



YOUNGSTOWN  
**NEIGHBORHOOD**

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**REVITALIZE RENTAL**

TENANT MANUAL

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# Important Contact Information

**MY PROPERTY MANAGER'S NAME IS TIFFANY SOKOL**

**I CAN REACH MY PROPERTY MANAGER AT 330.480.0423**

**YOUNGSTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION IS LOCATED AT  
820 CANFIELD ROAD, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO 44511**

## OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**YNDC MAINTENANCE: 330.480.0423**

**AFTER HOUR EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE NUMBER: 330.720.8599**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT: 330.742.8900**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT: 330.747.7403**

**DOMINION EAST OHIO GAS (for gas leaks and other emergencies): 1.877.542.2630**



YOUNGSTOWN  
**NEIGHBORHOOD**

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

## Our Mission

YNDC is committed to improving the quality of life in Youngstown by building and encouraging investment in neighborhoods of choice for all. We aim to accomplish this mission through a dual approach that includes strategic investments to rebuild market confidence in neighborhoods with strong assets, and broader partnership strategies to strengthen Youngstown's community development capacity and the citywide infrastructure supporting neighborhood revitalization.

**FAIR HOUSING STATEMENT: We are pledged to the letter and spirit of U.S. policy for the achievement of equal housing opportunity. We do not discriminate in our selection process on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.**



# I. Introduction to the Program

YNDC's REVITALIZE Rental program offers an opportunity to rent a quality rental unit. Tenants invest timely rental payments and commit to unit care guidelines for the period of their residence. Tenants have certain responsibilities while living in a Leased unit. The "Maintenance Responsibilities - Contract of Care" is included as part of the Lease Agreement and outlines tenant maintenance and repair responsibilities. This allows tenants to become familiar with the care and routine maintenance required to keep their unit in good condition, and assists them in preparing for future homeownership.

## Application

This process can take some time, depending on the availability of housing in the neighborhood you choose. This process includes:

1. Application Screening – Your application will be reviewed for:
  - o Completeness of the application – Was everything filled out on the form?
  - o Documents – Are all required documents included with the application?
  - o Eligibility – Do you fit the qualifying criteria?
  - o Credit – Are there any issues on your credit report?
2. Housing Counseling (if needed) – After reviewing your credit report, YNDC may recommend enrollment in a HUD-Certified Housing Counseling program to assist you in improving financial stability.
3. Interaction with Program Assistant – The Program Assistant will be your contact throughout the process of approving your application for the REVITALIZE Rental program. The Program Assistant will contact you with questions regarding your application and will be able to tell you the status of your application and the availability of housing that fits your needs.
4. Finding Appropriate Housing – Once you have received final approval for the REVITALIZE Rental program, you will work closely with the Program Assistant to locate suitable housing.

# II. Housing Policies

## Access to Property

### Non-Emergency Access

If YNDC needs to enter your unit on a non-emergency basis, you will be notified at least 24 hours in advance. YNDC will likely need to access the unit on a monthly basis for routine inspection and maintenance. If no one is in the unit after the proper notification has been given, the Property Management staff may enter your unit.

### Emergency Access

The Property Management staff may enter your unit without notice in emergency situations.

Emergencies may include:

- o Gas leak
- o Plumbing or electrical problems
- o Anything that may cause further damage to the property or endanger the safety of any individual or the community

### 3rd Party Inspection

On occasion there may be a need to enter your unit to complete an inspection with a 3rd party inspector. These inspections may include inspectors from the City, State, or other funders. You will be notified at least 24 hours in advance of these inspections and will be required to provide access to your unit. A YNDC Property Management representative will accompany the inspector.

## **Common Area Policy**

Some units have shared common areas, typically in the basement of the property. These areas are only to be used by building tenants for storage and laundry purposes. Storage areas must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards. Items in storage areas may not block doorways or access to mechanical systems including the furnace, hot water tank, and water meter. Flammable items MAY NOT be stored in the unit. Laundry must be removed from the washer and dryer in a timely manner with regard for other tenants who share the facility.

## **Cable Television Service**

You must contact your Property Manager or YNDC for written permission before you install any cable service in your unit. Any damage caused by the installation of cable television service will be charged back to the tenant. Satellite dishes are not permitted as they can cause significant damage to the property.

## **Criminal Activity**

As a tenant, you shall not permit or engage in any criminal activity in or around the Leased premises. You are responsible for the actions of household members, guests, and/or other persons visiting your unit. Criminal activity in or around your unit is a violation of your Lease and will result in IMMEDIATE EVICTION AND TERMINATION OF YOUR Lease and criminal action.

