

ISSUE

July

2018

YOUR MONTHLY
UPDATE FROM THE
RANGECREST TEAM

Rangecrest Review

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RTA cautions real estate agencies and landlords over Special Conditions

Special Conditions can have anything in them, right?

Unfortunately not, some Special Conditions have been found to be unlawful and in breach of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, especially when requesting the tenants complete specific obligations at the end of a tenancy. An example of this is requiring a specific carpet cleaning business be used upon exit.

The conditions cannot place an additional burden on the tenant more than what the Act already allows for, being that "Tenants must leave the premises, as far as possible, in the same condition they were in at the start of the tenancy, fair wear and tear excepted."

By having a strict entry and exit policy and procedure, Rangecrest protects both the tenant and property. The importance of understanding the Act and achieving the best outcome for all parties is paramount to us. For more about our entry and exit policy, please read next month's newsletter where we outline these processes.



Water rates can be a confusing subject, so we at Rangecrest Realty thought we would clear up the confusion.

Upon receipt of your water rates, if your property is water compliant, please provide our office with the original invoice and supporting reading page. You are welcome to keep a copy for your records, however, we do require a copy of the whole invoice and reading page. It is important that once you receive your water rates notice you also pay this in full directly to the billing agency, whether this be your council or utility company. This will avoid any late fees that may occur should your tenants not pay on time. Alternatively, you can also advise that you would like us to pay it for you out of your trust funds held. Please tell us each time how you would like this handled, we will not pay it unless requested to.

You may be thinking, I have an old water bill and my property is compliant. How far back can I charge my tenants? Unfortunately, there is no black and white ruling on this, however, the legislation states that it is to be a reasonable timeframe. Our advice from the RTA is that six months is generally considered a reasonable timeframe to back-charge water rates. Unfortunately, it is possible that tenants do have grounds to avoid paying their water invoice if they are issued with an invoice six or more months past the date it was invoiced to you as a landlord.

We like to ensure that the funds are disbursed back to you in a timely manner and this is why it is

Water bills: Are you missing out?

essential that we receive the notice from you as soon as possible.

Once we receive the notice we will arrange for your tenants to be invoiced for their usage (again if your property is water compliant and their lease has been prepared for such).

It is important to note here that the tenants are responsible for the usage only, the water access charge is still a landlord expense. A copy of the invoice and supporting page are required, by law, to go to your tenants and they have one month to pay, from the date they are invoiced. We make sure in our process that these legal requirements are followed for you.

This process is followed in accordance with legislation and ensures you, as landlord, are taking necessary precautions, to hold you in good stead should any action be taken against you by the tenants in the future. This is all about keeping 'ducks in a row' and ensuring your tenants are always informed of their requirements so that there is no confusion. If this process is followed arguably there shouldn't be any negative reaction, however, should you find yourself in that position (which is sometimes unfortunately unavoidable) you have followed all the procedures and have all the supporting documentation to assist your case.

If you provide the invoice and ask us to pay it, your annual property management statement will also list the expense which makes providing deduction documentation to your accountant easier at tax time.

If your property is not water compliant and you would like to know more about your rights and what you can/cannot charge your tenants, please contact our helpful property managers. We are here to help, so if there is anything you are unsure of, please phone us or pop in for a chat.

ESTATE



List your property with Anna

Rangecrest Realty Sales & Marketing representative Anna Ratcliffe invites you to have a free appraisal of your property.

Based in the Lockyer Valley, Anna will happily come visit you and your property to discuss what the market is doing in your area and how your property and expectations fit into that market.

Call us today for your free property and market appraisal.

Anna Mobile: 0434 566 738



End of Financial Year Statements

The End of Financial Year has come and gone. For some of us it passes without any real impact and you wonder what the fuss is about. For others, it is a flurry of activity and planning and leaves you running around organising and chasing statements and documents you thought you had put somewhere 'safe'.

At Rangecrest, we do not charge for additional statements or for providing them, they are simply part of doing business and are a necessary part of your needs as a property owner. This year, they were emailed to your preferred email address on or around the 2nd of July.

If you have come to us from another agency, you will need two statements to cover the period 1/07/2017 – 30/06/2018.

For some of our property owners, the agency you were with previously may not be able to assist you with a statement, but please do not fret. Rangecrest is happy to help and in most cases we hold a ledger of your owner profile from the previous agency. This can be sent to you in a matter of minutes, so please contact us and our helpful staff will be happy to assist you with a copy of your ledger. It is not a statement so it will need adding up but should give you or your accountant all you need.

WHAT'S ON:

Show season is upon us in the Lockyer Valley



The Gatton office visited the Laidley Show on the 6th & 7th July with salesperson Anna Ratcliffe attending both days and enjoying the festivities. Anna assures us it was mostly business but that some fun was had and she may have even eaten a dagwood dog to get into the spirit of the event.

Up next is the Gatton Show on the 20th & 21st July and Rangecrest will be in attendance (with a site booked inside the pavillion). This time, Anna will be joined by the Property Management team on Friday and everyone is excited in the lead up to the 'day out'. Pop in and see us at the Rangecrest Realty stand.

SMOKE ALARM COMPANY CHANGE

Rangecrest has recently secured the services of a new smoke alarm company that promises the same fantastic service at a better rate for our owners. If you haven't changed over yet and are interested in changing or finding out more, contact either the Toowoomba or Gatton office to discuss your property.

Imagine this...

Un-reported maintenance can have dire consequences:

Your tenant has been aware of a leak in the sink for months, and only reports it to the Real Estate agency at the routine inspection. This has meant major repairs, possibly an insurance claim (if you are insured) and, in some terrible situations, you are faced with having to discount your tenants' rent, or pay for them to live elsewhere while repairs take place.

How can this be avoided and what can be done?

In most cases, tenants learn from past experience, if they report

maintenance and it is not addressed, they are less likely to report issues in future. At Rangecrest, we encourage tenants at sign up of their lease to report all maintenance (big or small) immediately. We also encourage owners to address the issues quickly to minimise damage and potential future claims from tenants. Should these safety nets fail, the tenant can be breached and face covering the costs of the repairs. This is a lengthy and difficult process and it is best avoided where possible. This means encouraging tenants to report issues and, as painful as this can be for you as a landlord, the long term benefit to you as a property owner can be huge.