water wasters.
  - Report malfunctioning sprinklers.
  - Report standing pools of water.
- Report malfunctioning water appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines that come with the property.
- Run the dishwasher when it is fully loaded.
- Check water hoses on washing machines for leaks; change hoses every three years.
- Adjust the water level to match the load, using less water for small loads.
- Avoid using toilets to dispose of ordinary trash.
- Take shorter showers.



- Avoid letting the water continually run while shaving, brushing your teeth, or washing your face.
- Be sure your water heater temperature is set properly, but no higher than 120 degrees. Note: do not turn the water heater up to “hi” or “high” as this is a dangerous temperature level.
- Counsel all children on how to prevent wasting water.
- Do not “over water” landscaping; it is not healthy for plants and simply wastes water.

### **To Lower Air-Conditioning Bills:**

- During warm or hot months, close the windows and doors to your home early in the day to “keep cool air in,” particularly when the air-conditioner is running.
- Close window coverings on the sunny side of the house during different times of the day; this can lower the temperature dramatically.
- Replace the air filter often and with the right size, at a minimum of every three months, monthly if you purchase the inexpensive filters. A clean filter helps the air-conditioner to run more efficiently.
- When leaving your residence, turn the air-conditioner up a few degrees, a closed house without activity normally stays cooler. This is particularly important when going on vacation.
- There is no reason to keep the residence in a frigid state while you are gone, but do not turn the air off on very hot days – it will only take longer and more energy to cool down.

### **To Lower Heating Bills:**

- During the cooler months, keep all windows and doors tightly closed.
- Report any major drafts to the ICP office.
- Use a “reasonable” level of heat in the residence. Sometimes, turning down the heat just a few degrees can reduce an energy bill.
- Turn the heat down during the night and use warm covers and comforters.
- When leaving home, turn down the temperature on the thermostat.
- Do not turn the heat completely off. It will take more heat for a cold house than it will save. In addition, this could cause pipes to freeze, which will cause more problems.
- If there is a fireplace, close the damper if you are not using it, but please be sure to open the fireplace if you do start a fire.
- Replace the furnace filter often, at a minimum of every three months. A clean filter helps the furnace to run more efficiently.

### **Renters Insurance**

Property owners generally carry a standard fire and liability policy, and have additional coverage with “landlord/rental” insurance, but they normally cannot cover the contents or possessions of the resident. The reason that insurance companies do not provide this type of coverage is because they are “non-owner” occupied properties. Therefore, it is very important for you to have adequate insurance coverage for your contents.

If you think it is not important, sit down and write out a list of your possessions in one column. In a second column, list how much it would cost to “replace” them. You will be surprised how the list can really add up.

Contact an insurance agent if you do not have renters insurance. You can find them in the telephone directory, search the Internet, or ask a friend. The Internet can also provide both information and comparison-shopping. To avoid a loss, acquire renters insurance now.

## Safety Tips

The safety of you and your family is important to ICP, and many things can affect it. Here are some tips to follow:

- Unplug all heat-producing appliances like toasters, irons, and coffee makers when they are not in use to prevent fire hazards.
- Never leave a stove or oven unattended; turn off all stove and oven appliances when you leave the house.
- Never leave heating pads and electric blankets on indefinitely and turn them off when you leave the residence to prevent fire hazards.
- Never leave water running unattended in a plugged bathtub or when leaving the residence.
- If you have an upstairs bathroom and you see water in the ceiling below, particularly in a light fixture, report the leak immediately to ICP.
- Do not operate electrical appliances while standing or sitting in water.
- Avoid using blow dryers, curling irons, radios, TVs, or other appliances while in a bathtub or over a sink filled with water.
- If you have small children, use child protector plugs when you are not using outlets.
- Do not overload extension cords with too many appliances.
- Place lamps on level surfaces and use the correct wattage.
- Avoid running extension cords over walkways, under rugs, or any other place that could cause tripping.
- If you suspect an electrical problem, report it to ICP immediately.
- Do not remove smoke alarms, particularly if they are beeping. Smoke alarms are for safety and removing them can endanger all residents and guests. Change the batteries if needed.
- Do not allow children to leave toys on walkways and sidewalks.
- Replace outside light bulbs so you can utilize lights properly when it is dark.
- Report any exposed tree roots to the ICP office.
- Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen and the garage; they are available in hardware supply stores.
- If you use a grill or BBQ, use common sense, never leave grills unattended.
- If you have a fireplace, be sure to store hot ashes and coals away from the residence. Do not place ashes in garbage receptacles unless certain they are cold.
- Do not store fireplace wood against the residence.
- Always be certain the damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace.
- Do not build "roaring" fires in the fireplace; build reasonable fires suited to the size of the fireplace.