## **Eviction (Notice To Vacate)**

A Notice to Vacate will be given for the following reasons:

1. Nonpayment of rent 60 days or more past due.
2. Failure to comply with terms and conditions of your Lease Agreement or this Handbook.
3. Failure to cooperate with Property Management when asked to provide required documents.

## **Grievance Policy & Procedures**

Any YNDC tenant who has an unresolved dispute with YNDC may choose to file a grievance. A grievance is appropriate when a circumstance is thought to be unjust or unfair. To file a grievance, you must follow these steps:

1. File a written complaint with your Property Manager. You will receive a response within five business days.
2. If after you receive a response to your complaint you still feel that the situation has not been resolved, you may request a formal grievance form. The request must be submitted in writing to your Property Manager and the Program Assistant. You will receive a written response to your grievance within 20 business days.
3. If you complete steps one and two and still feel that your issue has not been resolved, you may request a formal grievance hearing. All inquiries for a formal hearing must be received in writing within 20 business days after you receive your written response (step 2). Send your written formal hearing request to the Program Assistant.

## **Household Changes/Unauthorized Occupants**

A change in the household makeup (or income) must be reported to Property Management within thirty days of the change. Change in household makeup includes:

- o Births
- o Deaths
- o Adoptions
- o Marriage
- o A companion moving in
- o Custody of a juvenile relative or foster child

Excluding births, additions to your household need to be approved by Property Management in advance. Friends and relatives are free to visit and occasionally stay for a short period of time, but you are responsible for the actions of your guests.

Allowing individuals who are not on the Lease to live in your unit is a violation of your Lease agreement.

# Housekeeping Standards

## Tenant Responsibilities

### Inside Unit - General

- Walls: Must be clean and free of dirt, grease, holes, fingerprints, crayon or other marks, and cob webs.
- Tile Floors: Must be swept and mopped regularly and free of hazards.
- Carpets: Must be vacuumed regularly and free of burn marks and spots.
- Ceilings: Must be clean and free of dust, dirt, grease, and cobwebs.
- Woodwork: Must be clean and free of dust, dirt, grease, and cobwebs.
- Doors: Must be clean and free of dust, dirt, grease, and cobwebs.
- Storm Doors: Must be in good repair.
- Windows: Glass - must be clean and have curtains, shades, or blinds.  
Casings - must be clean and free of dust, dirt, and cobwebs.  
Window Sills and Troughs - must be clean and free of dust and debris.
- Heating Units: Must be dusted, uncluttered, and not blocked by furniture or other belongings.

### Kitchen

- Stove: Must be clean and free of food, dirt, and grease.
- Refrigerator: Must be clean, doors should close properly, and freezer must have no more than one fourth inch of ice.
- Cabinets: Must be clean, orderly, and free of grease and spilled food, storage under the sink should be limited to small items to permit access for repairs.
- Exhaust Fan: Must be free of grease and dust.
- Sink: Must be clean and free of grease, garbage, and dirty dishes. Clean dishes must be put away in a timely manner.
- Trash/Garbage: Must be stored in a covered container and must be removed from the unit at least weekly.

### Bathroom

- Toilet & Tank: Must be clean, odor-free, and flush properly.
- Tub/Shower: Must be clean and free of mildew, mold, and soap scum. Shower curtain must be in place and of adequate length.
- Exhaust fan: Must be clean, sanitary, and free of dust.

### Other areas

- Bedrooms: Must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards.
- Hallways: Must be clean and free of hazards and no rubbish or other items may be stored or placed there by the tenant.
- Stairwell: Must be clean, uncluttered, and free of hazards, and access shall not be impeded by tenant's belongings or rubbish.
- Laundry Area: Must be clean and free of hazards.
- Utility Room: Must be free of debris, motor vehicle parts, and flammable materials.

## Storage Areas

- Closets: Must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards. Flammable items MAY NOT be stored in the unit.
- Basement: Must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards. Flammable items MAY NOT be stored in the unit.
- Attic: Must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards. Flammable items MAY NOT be stored in the unit.
- Other Storage: Must be orderly, clean, and free of hazards. Flammable items MAY NOT be stored in the unit.

## Outside Unit - General

- Yard: Must be free of debris, trash, and abandoned cars.
- Porch: Must be clean and free of hazards, and access shall not be impeded by items stored on the porch. No BBQ grill is permitted on the porch.
- Steps: Must be clean and free of hazards, and snow and ice must be removed by tenant.
- Sidewalk: Must be clean, free of hazards, and no rubbish items may be stored or placed there by tenant.
- Storm Door: Must be clean and in good repair.
- Driveway/Lot: Must be free of abandoned cars and no car repairs may be done on the premises.
- Garage: Must be clean, free of hazards, and no rubbish items.

