

# **City of Woodruff**

## **Rental Property Registration & Licensing Program**

### **FAQ's**

Originally written December 3, 2008

#### **1. Address:**

What address do I list if there are multiple addresses at one location?

- Enter one of the addresses, the range of addresses or each address, if you have it.  
But at the minimum, list at least one of the addresses.

#### **2. Apartments:**

Do apartments have to be registered?

- Yes, apartment owners must register themselves and their properties.

What address do I list for the apartment complex?

- Enter the street address of the office if there is one. If not, enter one of the apartment building addresses, the range of addresses or each building address if you have it.

Does the fee apply to each apartment?

- Yes, the registration/licensing fee is applied individually to each unit.

#### **3. Fees:**

Why is a fee charged?

- To offset the cost of running the program.

I own ten rental houses, are fees applied to each house?

- Yes, fees are assessed to each individual unit.

How much is the fee?

- Fees are established by City Council. Fees for registration have been set at \$15.00.  
Fee schedule will be reviewed each budget year by council.

Is this an annual fee?

- Yes, fees must be paid by December 31<sup>st</sup> for the Licensing year beginning on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **4. Commercial Property:**

Do I have to register my commercial property?

- No, only residential rental property and its owners are required to be registered.

#### **5. Deadline:**

When do I have to turn the forms in?

- Rental housing property must be registered prior to the property being rented out.  
New owners of existing rental housing must register their new information within thirty(30) calendar days following transfer of the property. Licenses are not transferable from one owner to the next.

## **6. Forms:**

Where can I get the forms?

- Forms are available by calling the City of Woodruff Code Department at 231 E. Hayne Street, Woodruff, SC 29388. You may request applications in person, by phone at (864)476-8154 or by email at [towens@safebuilt.com](mailto:towens@safebuilt.com). Forms are also available on the City of Woodruff website.

## **7. Inspections:**

Will there be an inspection or an annual inspection?

- Rental property inspections will occur on a 4-year cycle. Vacant properties can be inspected by request of the owner prior to new tenants occupying the property to alleviate hardships or scheduling conflicts with tenants.

What if I fail an inspection?

- You will be notified of any deficiencies and a time frame for compliance will be established. A time frame of a minimum of 30 days will be given before a re-inspection for correction of stated deficiencies. Code Official will work with the owner and occupants on scheduling re-inspection.

What if I do not fix any deficiencies identified during the inspection?

- Remedies as set forth by the City Ordinance include a receiving a fine, a summons being issued and your rental license being revoked/suspended.

Can I appeal?

- Yes, there are specific rights of appeal in the Town Ordinance. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the office of the City Manager within 30 days of notice of the deficiencies.

Can I get an inspection early?

- Yes, you may request an inspection by contacting the Code Official.

## **8. Violations:**

Is a violation a felony?

- No, if a summons has to be issued, a violation is a misdemeanor offense. No summons will be issued until all other remedies are exhausted.

## **9. Lien Holders:**

Why do I have to list lien holders on the application?

- If, through non-compliance with codes, the City is required to pursue condemnation of the property, lien holders must be notified of the City's intent.

## **10. More Than One Property:**

I have multiple properties; how do I fill out the form?

- There is space enough for 6 properties on the application but if more space is needed, additional forms can be obtained by contacting the Code Official at City Hall or by picking them up in person.

## **11. Maintenance Codes:**

Where can I find copies of the applicable City Codes, like the maintenance code?

- The complete codes can be reviewed at the Building Department at 231 E. Hayne Street, Woodruff, SC 29388. Copies can be made upon request.

## **12. Local Responsible Agent:**

What is a Local Responsible Agent?

- Anyone who can legally be responsible for operating the rental property in compliance with all applicable rules; can provide access to the rental unit(s); and, can accept all legal notices or service of process regarding the property is a Local Responsible Agent.

Who can be my Local Responsible Agent?

- They may be a family member, friend, neighbor, property management firm, real estate company, etc., who is willing to accept the responsibility. Your LRA does not have to be a paid professional agent, realtor, or consultant.

Who signs the application if I have a Local Responsible Agent?

- The Rental Housing Registration Ordinance requires both the owner and agent sign the application.

## **13. Not A Rental Property:**

You sent me these forms but I don't have any rental property.

- If someone lives in the home you own and none of the individuals that live in the home are legal owners of the home, then for the purposes of this program the property is a rental.
- If you do not own any property within the City of Woodruff which is used, or will be used as a residential rental property and you have been sent a letter and/or forms, then please complete the "Owner" portion of the form, write in the tax map number(s) on the bottom and write "NO RESIDENTIAL RENTAL" on the top of the form and return it. You may also want to verify what tax rate you're paying on your home. You may be eligible to petition for the 4% owner occupied rate, if you live in the home.

I don't charge rent to the people/family members in the house. Do I still have to register?

- If the people living in the home have no legal ownership of the home, then for the purposes of this program, the property is a rental, even if they are related to you.

## **14. Now What?**

Now I've registered. What happens next?

- If the property is due for an inspection, either because of new tenants or the 4-year cycle, you or your Local Responsible Agent will need to coordinate with the occupants to set a time when an inspection can take place. If an inspection is NOT warranted, your annual Rental License will be issued and you will receive it via postal service within a few days.

## **15. Tax Map Number(s):**

Where do I get the Tax Map Number(s)?

- The Tax Map Number will be listed on any County property tax-related papers or correspondence that you have.

## **16. Vacant Rental Residences:**

I don't have any renters right now. Do I have to Register?

- If the property will be used as a rental in the future, then it must be registered. It must be registered prior to any tenants moving in.

### **17. Why:**

Why do I have to do this?

- Owners of property within the City have brought complaints to the City government about deteriorating rental properties within residential neighborhoods. In the past, the City sometimes found it difficult to find owners of residential rental properties. In response, the Woodruff City Council created this program.

The primary purpose of this program is to:

- A. Establish a database which will provide the City with contact information for residential rental properties. City staff will now have a single source for contact information if a problem should arise.
- B. It is the purpose of this program to assure that rental housing in the City of Woodruff is decent, safe and sanitary and is so operated and maintained as not to become a nuisance to the neighborhood or to become an influence that fosters blight and deterioration or creates a disincentive to re-invest in the community.

### **18. Pest Control:**

Who is responsible for pest/rodent control at a residential rental unit?

- The owner of any structure subject to inspection by this Ordinance shall be responsible for extermination within the structure prior to renting or leasing the structure. After occupancy, the tenant of any structure subject to inspection by this Ordinance shall be responsible for the continued rodent and pest-free condition of the structure. **Exception:** Where the infestations are caused by defects in the structure, the owner shall be responsible for extermination.

### **19. Density:**

Are there density requirements?

- Yes, in no event shall the total number of occupants exceed two (2) times the number of habitable rooms in the dwelling unit. Hallways, bathrooms, kitchens and porches are not considered habitable rooms for occupancy density calculations. Bedrooms, living rooms, basements, or other spaces that can be converted to a bedroom space can be used for occupancy determinations. Owners shall specify the names of the actual residents authorized to reside in the residence upon licensing and shall stipulate the maximum number of occupants allowed in their properties.

### **20. Pets/Animals:**

Can I have pets?

- Yes; however, the Ordinance states that five (5) or more pets within the confines of one property constitute a kennel by definition and kennels are currently prohibited from any Residentially Zoned area within the City Limits of Woodruff. With regard to vicious animals, it is prohibited from raising vicious animals for sale or otherwise within the confines of a rented dwelling or rented space within the City Limits of Woodruff. Section 4-2 of the Spartanburg County Animal Control Ordinance applies as Spartanburg Animal Control is the authorized enforcement for the City of Woodruff.