## Vacation/Holiday Checklist

### Before Leaving on Vacation

When going on vacation, here are items to check before leaving:

- If going out of town for an extended period, please notify ICP how long you will be gone, and supply an emergency telephone number. Then should any problems arise concerning your residence, there is someone to contact.
- Check your rent payment to ensure it will not become delinquent. It would be a sad thing to come home to a late notice and charges.

- Notify all necessary parties such as your next-door neighbors, the paper delivery person, the post office, or any related service people. By doing so, you will avoid any panic that something is wrong.
- Select someone to pick up items on your doorstep to avoid giving signals to dishonest people.
- If leaving a vehicle in the driveway, remove any valuables and garage door openers that can be stolen, giving access to your home.
- Put garbage cans away or arrange for someone to take care of it.
- Place valuables and jewelry in a safe deposit box.
- Avoid leaving a message on your answering device telling people you are out of town and for how long.
- Set timers on interior lights, to deter burglars.
- Be sure to check all windows, window locks, and doors before leaving.
- If you have an alarm, be sure to set it.
- Turn off the water valve to your washing machine.
- Turn off all appliances, large and small, such as stove burners, coffee pots, irons, curling irons, etc.
- Unplug TVs and computers in the event of lightning or power surges.
- Turn your water heater to low or “vacation” setting, but do not turn the water heater off.
- Anything else living in your house besides you, such as plants or pets? Then be sure to water plants and have someone take care of your animals. Do not leave pets in the residence unless a reliable person is going to care for them daily

## **Holiday Tips**

Everyone enjoys the different holidays, but it is important to exercise care during the celebrations and remove decorations when each season is over.

- Hang lights and decorations properly and carefully.
- Before hanging, check for bad plugs and loose wires. If you find defects, dispose of the lights.
- Only use lights and decorations during holiday seasons; remove them immediately when the season ends.
- Dispose of holiday trees properly; never burn them in a fireplace.
- If you use extension cords, do not overload, do not staple them to the residence, and if outside, use only cords approved for outside use.
- Never leave holiday lights on when leaving your residence to avoid fire danger.
- For fireworks celebrations:
  - Do not use illegal, dangerous, or explosive devices.
  - Only buy legal fireworks and check where you can use them.
  - Use common sense safety rules with fireworks.
  - Do not use fireworks in or around your residence.
  - Keep all fireworks away from any dry grass, trees, or roofs.
  - Attend a fireworks celebration instead of buying them and enjoy the fun without the responsibility.

## **Emergency/Disasters**

Unfortunately, emergencies and disasters happen all around the world. The best solution is to be prepared. In the back of this Handbook, you will find a convenient Emergency/Disaster Checklist that has items to do before and during an emergency/disaster.

There are different types of emergencies:

### **Maintenance Emergencies:**

- ICP outlined in the maintenance addendum that you signed during your move in what to do for emergencies such as flooding, electrical, gas, etc.
  - We have also reviewed them on page 10 of this handbook.
  - Please follow the maintenance instructions and call ICP when appropriate.
  - ICP requests that you treat the ICP staff courteously while under stress of the situation - we will do everything we can to help you as soon as possible.

### **Area Emergencies or Disasters:**

- Be prepared and use the ICP Emergency/Disaster checklist enclosed with this information.
- When major emergencies or disasters such as a storm, earthquake, or some other force of nature occur, everyone experiences great inconvenience and difficulty. Remember this and be considerate of others and the degrees of different problems.
- ICP requests that you call emergency services first in a disaster, then notify the ICP office as soon as possible to relay what has happened.
- ICP will assign priorities to work and during an area emergency/disaster, will work to assist you as much as possible
- When calling the ICP office, we ask you to be patient and calmly state what problems you are experiencing. We will handle the problems as quickly as possible.

## **Drug Free Housing**

ICP has a drug-free policy for tenants and it is a requirement of your tenancy as outlined in your rental agreement. However, people can encounter drug problems from other residents from the lowest income neighborhood to the highest. We want you to be aware of signs of potential drug problems in any neighborhood.