## **Lease Agreement**

Your Lease and this Handbook are a contractual agreement between you and YNDC. By signing the Lease, you agree to accept the responsibilities of a lessee. As landlord, YNDC accepts responsibility for enforcement of your Lease and this Handbook. If you do not understand any part of your Lease or this Handbook, the Program Assistant can assist in explaining it to you.

## **Living Space**

The Program Assistant will help you locate a unit that will fit your needs. Attic spaces and basements are NOT intended as living spaces. Only bedrooms are to be used as sleeping quarters.

## **Lockout/Lost Key**

If you are locked out of your unit, you will need to notify your Property Manager. Only the Property Manager is permitted to distribute keys to units. A \$5.00 KEY FEE will be charged if you request a duplicate key because of a lockout. This fee is charged for replacement of keys during business hours only. If you request emergency lockout services (after business hours or on holidays or weekends), you will be responsible for paying an after hours lockout fee of up to \$150.00.

## **Move-In/Move-Out Inspection**

When you move in, your Property Manager will conduct an inspection. At this time, you are given an opportunity to record any concerns regarding your unit. If you are preparing to move out, you need to schedule an appointment for a move-out inspection at least 30 days before you plan to move.

## **Move-Out Notice**

You must provide the Program Assistant with a 30-day written notice stating your intention to move out. If you move before your Lease expires, you may forfeit your security deposit.

## **Noise**

In order to respect the rights of others to peace and quiet, it is important to keep noise levels down at all times.

## **Parking**

If you live in a property that has two or more units, visitors or guests are NOT permitted to park on the property. Only tenants that are on the Lease will be permitted to park there. All guests and visitors must use street parking. Inoperable cars, trucks, and bikes or any mechanical salvage are not permitted on the property.

## **Pets**

You may NOT keep any pets in your unit.

## **Renew Lease**

At least annually, you and all household members 18 or older are required to provide income and family composition information to YNDC. Three months prior to your move-in anniversary date, you will receive a notice from the Program Assistant that it's time for renewal.

Ninety days prior to your Lease renewal, here is what you can expect to happen:

1. Receive a written notice with a deadline for renewal.
2. Call YNDC for an appointment.
3. Bring income verification for all household members.
4. All household members 18 or over will meet with the Program Assistant for approximately 15 minutes.
5. It will take 2-6 weeks to process your paperwork. Then, within 6-8 weeks after your appointment, you will receive your new rent coupons and notification of any rent increase.

This reporting requirement is mandatory and failure to provide the necessary information is grounds for eviction.

## **Rent Policy**

Paying your rent on time is important for many reasons. If you fall behind on your rent, chances are you will fall behind on other bills also. Once you get behind, it is very difficult to get caught up again. Read this section carefully, and be sure to make your rent payment a top priority each month.

- o Rent is due on or before the first of every month.
- o Rent payments are to be made payable to Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation. Rent payments must be paid by ACH payment.
- o Partial payment will NOT be accepted.
- o If your rent is received after the 15th of the month, a late fee will be charged in the amount of \$50.00 or the largest amount permitted by applicable law, whichever is less. An additional late fee of \$50.00 will be charged for every additional 15 days rent is past due.

Your rent payment history with YNDC may be reported to the credit bureaus. If you move out of your unit owing a balance to YNDC, that amount will be placed with a collection agency and reported to the credit bureaus.

## **Renter's Insurance**

YNDC carries insurance on the unit you are living in. This insurance does NOT cover your personal property (i.e. - clothing, furniture, fans) or personal liability (if you unintentionally cause a loss, such as a fire or flood). Personal liability insurance is required. YNDC strongly recommends that you additionally carry fire, damage, and theft insurance on your personal property. Renters insurance is inexpensive and a wise investment.

YNDC is not responsible for damage to your personal property in case of fire, smoke, burglary, falling objects, hail, explosions, rain, snow, ice, heat, or water damage. Renter's insurance will reimburse you for such losses.

## **Security Deposit**

A security deposit equal to one month's rent was charged at the time you moved into your YNDC unit. The Security Deposit may not be used as payment of the last month's rent.

In the event of a move-out at the termination of the Lease, the following procedures must be followed:

1. A thirty-day written notice must be provided to the Program Assistant.
2. All keys to the unit must be returned to your Property Manager.
3. Your new forwarding address must be provided to the Program Assistant.
4. Any unpaid charges for delinquent rent/repairs must be settled with YNDC.

