

# **RENTAL AND VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRY**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1.) Which properties are required to be registered with the City of Youngstown?**

Every property that is not occupied by the owner of record in the City of Youngstown is required to be registered with the exception of Voucher properties (Government Assistance) which are inspected through the Youngstown Metropolitan Housing Authority.

Vacant properties must also be registered. The Vacant/Rental Registration form can be downloaded at [www.cityofyoungstownoh.com](http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.com).

### **2.) What are the fees and requirements for rental or vacant property registration?**

#### **RENTAL REGISTRATION FEE:**

- RESIDENTIAL: \$40.00 Per Year/Per Single Family Residence
- MULTIUNITS: \$40.00 FOR THE FIRST UNIT and \$25.00 for EACH ADDITIONAL UNIT IN THAT STRUCTURE

**Note:** *Public housing units or other properties subject to annual inspection pursuant to Federally Mandated Regulations (Section 8) do NOT have to register their properties or pay the registration fee.*

#### **VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRY FEE:**

- RESIDENTIAL: \$100.00 Per Year/Per Structure
- COMMERCIAL FEE: \$250.00

### **3.) How will you enforce the law? What are the penalties for not registering?**

The penalties are strict for those that are not in compliance with the Rental Property/Vacant Registration ordinance. Penalties are \$100 per day for **Rental** property and \$50 per day for **Vacant** property owners that have not complied with the law. We vigorously enforce the ordinances and we have a very active citizenry that is eager to report unregistered landlords and vacant property owners. It will be in the best interest of all landlords and vacant property owners to comply with this ordinance.

### **4.) What is the information used for?**

The city will find the information gathered useful for planning purposes and right sizing our City. When a City has a large number of rental properties and vacant structures this factor must be considered when planning improvements and projects.

**5.) What if the tenant is the party responsible for violations, such as debris and refuse on the front lawn or porch?**

It's ultimately the owner's responsibility to maintain the property. They should include terms in their lease that require tenants to keep the property orderly. If they end up renting to people who then fill the porch with sofas and debris, the landlord would have the right to warn the tenant that they are not in compliance with their lease. If that tenant does not then come into compliance, the landlord would have grounds to evict the tenant. The City of Youngstown expects that by enforcing this ordinance landlords will be more apt to rent to tenants that will be responsible. You can also review the Tenant/Landlord Rights and Obligations Pamphlet published by the Ohio State Bar Association at [www.ohioabar.org](http://www.ohioabar.org).

**6.) What are the benefits of the program?**

Our City is sending a positive message to prospective renters that we require a certain standard of living for rental properties. We expect that this will make more people comfortable in looking at Youngstown as an option for renting. We also expect that by enforcing these standards neighborhoods will start to look more appealing, which will have a positive impact for all the properties in our neighborhoods. All of this points to an improved bottom line for landlords and improved neighborhoods in our City.

***Positive impact on real estate values:***

- 1.) Stabilized neighborhoods by improving properties. People buy neighborhoods first, and *then* they buy the home. If the neighborhood does not appeal to them, they won't look at the house, and we have some true gems in our City.
- 2.) Encourages landlords to rent to tenants who will act *responsibly* with the property and thus the neighborhood. Neighbors who damage rental properties also damage the neighborhood. These are often the neighbors that are associated with other behavioral problems and criminal activity. These are the tenants that are often the trouble-makers of the community.
- 3.) Makes prospective Youngstown renters feel safe renting in our market knowing that properties meet inspection requirements. Some landlords are now advertising their rental units as having passed this inspection to make their unit more marketable. (Inspection Sheets can be downloaded from the City of Youngstown's website)
- 4.) Encourages investment activities by neighbors and other landlords who are considering doing business in Youngstown. When neighbors are investing in their houses, it makes people feel safer to invest in their own property. They don't see property repairs and investments as a bad financial decision, but a good one.

5.) Supports and nurtures healthy tenant/landlord relationships.

Tenants sometimes perceive that they will ruin their relationship with the landlord and possibly even face eviction by complaining about repairs that are needed. The RPR Program activity means that the tenant doesn't have to ask the landlord to make repairs since this directive comes from the City.