- Do not approach a house or building if you smell a strong chemical odor. Report it to the authorities. Drug houses may contain volatile chemicals and can easily explode.
- Do not pick up abandoned purses, suitcases, filled bottles, or packages. People place “meth labs” in objects of many shapes and sizes. They are highly explosive and dangerous; report any unusual or abandoned object to the authorities. Do not attempt to examine it yourself.
- If you see constant pedestrian or vehicle traffic in your neighborhood at all times of the day and particularly at night, it could be a drug house, particularly if you observe high security precautions surrounding the property.
- First, report unusual and disturbing activities in your neighborhood to the authorities, and then notify ICP of your suspicions as soon as possible.
- Educate and train children of all ages for the signs of drug activities or a drug house.
- Be aware and be alert - a drug house or drug activities are a danger anywhere and to everyone.

# Frequently Asked Questions

ICP has put together a list of the most frequently asked tenant questions that may answer many of your concerns in advance.

## **Why did I receive a notice when I paid the rent on the 6th of the month?**

- As outlined in this Handbook before, the rent is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> and late if not received by the 5th of the month. Once the 5th of the month passes, we begin preparing Notices to Pay or Vacate.

Obviously, we served the notice before we received payment. ICP serves Notices based on state landlord/tenant law requirements and their obligations to the owner of the property.

## **Can I clean the carpet myself?**

- Yes, we but don't advise it. We recommend you use a professional to avoid having to pay twice. If you hire someone to do the work, and it isn't up to standards, we will hire a different vendor to re-clean and bill that to your security deposit.

## **Can I install extra telephone lines?**

- You can install extra telephone lines if you pay the expense and disconnect them when you leave. However, you must notify ICP and obtain written permission to install the lines.

## **Can I have a satellite dish?**

- Yes, you can have a satellite dish. However, you must submit a request to ICP and sign an agreement prior to installing the dish. You also must take responsibility for removing the dish and repairing any damage. Dishes must be mounted on a pole in the yard, never attached to the house.

## **I did not have a pet when I moved in; can I have a pet now?**

- Notify your ICP management team of your request for a pet. Do not move a pet into the property without permission. The Property Manager will contact the owner and submit your request. If the owner does allow a pet, an increased security deposit will be required and a pet agreement signed. If the owner says no, abide by the decision and your rental agreement.

## **What happens if my pet dies or runs away, can I have my increased security deposit back?**

- No, all security deposits remain in effect until all tenants vacate the property. Until a property is completely vacant, there is no way to check the entire property thoroughly.

## **What happens if I want another pet?**

- Notify your ICP management team what pet you want. The Property Manager will contact the owner and submit your request. If the owner does allow a pet, an increased security deposit will be required and a pet agreement signed.

## **My roommate wants to move, but I want to stay. What do I do now?**

- Your roommate needs to submit a notice to vacate. ICP will need documentation from you to show you can support the property by yourself. ICP will not partially refund part of the security deposit to your roommate since it is a condition of your rental agreement. You and your roommate will have to settle any funds owed to each other, including any or all of the security deposit. Have your roommate use the ICP Notice to Vacate included in this handbook.

## **I want to add a roommate, now what do I do?**

- The prospective roommate will have to submit an application and ICP must approve the person PRIOR to them moving into the property. You can apply on the ICP website. If ICP denies the applicant, they cannot move into the property. If approved, we will add them to the lease as a permitted occupant. You will also need to pay a \$75 administrative fee.

## **Why do the owners want to see the property?**

- The owners are showing responsibility toward the maintenance of the property, the condition, and their investment. It is also their right to see the property, but they respect that it is your residence. It is also nothing to fear. This is why ICP contacted you first to set a date and time. Do not allow someone who knocks on the door to view the property if you have not heard from us first.

## **Giving Your Notice**

Eventually you will move out, and we want you to be prepared when this is necessary. ICP tenants are required to give a 30 day notice prior to the next rent due date if their lease is month to month, 60 days if they are in the lease term. The day you give the notice does not count in the notice time period.