Within thirty days of your move-out, a Statement of Account letter explaining any deductions along with a check for the refunded amount (where applicable) will be mailed to your forwarding address.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is NOT permitted in any of YNDC's rental units or common areas.

## **Telephone Number**

Be sure that your Property Manager has your CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER, and the name of someone to call in case of emergency. If you change your phone number, you must notify your Property Manager and give him/her your new number.

## **Trash Removal**

Tenants must provide their own trash containers and lids. All trash/garbage must be placed in the proper containers. The best place to store garbage cans is in the back yard area of your unit. Trash and garbage MUST NOT be left on porches or outside of your front or side door. Storing garbage properly will reduce rodent and other pest-related situations. Trash MAY NOT be set out prior to noon the day before scheduled waste collection for your neighborhood, and trash containers must be removed from the curb within 24 hours of waste collection.

# III. Maintenance

## **Tenant's Maintenance Responsibilities (Contract of Care)**

### Exterior Maintenance

1. Maintain front and rear yard. Keep yard free of trash, debris, and any other items that may interfere with mowing the grass. Keep garbage cans covered.
2. Keep service walks and stairs free from snow and ice at all times. In the case of snow accumulation, ensure vehicles are parked in the garage or removed from the driveway so that YNDC can adequately clear the driveway of snow and ice.

### Interior Maintenance

1. Clean carpet as needed (at least annually).
2. Test smoke detectors monthly; replace batteries every six months.

Your responsibilities as a tenant are detailed in your Lease agreement and this Handbook.

### Maintenance Policies

#### Maintenance - Customer Service

Customer Service is available during regular business hours to take your maintenance call. If you have a maintenance request, please call (330) 480-0423.

## Maintenance Priorities

Corrective maintenance is the repair or replacement of materials that are damaged or do not function. This service is performed in response to (1) a tenant request or (2) identification during inspections. The following priority system is used for routing and scheduling corrective maintenance:

Priority 1: Emergency – defined as any situation adversely affecting the life, health, or safety of a tenant, the property or an adjacent property. All emergencies are handled within 24 hours and may include:

- o sewer backup
- o fire
- o no heat when temperature is below 40 degrees
- o plumbing/water leaks causing damage to structure or personal belongings
- o gas leaks (call Dominion East Ohio Gas at 1-877-542-2630)
- o sparks from the breaker box, outlet, or electrical switch or short circuit

Priority 2: Urgent – problems involving an inconvenience, discomfort, or hardship to you and your family or that could result in further deterioration of property if left unattended. Urgent repairs are handled within 48 hours and may include:

- o water leaks
- o broken steps
- o leaking hot water tanks
- o hanging gutters
- o blown fuses
- o backed-up toilets

Priority 3: Routine – situations that warrant repair but are not urgent. These situations often require an inspection. For routine repairs, YNDC shall contact the tenant within 72 hours to arrange for the completion of the repairs.

- o extermination
- o lock changes
- o minor electrical repairs (i.e. securing light fixtures and replacing nonworking switches).

Deferred – lower priority maintenance items are deferred (not completed) until funds become available or until the season/weather permits the work to be completed. Typically, these include the following:

- o repairing or re-tiling floors
- o roof repairs.
- o concrete and asphalt repairs
- o landscaping and tree cutting
- o tuckpointing of foundations and chimneys
- o exterior painting of houses

Preventive – may include bi-annual furnace cleaning and inspections and extermination in multiple unit buildings.

## **Maintenance Requests**

Please allow YNDC at least 72 hours to respond to your request. The only exceptions are for requests that are prioritized as emergencies, urgent, or for extensive jobs, such as roof repair or major sewer work that require YNDC to bid out the work before it can be completed.

When you call in a maintenance request:

- o Make yourself available to the contractor. We have had many situations where our contractors and staff have difficulty getting in touch with tenants.
- o Our contractors are given a deadline in which they must complete your maintenance request. They can only accomplish this if you return their calls to set up an appointment with them. That is why it is important that you leave a working phone number with us when you call in with a maintenance problem. If you are unable to keep an appointment you will need to call the contractor and cancel the appointment.
- o Not having a phone number can make it very difficult for us to service your request. If we are unable to get in touch with you after several attempts, we will try to contact you by mail. This will be noted in our files.
- o If you find that you need extra work done at your unit after a contractor has arrived, please call YNDC immediately. YNDC must approve any additional work BEFORE it can be started. Contractors are not allowed to do any work unless it is approved by YNDC first.

