

Housing Conservation Coordinators



HDFC Buildings

Can You Help Reduce Your Maintenance Fees?

- The most common waste of energy is the poor lighting systems in public areas.
- Lack of proper roof insulation forces residents to utilize more fuel.
- Most HDFCs are not taking advantage of the Weatherization Assistance Program.



Quashing Bedbug Infestations

Know Your Rights!

Tenants whose landlords do not promptly respond to bedbug complaints can call 311 to file a complaint with the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development. You can also attend HCC's Free Legal Clinic. (See page 4 for the Legal Clinic schedule).

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Plastic Bags!

According to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Americans throw away more than 100 billion plastic bags each year. In order to reduce this problem, our Weatherization Assistance Program is reinforcing and educating Manhattan's West Side communities about how to reuse and recycle plastic grocery bags...and finally reduce or never use them again.

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Rent Reform

It's Now or Never

June 15, 2011 could go down as one of the most important days in New York City's history.

Know Your Rights!

New York Rent Laws, the state laws that govern

New York City's rent regulation system are due to expire.

As of right now over 2 million new Yorkers who are protected from unfair evictions and rent increases, might be at risk of not only losing their tenant protections, they could all lose their homes.

Over one million low and moderate-income New York households rely on the protections that rent regulation offers to live and stay in the city they helped build.

The rising cost of housing has already displaced too many New Yorkers. Now is the time for all tenants, regulated or not, to ensure that our state elected officials and Governor Cuomo hear how important rent regulation is to preserve affordable, safe housing and community stability.

We must talk to our neighbors and friends until our message is heard loud and clear, and the rent laws are renewed and strengthened. ■

Weatherization Assistance Program

Update on the “Educational Workshop to Save Energy”

Recently, more than 70 tenants from the Red Oak building (135 W. 106th St.) learned practical tips on how to save money and reduce energy consumption in their apartments.

Tenants were encouraged to turn off their water while brushing their teeth or shaving and to identify “phantom power” in their homes defined as electronics that continue to use power even when they are not in use.

Emphasis was placed on tightly wrapping all freezer and refrigerated food with plastic or aluminum foil so as to avoid moisture leakage, which forces the fridge to use additional and unnecessary energy.

The interactive seminar was held on February 9th at a residential building in West Side Federation for Senior & Supportive Housing’s portfolio. The Red Oak building is currently being assisted by HCC’s Weatherization Assistance Program. The



scope of work includes duct cleaning, updating showerheads and refrigerators, upgrading the heating system, providing compact fluorescent light bulbs for more than 200 apartments. ■

Free Credit Counseling

Just one incorrect entry or poor rating on your credit history can have a large impact on your daily life. Not only can poor credit limit your employment options, it can also limit your housing options. To help address poor credit scores and delinquent accounts, we are hosting a Free Credit Counseling workshop for Chelsea and Clinton residents. Attendees will learn how to read their credit reports and get one-on-one legal assistance/advice on how to clean it up.

The event will be held on Saturday, May 7th from 10am–1pm at the Hudson Guild, located on 441 West 26th Street. The workshop is sponsored by NYC Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, in partnership with the Legal Services for the Working Poor coalition (comprised of HCC, CAMBA Legal Services, MFY Legal Services, Northern Manhattan Improvement Co., and the Urban Justice Center) and CB4. ■

Living Green



The Weatherization Assistance Program also enlightens residents in the use of eco-friendly reusable bags. The reusable bags can reduce waste and litter, thereby resulting in cleaner streets. Environmental friendly bags will be offered only to those tenants participating in our program. ■

Supplemental Rent Increases Back in Effect

On March 24, 2011, the Court of Appeals reversed and dismissed the petitions challenging the minimum dollar increases under Rent Guidelines Board Orders

40 and 41.

As a result of this decision, the minimum dollar increases adopted by the Rent Guidelines Board in Orders 40 and 41 are valid and in effect for leases covered by those orders.

These minimum rent increases are as follows: For leases that went into

effect between October 2008 and September 2009 with rents below \$1,000 where tenants have lived in their apartments for at least six years, the increases for these tenants are \$45 for one-year leases and \$85 for two-year leases.

For leases going into effect between October 2009 and September 2010 these tenants face increases of \$30 (one-year lease) or \$60 (two-year leases).

Although the Rent Guidelines Board had suspended these increases while litigation was pending, they are now back in

effect. Housing and Community Renewal (HCR) will be issuing a policy statement on the effect of the Court of Appeals decision for those tenants that stopped paying the increases, were given a refund, and/or were offered renewal leases without these increases.

If you have questions about your lease and whether these developments will affect you, please visit Housing Conservation Coordinators during our intake hours or if you are not eligible for intake, you can attend the weekly legal clinic. ■

Know Your Rights!

HDFC Buildings

Can You Help Reduce Your Maintenance Fees?

HDFC shareholders can stop throwing money out of their windows by upgrading their building's energy efficiency

In these challenging economic times, HDFC shareholders may be inadvertently wasting money due to inefficient lighting or lack of insulation.

Incandescent lighting in common areas unnecessarily use large amounts of electricity and inadequate or no roof insulation lets heat escape. In some apartments, heat escapes through gaps in the window frames; other apartments are overheated due to poor distribution systems.

Conversely, during summer months, insulation deficiencies force tenants to spend exorbitant amounts of money to run their much-needed air-conditioners.

Make use of local resources

While some shareholders may take the first steps to reduce their personal energy use, the HDFC must examine its energy use overall and ways it can operate more efficiently.