*Example #1: Your lease is month to month and you want to move out February 5<sup>th</sup>. You need to give notice by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. If you have more questions, please contact our office.*

*Example #2: Your lease is **not** month to month and you want to move out February 5<sup>th</sup>. You need to give notice by the 31<sup>st</sup> of November.*

## **Before Giving Notice:**

- Check your rental agreement/lease to see if you are eligible to give notice. It will specifically state when you can give notice. A lease is a binding agreement for a set period and you may still be bound to the lease.
- If you need to move and you are still committed to a lease period, contact your ICP management team to discuss your options.
- Notices must be in writing. The day ICP receives the notice is the date the notice begins. For example, do not fill out a notice with the current date and mail it five days later, thinking the date you mailed is the notice date.
- ICP does not accept notices by email message because of lack of signature, however you may attach a scanned copy of the signed notice. Do not assume ICP received your signed notice. If you have not received confirmation of receipt by ICP, contact our office.
- ICP does not provide rental history to other landlords/property management companies unless tenants gives the authority to ICP to give out rental references.

- If you need to move and are still committed to a lease period, you will be required to put your **lease-break notice** in writing. You are responsible for the property and payment of your rent until either the end of the lease or until the unit is re-rented. Please be sure to pay your full rent as due.
  - If the unit is rented to another tenant prior to the expiration of your lease you will be entitled to a refund of the rent covered by the new tenant. You are responsible for a \$300 cost to re-rent fee. You should begin marketing the property immediately. You may pick up a yard sign from your property manager. We will begin our standard marketing to *assist you* in re-renting the property. Should you locate a prospective tenant, refer them to us so they may go through the qualification process and sign a new lease.
  - ***If you handle your obligations properly you may be entitled to a refund of your security deposit and positive rental reference.*** If you choose to not follow our liberal lease break policy and “break” your lease, it will cost you financially, you will receive a negative reference, and legal action may be brought against you.

### Setting Up Your Move-Out Appointment

- After you submit your Notice to Vacate, ICP will send you a move-out packet. This will instruct you on what to do during the notice period, and how to prepare to move out.
- ICP only performs move out appointments during weekdays, 9 am to 4 pm.
- It is the responsibility of the resident to deliver all keys and openers to ICP at the move out appointment.
  - Failure to deliver keys and openers could incur additional charges.
- Remember to supply a forwarding address and telephone number for your security deposit refund.
- Use the ICP Move-out Packet so you remember important details.

## Preparing the Property at Move-Out

When you are ready to move, if you have questions on how to prepare your residence after receiving the move-out packet, please call your ICP management team, and discuss your concerns with them. We want your move to be a pleasant and successful one. The following are some steps to take to prepare for your move.

### Cleaning

- Clean the property throughout the interior and exterior.
- This includes the vinyl or tile floors, windows both inside and out, window sills and door casings, mini-blinds, wiping out drawers and shelves, all appliances, sinks, toilets, bath tubs, showers, vanities, light fixtures, fireplaces, removal of cobwebs inside and out, etc.
- Tenant caused dirt is not normal wear and tear.
- Pick up debris and animal feces on the exterior of the property and place them in the proper trash receptacles.

## **Carpet Cleaning**

- Professional carpet cleaning is normally required. The cost for carpet cleaning depends upon how recently the carpets were professionally cleaned and whether you have had pets.
- Do NOT rent carpet-cleaning machines, use home cleaning machines, or employ chemical cleaning companies. Only professional truck-mounted steam cleaning from a reputable company is accepted.
- Call ICP for a recommendation on a carpet cleaner who will give you reasonable rates on carpet cleaning.
- ICP will schedule the carpets to be cleaned once you have moved out if you do not adhere to the following step.
- If you hire another carpet cleaner, the carpet cleaner must guarantee their work to the satisfaction of ICP, and a receipt is required upon turnover of keys.
- Tenants, please note: ICP will not reimburse for any carpet cleaning contracted by tenants.

## **Draperies/Window Coverings/Windows**

- Do NOT wash draperies.
- You are not expected to dry clean draperies unless:
  - You have caused excessive soil or allowed water damage from open windows. Draperies with water stains could require replacement. Discuss this with your management team.
  - You have not been using the draperies provided and/or have kept them in good condition.
- Wipe all mini blinds - do not use harsh chemicals on the blinds.
- Clean all windows inside and outside, except for the outsides of second story windows.

## **Replacements**

The following must be in working order to avoid charges when moving out:

- Burned out light bulbs,
- Non-working smoke detector batteries,
- Missing doorstops,
- Furnace filters (change the filter just before you vacate the property, and make sure you use the correct size).