## **Maintenance Work at Your Unit**

Always take down the name of any contractor or person coming to your unit to do work. Tenants should NEVER allow any person into their unit without their information first. This is important for two reasons:

1. This can be a safety issue. You should never assume that everything is all right just because someone claims to have been sent by YNDC to do work on your unit. Call YNDC if you have concerns.
2. Having the name of the contractor doing work at your unit is extremely helpful should a problem arise concerning the work that is being completed. This will help Customer Service research who was sent to your unit and then contact the correct contractor to come back and resolve all issues.

When a contractor finishes working in your unit, the contractor is required to have you sign a Maintenance Sign-Off Sheet.

- o Please DO NOT sign this sheet unless you are completely satisfied with the work.
- o Sign-off sheets should never be signed simply as proof that a contractor came to your unit. They are supposed to be used as customer satisfaction forms.
- o We encourage all tenants to write down any comments that you have about the completed work (good or bad) on the comment section of the sign-off sheet. If a contractor is pressuring you to sign before or after a job is done, contact YNDC immediately to inform us of the situation.

## **Maintenance Charge Backs**

There are circumstances where you, as the tenant, may be required to pay YNDC for the cost of repairs on your unit. These are called charge backs. The following issues would result in a charge back to the tenant:

- o Maintenance issues that are caused by tenant damage or neglect (such as repair of clogged toilets, broken windows, doors hanging off hinges, holes punched in walls, unit infested by fleas, damaged carpeting, cleaning up excess debris, and disinfecting units).
- o A tenant misses an appointment with a contractor without calling the contractor to cancel the appointment, and the contractor bills YNDC for a service call.
- o A citation from the city that results from tenant negligence.
- o Work done by YNDC that is the tenant's responsibility, such as replacing light bulbs or smoke detector batteries, cleaning carpeting, or rehanging doors or handrails.
- o Unnecessary maintenance calls. For example, a tenant calls in with a furnace problem, is asked by the Property Manager to see if the switch on their furnace is turned on, and refuses. If the heating contractor discovers that the only problem was that the switch was not on, the tenant will be charged.

Tenants will be notified by mail when a charge back occurs. You will be given a description of the service that was performed and the cost of the service. Payment must be made within 30 days of receiving the charge back letter.

# IV. Maintenance Suggestions

## Carpet

Carpet care and maintenance is your responsibility. Below are some tips for the care and upkeep of your carpet:

- o Immediately clean up any food or drink spills. Leaving residue may cause stains or permanent damage.
- o When stains occur, it is necessary to act quickly to remove stains before they dry. It is helpful to keep a carpet spot remover on hand for such stains and to clean them BEFORE they dry.
- o Shampoo the carpet at least once annually.
- o All furniture heavier than 20 pounds should have either rubber or plastic coasters under the legs so they do not cut into the carpeting.
- o DO NOT IRON ON THE CARPET. You may accidentally set the hot iron down causing permanent damage.
- o Do NOT smoke or permit smoking in the unit.
- o Do not lay any carpeting over existing carpeting.
- o Do not glue, tack or permanently attach carpet over tile or bare floor areas.

If you care for your carpet properly, it will last longer. If you do not care for your carpet properly, it may affect your security deposit when you move out.

## Counter Tops

Some kitchen and bathroom counters are covered with Formica. Here are some tips for keeping your counter tops in the best shape possible:

- o Do not cut food or other items directly on the countertop.
- o Do not set hot pots and pans on the counter without a trivet or hot pad.

## Frozen Pipes

Frozen pipes can cause a great deal of damage to your plumbing system. To prevent frozen pipes:

- o Leave bottom cabinet doors open in the winter, allowing warm air to circulate around the pipes
- o Do not set the thermostat at an extremely low temperature. If you go on vacation or lower the thermostat while you are at work to save energy, be sure you keep it at 60 degrees or higher.

If the pipes freeze, shut the water off at the main valve (located in the basement or utility room) and call maintenance.

## **Garbage Disposals**

If your unit has a garbage disposal, keep in mind that it is designed to handle a moderate amount of food waste. When using the disposal, follow these tips to help it run more efficiently and prevent clogged drains:

- o Run cold water while running the disposal. Cold water hardens any grease that may have accidentally drained into your sink.
- o Use small amounts of baking soda or pieces of unpeeled lemon to deodorize when necessary. Do not put chemicals or drain cleaners in the disposal. This may damage the unit.
- o The following items can cause damage to your garbage disposal. Avoid putting them in the disposal: forks, knives, spoons, metal, glass ceramics, leather, cloth, string, rubber, seafood shells, cigarettes, artichokes, bones, corn husks, popcorn, corn kernels, seeds, and any hard or stringy substances.

