

Rent can be tricky business

BY GWEN TIETGEN

Renting an apartment can be a lot trickier than it looks. First, renters should know

where they want to live and what they may want in a potential apartment, said Suzanne Gilleland, housing resource specialist with the Lincoln Action

Program.

"Know what you can afford for rent with the cost of utilities," Gilleland said.

And be prepared, warns Larry Potratz, director of the Lincoln Housing Authority.

"Sometimes landlords run credit checks or criminal checks on future tenants," Potratz said.

When obtaining an apartment, Gilleland said, most landlords ask for a deposit. The maximum amount that can be charged for the deposit is up to one month's rent.

If renters change their minds about renting the apartment, landlords don't have to return the deposit, she said.

The lease should list the landlord or management company's contact information, the length of the lease, a list of the utilities the tenants are responsible to pay and the amount of the rent and deposit.

"Keep your original lease and inspection, listing what is wrong with the apartment," she said.

If problems occur, tenants should first contact the landlord, but if they don't get a response to the problem, be careful, Gilleland said.

"A lot of people think they can just stop paying rent if a landlord fails to repair the apartment," she said.

"Keep paying rent, no matter what."



Nate Wagner/DN

Fountain Glen apartments on N.W. 2nd St. are home to many UNL students who say the complex provides nice facilities and a fun atmosphere.

Apartments offer students security

BY JILL CONNER

For students looking for a place to live after their first year, a dorm-like atmosphere without the cramped quarters and regulations seems too good to be true.

But for those wanting all the benefits and none of the disadvantages, the dream is reality.

Steven Hinnerichs, a junior business major who lives at Fountain Glen apartments, 6157 N.W. Circle, said he likes the big complex because he lives by all of his friends.

"I know people in just about every building," he said.

Hinnerichs said he wasn't worried about crime because all the apartments are near each other and provide a dorm-like community.

Brandy Wood, a sophomore dietetics major, said her smaller complex offered a friendlier atmosphere.

Wood lives at Village Square Apartments, 1620 S. Folsom St., a complex with about 90 apartments.

"I feel more comfortable around my neighbors because there is only nine per building," she said.

Heather Martindale, assistant manager of Highland View Apartments, 4441 N. First St., a complex with 406 apartments, said as a manager it is hard to know everybody, but there are ways to reach all the residents.

"We have a pool party every year just after school starts in August, and we have a monthly newsletter, which provides information about some of our rules and regulations, little reminders about holidays and special things going on at the complex," she said.

For other students, a bigger apartment complex offers an escape from the usual campus scenery.

Todd Vanpeteghem, a senior exercise science major, said the apartment complex he lives in, LionsGate Apartments, 5101 Vine St., offers a break from campus.

"You have a little more freedom out here (at LionsGate)," he said.

Vanpeteghem advised students to find a big complex but one close to campus.

"We're in the middle of everything, not too far from campus and everything's here," he said.

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