

# TracyRoberts

real estate

## Property Management News

June 2010

### Landlords Should Be Proactive

If you are experiencing problems with tenants, taking a proactive approach can often resolve the issue a lot quicker and prevent unwanted tribunal appearances. Sometimes, minor problems can escalate if left unchecked.

Obviously, the first step is for the property manager to discuss the issue with both parties and gain a clear understanding of the problem. Both parties then need to check their rights and responsibilities as outlined in the residential tenancy agreement.

The Fair Trading Department can also advise you on the best approach; for example, if the tenant is experiencing a personal crisis which is affecting the tenancy agreement, it may be practical to advise them to contact the Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service (rather than go in with guns blazing and exacerbate the issue).

Remember that resolving problems in a timely fashion is far more beneficial to you as a landlord as it minimises any possibility of financial loss and time spent attending a tribunal hearing, getting documentation prepared and/or briefing the property manager.

### End of Financial Year

Tax time can be quite daunting, but if you streamline the process and know what you can claim for in advance, the task can become a lot easier. Below is a list of tax deductible items that you can claim for your tenanted rental property:

- advertising costs
- bank charges
- any body corporate fees that apply
- council rates including sewerage and water
- gardening and lawn-mowing costs
- insurance (such as landlord insurance)
- property agent fees or commissions
- interest expenses (such as those incurred on a loan to purchase the property)
- legal expenses (for example, costs incurred for a defaulting tenant)
- decline in value of depreciating assets (such as air-conditioning, lights, rugs, dishwashers, freezers, fridges) and
- travel undertaken to inspect the property or to collect the rent.
- capital works
- land tax
- office supplies
- phone
- water charges
- pest inspections & control



Other items that are claimable include the cost of any repair work which includes, for example, replacing a damaged fence caused by a storm or a falling tree, maintaining the property in its current state or work which prevents deterioration of the property, such as painting the property or maintaining the plumbing. (However, please remember that you cannot claim expenses you incurred whilst renovating / decorating to make the property rentable.)

You can also claim your borrowing expenses associated with the property such as:

- stamp duty which was charged on the mortgage
- the cost of establishing the loan
- any title search fees charged by your lender and
- mortgage fees and document costs.
- valuation fees
- mortgage insurance

This is not an exhaustible list and advice should be sought from your accountant or the Australian Tax Office.



## What Makes a Good Property Manager?

A good property manager should be knowledgeable, ethical, have a good understanding of tenancy laws and be able to assist you in meeting your rights and responsibilities as a landlord.

Our responsibilities to you include:

- Finding suitable tenants – this includes checking to see if the potential tenant has any of the following: rental arrears, tribunal orders or poor maintenance histories. We will also ensure they have a good employment history, get copies of their latest bank statements and, of course, do reference checks.
- Making sure the tenancy agreement is correctly completed and signed.
- Lodging the rental bond.
- Managing your property on a day-to-day basis which includes collection of rent and issuing of receipts; arranging repairs; conducting property inspections and handling any disputes that may arise.
- Forwarding the rent to you minus any fees and costs.
- Keeping you up to date on your property and offering you peace of mind knowing that someone is looking after you and your property.

As an added bonus we will regularly provide you with our newsletter, keeping you informed and up to date on all relevant tenancy issues.



### Meet a member of our Property Management Team



#### Bernadette Manassa

Bernadette is our Property Management Associate who assists Gayle with the day to running of the property management department. You may have already had the opportunity to speak with Bernadette concerning any repairs or routine inspection inspections that have been carried out at our property.

Bernadette is also very thorough with her reports and you should look forward to reading one of them for your property soon.

## Handy Painting Tip

Ever wondered if it was a good day to paint the exterior of your house? Well, with the new Dulux WeatherShield Weather Desk, you can get all that information at the click of a mouse. This new site provides you with all the latest weather from across Australia and includes frequently updated weather conditions for up to three days in advance. There are also links to local weather.

So when you find the perfect day, paint exterior doors and windows first thing in the morning, then prop them open to dry. They should safely be ready to close by nightfall.

A downloadable widget to install on your computer can be found at...  
[www.dulux.com.au/weatherdesk/index.html](http://www.dulux.com.au/weatherdesk/index.html)

## Don't Lose Your Superannuation...



If you think you have any lost superannuation, then now is the time to track it down before it becomes part of Australian Taxation Office revenue.

For anyone who has superannuation of less than \$200, you may be able to access it tax free. The easiest way to track this is to use the Australian Tax Office's SuperSeeker, either online ([www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)) or via the telephone service 13 28 65. Remember that you will need your Tax File number.



## Holiday homes need insuring too...

According to a leading insurance company, the top three reasons for claims made on holiday rentals are: Water damage, Loss of rent & Theft

If you have a rental property that is used as a holiday rental only, you are exposing yourself to different types of legal liability than those who rent out their properties long term. Please read your current policy and ensure that it covers for short term and long term rentals or talk to us and we can help you find a suitable policy.

## Wanted!

### More rental properties urgently needed.

We are facing a lack of properties to meet the current and ensuing demand. We would really appreciate the referral of any people you may know that owns or is thinking of purchasing an investment property.

**Please contact our office**

**9631 3544**