In the event the disposal will not start or hums, check it for blockage, then push the red reset button located on the bottom of the disposal. Always push the reset button and try the disposal again prior to calling for service. If pushing the reset button does not correct the problem, contact maintenance. CAUTION: NEVER PUT YOUR HAND INTO THE DISPOSAL.

## **Gas Leaks**

If you smell the garlic-like odor of leaking natural gas or suspect a gas leak, take the following steps immediately:

1. Get everybody outside and open the doors to ventilate the house.
2. Do not light any matches or lighters or flip any electrical switches — it could ignite an explosion.
3. Turn off your gas supply valve, located next to the gas meter on the inlet pipe. Use an adjustable wrench to rotate the valve one-quarter turn so that the stem is perpendicular to the inlet pipe.
4. Call the Gas Company (1-877-542-2630) or the fire department — use a neighbor's phone.

## **Pest Control - Exterminating**

Exterminating services are available upon request or whenever deemed necessary by Property Management. To help prevent problems, check all bags and other containers that you receive from food stores. Anything delivered to your unit should be inspected for insects. It is very important for all tenants to maintain a clean and sanitary household at all times. As dirt, garbage, dirty dishes, and clothing pile up, the chance of insect and pest problems increases.

## **Plumbing - Drains**

Most drains will clog up because of hair, grease/oil, and food being allowed to enter the drain:

- o Pour excess grease into a tin can or other container and allow it to harden so you can throw it into the trash rather than the drain.
- o Run cold water after using a garbage disposal to allow food bits to travel into the main line.
- o Keep a plunger handy in case of a clog in the sink or toilet.
- o Drain cleaner such as Drano can be used intermittently in sinks to wash away accumulated food before it clogs the drain. Be sure to fill the sink half way with water before adding the drain cleaner.
- o Be careful when washing hair or cleaning food in the sink. You may be charged back for repairs if toys, combs, toothbrushes, paper towels, etc. are pulled out of your sink or toilet.
- o Be sure to clean out washing machine drains regularly. Because the drain is on the basement floor, dust, lint, and other items tends to accumulate there. Cleaning out the drain regularly will prevent backup and prevent water from overflowing.

## **Power Failure**

Unless all the lights in the neighborhood have gone out, the most likely cause of a household power failure is an overload or a short circuit.

To fix an outage:

1. Turn off or unplug the appliance, switch, or light you suspect may have caused the outage.
2. If you reset a breaker and it snaps off instantaneously, suspect a short. If the problem is an overload, a breaker will hum for a moment before tripping.
3. To reset a breaker, flip it to the Off position, then to On. If the circuit is protected by a GFCI, reset it as well.

If your electricity goes off totally, please check with your local utility provider to see if it will check out the situation. The utility provider will come out at no charge. If the problem involves your house wiring and not the power company, please call YNDC.

## **Sewer Backup**

Occasionally, sewers back up because of tree roots in the main sewer system, especially at a time of heavy rain. If this occurs, please call YNDC's EMERGENCY maintenance line for service. In case of sewer back up, please try to limit the amount of water usage. Do not wash clothes, take showers, flush toilet, or wash dishes until the problem is handled. If objects are found in the drain that indicate that tenants are disposing of items improperly, the cost of the service may be charged back to the tenant.

## **Sinks and Tubs**

Proper care of your enameled sinks, toilets, and bathtubs will help them last longer and maintain their finish. Follow these tips:

- o Use nonabrasive cleaners on enameled surfaces. Abrasive cleaners can wear the finish down so that it will stain more easily.
- o Rinse fruit juices, teas and coffee grounds thoroughly after pouring them into the sink to prevent staining and discoloration.
- o If your kitchen sink is stainless steel, it must be wiped out after each washing to maintain its shine.

## **Smoke Detectors**

For your safety, every YNDC unit is equipped with smoke detectors. Some smoke detectors are operated by batteries. A smoke detector with a dead battery cannot help save lives. If your smoke detectors are battery operated, it is your responsibility to replace batteries periodically to be sure the smoke detector is working.

A good rule of thumb is to change batteries when the time changes in the spring and fall. Push the test button on the smoke detector when the batteries are installed to be sure they were installed properly.