## **Pest Control**

- If you have a pet, professional pet pest control may be needed.
- If a property is found loaded with ants, spiders, cobwebs, etc., you can incur pest control charges.

## **Landscape Clean-Up**

- The outside area is to be neatly mowed, trimmed, pruned, fertilized, and watered for outside areas that apply in your rental contract.
- Remove all trash and debris, placing in the proper receptacles.



- Remove grease or oil drips; dispose of motor oil properly - it does not belong in the garbage receptacles.
- Pick up any animal feces whether you have an animal or not.

## **Trash**

- If you have trash that exceeds the normal pickup, you are to arrange to have it hauled away at your expense.
- Place all other trash within the appropriate trash receptacles for normal trash removal.
- Do not overflow trash receptacles.

## **Painting**

- We request that you do not spackle, putty, or touch up paint.
- Charges can occur if unnecessary painting is required due to tenant painting.
- Charges for painting depend on whether it exceeds normal wear and tear, and the length of time in the property.

## **Your Security Deposit Refund**

When you follow the move-out procedures in the move-out packet (sent to you once you submit a notice to vacate) and leave the property in good condition, it simplifies the task of refunding your security deposit. ICP remits security deposit transmittals within 30 days in accordance with the state landlord/tenant law. Remember, ICP wants your move out to be a pleasant and successful process.

## **ICP Additional Tenant Forms**

We have put together the following forms on our website that could be useful to you in the future. If you need forms because you cannot access the website, contact the ICP office.

- Moving checklist/utility numbers
- Emergency/disaster checklist
- Maintenance request
- Add roommate request
- Cable/satellite/TV request
- Request to add pet
- Notice to vacate

# Emergency/Disaster Checklist

*Take the time to review and implement these important lists - it could save lives!*

## **Pre- Emergency/Disaster Checklist:**

- Take an inventory of your belongings, complete with photos, descriptions, and serial numbers. Items to list are TVs, VCRs, stereos, cameras, camcorders, sports equipment, jewelry, silver, computers, or anything of value.
- Know where the shut off valves are in your residence.
- Keep copies of important papers stored in a safety deposit box.
- Make sure your renters insurance is current at all times.
- Discuss with your family or other residents what emergency procedures you will use and post them in the kitchen, office area, etc.
- Plan escape routes in the event of fire and inform every resident of the routes, including children.
- Teach children how to use 911 or call for other services.
- Always maintain a reserve of bottled water/drinks and non-perishable foods in your residence, along with a manual can opener.
- Have a portable radio with plenty of extra batteries and the right kind for the radio.
- Have two or more flashlights with the extra batteries and for the right kind the flashlight.
- Have large long-burning candles and matches available.
- Have an adequate first aid kit and replace items when necessary.
- Keep your cellular phone charged.

## **If an Emergency/Disaster Occurs:**

- In a gas leak is possible during an emergency/disaster, immediately turn off the gas valve.
- Keep your car in the driveway, if it is practical, for any necessary evacuation.
- Call 9-1-1 only to access help and NOT to learn news.
- Call (Company Initials) when it is practical, but remember that (Company Initials) will do what they can to help you, but is not an emergency service. Many repairs will have to wait until the emergency/disaster passes.
- Only call people when necessary and have an emergency contact outside your area who can notify other people.
- Limit use of the telephones during emergencies/disaster to avoid overloading the circuits.
- Unplug or turn off major lights and appliances - such as space heaters, washers, dryers, computers, TVs, etc. Several appliances coming back on at the same time may overload circuits or hot appliances may come on while you are away or asleep causing fire hazards.
- Leave a single light on to alert you that power is restored.
- If you use candles and matches, do it safely - you do not want to create another problem.
- Limit cell phone usage or use your car to charge batteries.
- If you have to call emergency services, be calm, state your problem, and be patient. Emergency services will be overloaded.

- If you have standing water in a room, do not enter if the electricity is on; try to wait for a professional.
- Do not vacuum wet floors or carpets unless you have the right equipment for water removal. Using a normal vacuum is dangerous with water.
- Only open freezers and refrigerators when necessary to avoid losing food as long as you can.
- Conserve water and food when disaster occurs.
- If you are in a car when power lines fall, remain in the car until you can get help or you are certain that it is safe to do so; then jump clear of the car, not touching any metal.

