

# Landlord Link

The Housing Authority of the City  
of Santa Barbara

## Revitalizing the Neighborhood

The Housing Authority recently celebrated the transformation of an older, eight-unit downtown apartment complex, many considered to be an “eye sore”. Built in 1953, the property, located at 633 de la Vina, was in need of not only a face lift, but modifications to improve the physical access to the apartments. The Housing Authority purchased the property in 2007 using a federal HOME grant for \$741,080 and a tax-exempt note with the previous owners for \$960,000. The Housing Authority began the renovation in February of 2010 using the city’s Community Development Block Grant program, which provided \$360,000. As noted by Robert Pearson, Executive Director/CEO of the Housing Authority, “The housing authority has a rich history of improving Santa Barbara neighborhoods through its new construction of

award-winning housing and its acquisition and transformation of older, existing apartment buildings,

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Photography by James Chen

## Renovation, Repair & Painting Rule

Common renovation activities like sanding, cutting, and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips by disturbing lead-based paint, which can be harmful to adults and children. To protect against this risk, effective April 22, 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) changed its requirements regarding renovation, repair and painting for houses built prior to 1978 as follows:

- Property owners/landlords who renovate, repair or prepare surfaces for painting in pre-1978 rental housing must be certified and follow lead-safe work practices required by the rule.
- Contractors who perform the repair must be certified and must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

Property owners and/or contractors, must, before

beginning work, provide tenants with a copy of EPA’s lead hazard information pamphlet *Renovate Right: Important lead hazard information for families, child care providers and schools* and must document compliance with this requirement. To become certified to complete lead-safe work, property owners and/or contractors must submit an application for certification and fee payment to the EPA.

The rule does not apply to minor maintenance or repair activities where less than six square feet of lead-based paint is disturbed in a room or where less than 20 square feet of lead-based paint is disturbed on the exterior. Window replacement is not minor maintenance or repair.

For more information, and to obtain EPA’s lead hazard information pamphlet and other forms, visit the EPA’s website at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

## New Fair Housing Policy

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on July 1, 2010 announced a new policy that provides lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and families with further assistance when facing housing discrimination. The new guidance treats gender sexual orientation- or gender identity-based housing discrimination most often faced by transgender persons as gender discrimination under the federal Fair Housing Act, and instructs HUD staff to inform individuals filing complaints about state and local agencies that have LGBT-inclusive discrimination laws. California law already protects LGBT individuals—it is unlawful for a landlord or managing agent to discriminate against a person or harass a person because of the person's gender and perception of gender, sexual orientation, personal characteristics such as a person's physical appearance or sexual orientation, or perception of a person's sexual orientation. More information can be obtained from HUD's website at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) or the California Department of Consumer Affairs website at [www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov).

## Revitalizing the Neighborhood

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and 633 De la Vina is testimony to that history, and our ongoing commitment to create affordable and beautiful housing for the community.” The complex includes six one-bedroom units, and two two-bedroom units, and is home to seniors, families and disabled individuals, all paying thirty percent of their income for rent through the Section 8 program.



## Security Deposit FAQ's

The most common disagreement between landlords and tenants is over the tenant's security deposit, specifically the refund after the tenant has moved out of the rental unit. Here are a few common questions we receive about security deposits, refunds, and the like:

**Q:** *How much security deposit can a landlord require?*

**A:** Up to two times the monthly rent for unfurnished units, three times if the unit is furnished.

**Q:** *How long does the landlord have to refund the security deposit?*

**A:** A landlord must send the tenant an itemized accounting, copies of invoices or receipts, and any good faith estimate of the amount retained from the security deposit (unless the repairs or cleaning cost less than \$126) and/or refund the deposit not retained within 21 days of the date a tenant vacates the unit, or, according to a

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California Supreme Court decision, the landlord loses the right to keep any of the security deposit and must return the entire deposit.

**Q: Can a tenant use the security deposit for the last months rent?**

**A:** A tenant may NOT use the security deposit as the last month's rent without the landlord's approval as the law considers it all as security.

**Q. What charges can a landlord deduct from the security deposit?**

**A:** A landlord can charge a tenant for cleaning but only to make the unit as clean as it was when the tenant first moved in, unpaid rent, and damage to the rental unit beyond normal wear and tear.

Please note that this information is not intended to be legal advice. For more information visit the CA Department of Consumer Affairs website [www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov) for the landlord guide book or your attorney.