## **Toilets**

Occasionally toilets can overflow, usually as a result of an object that has been dropped inside. Do not leave any items stored on top of the toilet tank, as they could accidentally fall in and cause blockage. DO NOT FLUSH: sanitary napkins, diapers, paper towels, toilet deodorizers, grease.

If the toilet overflows, first turn off the water going to the toilet at the shutoff valve. It is very likely that you can resolve the problem by using a plunger to dislodge what might be causing the blockage.

Toilet problems can be the source of other major problems in your unit. Be certain to address problems immediately to prevent them from becoming costly:

- o Stains or moisture at the base of the toilet may indicate that the seal is damaged. Ignoring this problem can lead to a rotting floor, a damaged ceiling beneath the floor, and leakage of sewer gas into your unit.
- o Continuous running water after flushing will cause excessive sewer bills and may be simple to remedy.

## **Vacations**

YNDC recommends that you let your Property Manager know when you are going to be away from your unit for more than three or four days, so the Property Manager can keep an eye on your unit while you are gone. It is a good idea to unplug all electrical appliances and shut off water valves to washing machines if you will be gone for more than a few days. If you go on vacation during the winter, DO NOT turn off the heat. Turn the thermostat no lower than 60 degrees while you are gone.

## **Water**

As your landlord, YNDC pays the water and sewer bill for your unit. Excessive water usage may result in termination of your tenancy.

Some tips on conserving water:

- o Fix leaky faucets. A leaky faucet can waste up to 2,500 gallons of water per year.
- o Use showers rather than baths. An average shower uses half as much water as a bath.
- o Always make sure that all faucets are shut off completely.
- o Only use your clothes washer and dishwasher when you have a full load.
- o Use a nozzle on your hose so that you can shut off the water flow when washing your car, etc.

## **Water Leaks**

If you know how to repair water leaks, repair them as soon as possible. If you need assistance, report a leaky faucet or a running toilet to maintenance. Neglecting these items is costly. You will be amazed at how much your water bill will increase from one leaky faucet.

## **Water Shut-Off**

There is a main valve to turn off all the water in the house, and there are individual valves for different parts of the house. You may want to tag each valve to indicate what it is connected to, so they are easier to find when problems occur. The main shut-off valve is usually located near the water meter and will have a handle like a small wheel. A small amount of oil applied around the handle of the shut-off valve once a year will help prevent sticking.

Most shut-off valves for the water are located under the kitchen sink or bathroom vanity, behind the toilet, or behind the bathtub access panel. If you cannot shut off the water at the valve, turn it off at the main valve, which will be located in your basement or utility room. It is a good idea to know where the shut-off valves are located.

## **Window Coverings**

Covering windows in your unit is important to protect your belongings and your privacy. Depending on the size of your unit, covering the windows with blinds or curtains can get expensive. It may be tempting to cover the windows with blankets or newspaper. In many cases, when windows are covered in this manner it indicates the unit is vacant and may be an invitation to others to break in to your unit.

Check out discount stores, thrift shops, flea markets, and garage sales for great bargains on curtains and blinds. You can even use sheets or pieces of fabric and wrap them in a pleasing manner around curtain rods or poles.

# V. Tips for Better Living

## Child Safety

Units where children live or visit need special consideration. They should have:

- o A lockable, “child-proof” section for every medicine cabinet.
- o Locking cabinets for matches, lighters, flammable liquids, potentially poisonous household cleaners, garden pesticides, auto chemicals, pool cleaners, etc.
- o Plastic safety caps to cover any unused electrical outlets; cabinet locks for kitchen, hobby areas, and bath vanities.
- o Child-safety gates at the top and bottom of stairwells.
- o A metal fire screen that completely covers the fireplace.
- o Spout guards and a mixer faucet for hot and cold bathtub water faucets.
- o Edge guards for sharp-edged furniture and fireplace hearths.
- o Protective surfacing under and around all outdoor playground equipment

## Fire Prevention

On average, fires kill approximately 5,500 Americans and injure over 300,000 each YEAR. The major CAUSES of unit fires are: smoking (26%), suspicious (16%), heating (14%), child playing (10%), electrical (10%), cooking (8%), and all other causes (16%).

To help prevent fire:

- o Never use your stove or oven to supplement your heating system. This can create health problems and increases the risk of a fire. If you have problems with your heat, report the problem to your Property Manager.
- o Be sure to replace batteries in smoke detectors when the time changes.
- o Do not accumulate items such as newspapers, trash, etc. in your unit. This could be a fire hazard, and a haven to pests.
- o Clean grease from cooking surfaces promptly since this is a major cause of fires and attracts insects.
- o Do NOT leave the room when using the stovetop.
- o Never use or store combustible items like gas or kerosene in your unit.
- o Do NOT smoke or permit smoking inside unit or in common areas.
- o Avoid overloading electrical circuits. Never leave portable space heaters unattended. They are one of the leading causes of house fires when not used properly. Be sure not to place items that can burn close to space heaters.
- o Be careful when burning candles. Be sure to place them in sturdy holders, and out of reach of children. Never leave lit candles unattended.
- o Never hang clothes near the hot water tank or furnace. Do not store boxes, etc. near the hot water tank or furnace.
- o Replace missing or burned out light bulbs in hallways, entranceways, and parking areas.

## **General Safety Tips**

- o Keep emergency phone numbers close to the phone, including fire, police, and poison control. Make sure everyone knows the location of these numbers.
- o Make sure flashlights are functional or use flashlights with built-in, rechargeable batteries. Keep the flash lights readily accessible at bedsides and in the basement.
- o Use night-lights near bathrooms, bedrooms, and stairwells. Make sure stairwells and hallways are always adequately lit.
- o Keep a well-stocked first aid kit (including ipecac syrup) in your unit. Make sure everyone knows where to find it and how and when to use the items in it.

## **Key and Access Safety**

- o When service men come to your unit, ask for an ID and don't be afraid to call the company for verification.
- o If you arrive to your unit and find the door open, DO NOT go inside. Go to a neighbor's house and call the police. Let them go inside first and make sure the intruders are not still there. Be careful with your keys. Many burglaries don't require forcible entry. Don't hide a spare key in the mailbox, over the doorway, or under the mat. These are very common hiding places and the thieves know where to look.
- o Don't put ID tags on your key ring. The person that finds them may not return them and will know where the locks are that go with the keys.
- o Get a removable key chain. If you have to take your car in for service or give your keys to a parking lot attendant you won't be giving them the keys to your unit.

## **Managing Your Money**

Your Lease is a long-term commitment. Here are some things to keep in mind as you plan your financial future:

- o Your rent payment is your first priority. Always pay it on time. It will be very difficult to catch up if you get behind.
- o Learn to save money. It will be an important factor in your ability to pay for repairs and maintenance.
- o Consider the future. What are your goals for next year and after that? Do you want to go on vacation? Send your children to college? Return to college yourself? Buy a new car? Saving and investing part of your earnings brings you closer to these goals.
- o Begin thinking about retirement. For further security in retirement, open a retirement account. Your employer is a good place to start, or check with a financial planner.

## **Protecting Your Valuables**

Renter's insurance is an important investment to protect your personal belongings. To help prevent loss:

- o Don't keep excess cash around the house. Keep it in a savings or a checking account.
- o Keep important papers in a safe deposit box. A safe deposit box costs very little and may be free with your checking or savings account.
- o Take pictures of your heirlooms and personal items for later identification.
- o Mark all electronic equipment with a permanent etching of your name and serial number. This helps identify property and makes it hard for the thief to sell.

## **When You Are Away**

- o Various sources indicate that simply displaying security window decals and/or yard signs can decrease your chances of being burglarized by up to 75%.
- o Don't leave a ladder outside your unit.
- o Purchase a timer that will turn on your lights automatically and light up your house when you're away.
- o Have your mail held at the post office.
- o Have your paper delivery stopped until you come back.
- o Don't leave notes on the door announcing your absence. A note saying you'll be back at 6:00 tells the thief he has plenty of time to ransack your unit and take your possessions.

## **Conflict Resolution**

Be considerate of your neighbors. If you are living in a multifamily unit, it is important to get along with other tenants in your property. Try to work out disputes in a civil manner. In certain cases, your Property Manager may recommend that a mediator handle the conflict between tenants.

## **Domestic Violence**

Battering is a pattern of behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence.

It often begins with behaviors like threats, name calling, violence (such as punching a fist through a wall), and/or damage to objects or pets. It may escalate to restraining, pushing, slapping, and/or pinching. The battering may include punching, kicking, biting, sexual assault, tripping, or throwing. Finally, it may become life threatening with serious behaviors such as choking, breaking bones, or the use of weapons.

Battering happens when one person believes they are entitled to control another. Assault, battering, and domestic violence are crimes and should be reported to the police, or call the Ohio Domestic Violence Network at 800-934-9840.

# VI. Signature Page

**I have read and accept the contents of the REVITALIZE Rental Tenant Manual:**

**Lessor:** Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation

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Ian Beniston, Executive Director

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Date

**Lessee(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature

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Date

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Signature

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Date