HDFCs should reach out to local resources, including a Weatherization Assistance Program currently operated by Housing Conservation Coordinators, to learn about steps it can take to cut its energy usage. HCC's Weatherization Program serves low income buildings (i.e. more than 50% of the tenants must qualify) on Manhattan's west side between 14th to 110th Streets.



Before: Pre-existing condition of the five boilers which generate heat and hot water to the buildings located at 152-164 Manhattan Ave. at 107th Street.



After: Thanks to HCC's Weatherization Assistance Program, we replaced the entire five boilers and installed two energy-efficient boilers.

Take action

Once you enroll in the Weatherization Program, a complete energy audit will be done of the building and each apartment. It will determine what measures should be taken to reduce expenses.

Typical measures include upgrading heating systems, adding roof insulation, replacing refrigerators and exchanging incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent lighting.

By taking these steps, not only can shareholders significantly reduce their monthly utility payments but also building costs overall will be reduced.

"Our program is helping families to reduce their energy costs, save money and reduce their carbon footprint, but some HDFC buildings are not taking advantage of this unique opportunity," says Karen Jackson-Campbell, Director of the Weatherization Assistance Program at HCC.

Assessment

Because every building has unique needs, an energy auditor will conduct a detailed assessment of your building in order to identify critical areas of energy waste.

Board members of HDFC buildings may contact José Melendrez from Housing Conservation Coordinators at (212) 541-5996 (ext. 30). ■

HCC's Announcements

Every Monday

April Free legal assistance for tenants

4
11
18
25

From 4:00pm - 6:30pm

If you have housing problems, visit us during our intake hours. To qualify you must live between 34th & 72nd Streets, from 8th to 12th Avenues and meet our income guidelines (See chart below). Please bring all relevant documents (Leases, rent bills, proof of income).

May

2
9
16
23
30

Free legal clinic

From 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Any New York City resident can visit HCC's legal clinic, regardless of income. Visitors must call the front desk (212) 541-5996 to reserve a spot in the clinic in advance. Only the first eight callers will be able to reserve an appointment.

June

6
13
20
27

Tuesdays

April Free legal immigration services

12
26

From 5:00pm - 7:40pm

We provide free legal information and possible representation. Appointments are required. You must live on the West Side of Manhattan between Canal Street and 110th Streets and be income eligible for our services. Spanish translation is provided. Please bring all relevant documents. Call us (212) 541-5996.

May

10
24

June

14
28

Every Thursday

April Free legal assistance for tenants

7
14
21
28

From 10:00am - 12:30pm

To qualify, you must live between 34th and 72nd Streets, from 8th to 12th Avenues and meet our income guidelines.

May

5
12
19
26

Household Size	Total Household Income Limit
1	\$38,000
2	\$41,500
3	\$44,000
4	\$47,500
5	\$51,000

June

2
9
16
23
30

For more information, please visit us at 777 Tenth Avenue, at 52nd Street.

Welcome to Matt as HCC's newest Community Organizer

Matt Klein is an asset to HCC and WSNA for his medley of skills and dedication to social justice, organizing, community building and self-determination.

In his previous position at the non-profit organization, the Fifth Avenue Committee, Klein developed a series of forums and mobilized community members around citywide development



and land-use issues, including the responsible banking and living wage campaigns. In the summer of 2009, after earning his M.S.W., Klein volunteered with Housing Conservation

Coordinators and worked on the Illegal Hotels Campaign and became familiar with issues specific to Manhattan's West Side. ■

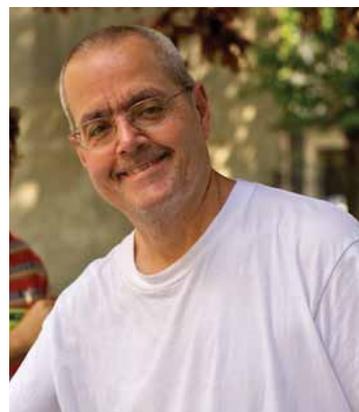
Bob Kalin Celebrates 31 years at HCC!

By Bennett Baumer

HCC activist Bob Kalin has worked at HCC as long as I have been alive, I say with un concealed glee whenever he and I share the stage in front of an audience.

Bob's 31 years of landlord-tenant wars began when I was a swaddled newborn in the summer of 1979. Bob, a native of the Chicago suburbs whose father was seminary student turned Saul Alinsky protégé, took a job at HCC after settling in Hell's Kitchen and graduating from NYU.

Back then, HCC had no staff attorneys but did choreograph a food pantry under a leaky roof. Tenants who dropped by HCC seeking repairs would look at



worked with beleaguered tenants in buildings where landlords -at best- walked away from their tenements or -worse- torched the place to collect the insurance money.

Bob pioneered the low-income co-op

the condition of the office and run away thinking their apartment wasn't half that bad.

The treasure called Bob leaped into HCC's organizing work and utilized the then newly created HP Action (used to sue landlords for tenant repairs or lack of warranty of habitability-too much noise, etc.) to fabulous effect, wresting repairs from reticent owners in housing court.

In the 1980s, Bob

movement along with tenants who pressured the City to seize private property from owners and offered low-interest loans to turn their tenements into affordable cooperatives. Today, there are hundreds of low-income co-ops on the West Side alone thanks to Bob's magic. Bob continues to pepper his value onto hundreds of tenants every year. We're toasting Bob's 31 years of labor in making tenants whole & happy! ■

Reuse and recycle this newsletter

After reading it, please give to your neighbor