## Inspector's Corner

By Jerry Morales, Leasing Agent

Bed bugs! In recent years there has been a resurgence of bed bug infestations throughout the U.S. Here are some FAQ's:

**What are bed bugs?** Small wingless insects, approximately 1/4 of an inch long that feed on blood, normally during the night.

**Are bed bugs dangerous? Do they carry disease?** Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, however, their bites can cause large, itchy welts on the skin.

**What are the indicators of bed bug infestation?** Evidence includes the presence of bed bugs or their cast exoskeletons, and blood spots/stains on bedding, walls, or upholstered furniture, most often where a person sleeps or rests.

**If discovered, what are my, and my tenant's rights & responsibilities?** Pests, including bed bugs, are a habitability issue, which means the owner needs to deal with it immediately. Even if fault can be determined to recover costs from the responsible tenant, if it spreads to other units due to lack of prompt action by the owner, the owner may be liable to those other residents. For more information, including information specific to landlords and tenants, visit the California Dept. of Public Health's website: [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)



Photography by Mark Kuroda

## Welcome New HACSB Commissioners

The Housing Authority welcomes two new Commissioners to its Board: Patrick Johnson, filling the senior tenant position and Don Olson, representing the community-at-large. Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Olson were appointed by the Mayor on June 29, 2010, along with Mary Johnston-de Leon who was reappointed to fill the non-senior tenant position. Each of these Commissioners bring to the Board a background and an interest in low-income housing development. When asked what brought him to the Housing Authority's Board, Don Olson noted "Safe and secure shelter is a basic human need and finding affordable

housing in Santa Barbara is a major challenge for many of our residents. Our Housing Authority is recognized nationally as being one of the best in the country. Over its 40 year history, the HACSB has served thousands of individuals and families who live and work locally. A significant part of my career has been focused on advocacy, financing and permitting of affordable housing in our community. As a Commissioner, I will do what I can to help our Housing Authority continue to pursue its mission." The staff at the Housing Authority looks forward to each commissioners contribution and leadership to our Agency!

We're on the Web!

[www.hacsb.org](http://www.hacsb.org)



## The Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

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### Mission

The Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara is a local public agency created under state law for the purpose of providing safe, decent, and quality affordable housing and supportive services to eligible persons with limited incomes, through a variety of federal, state, local and private resources.

### Vision

HACSB does more than handle the day-to-day demands of providing affordable housing solutions to lower income families, seniors and the disabled. We strive to craft solutions to our Community's affordable housing dilemma in a holistic manner, and turn them into reality.

## News Flash!

### List Your Vacancies... **FREE!**

The Housing Authority maintains a **FREE** listing service for your vacancies. If you want to fill a vacancy quickly, add it to our list which is sent out to all Voucher holders currently looking for a unit. Please contact Andrea Fink at 897-1034 or go to our website at [www.hacsb.org](http://www.hacsb.org) to list your unit.

### Who to Call ...

For HAP contract/lease-up questions:  
Andrea Fink, 897-1034

For inspection questions:  
Jerry Morales, 897-1049 or  
Ronnie Anderson, 897-1045

For HAP payment questions:  
Ruben Venegas, 897-1046

Director of Housing Management:  
Veronica Loza, 897-1032

### Housing Authority Office Hours

As a reminder, the Housing Authority works a flex schedule, with alternate Fridays closed to the public. We also have extended daily customer service hours:

Monday—Thursday:

7:30 am - 5:30 pm

Alternate Fridays:

8:00 am - 4:00 pm

### Furniture Closet

The Housing Authority continues to need donations for our Furniture Closet. If you have furniture in good condition that you would like to donate, or know of a tenant in need of donation, please contact Angel Velazquez or Marcus Lopez at 897-1044. Donations are tax deductible.

### Rental Housing Mediation Task Force

The City of Santa Barbara operates the Rental Housing Mediation Task Force (RHMTF) program the purpose of which is to resolve rental housing disputes by offering mediation services, along with information on residential Landlord-Tenant rights and responsibilities. The RHMTF was established in 1976 out of a "Grass Roots" effort to resolve Landlord/Tenant disputes and is composed of staff and a task force of fifteen trained community volunteers—five landlords, five tenants, and five homeowners—who are appointed by the Santa Barbara City Council. The Program establishes an effective and efficient alternative to formal court proceedings for the resolution of rental housing disputes, potentially saving thousands of dollars. For more information visit the website at [www.santabarbaraca.gov](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov)