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Last apt. dweller's 'hotel' hell

By ANGELA MONTEFINISE

A fed-up family is taking on a hotel giant.

It's the Marinacs against the Marriott in a battle over the hotel chain's Chelsea location on West 24th Street — a location the family, as well as the city, believes is operating illegally out of a 19-story apartment building.

"This is an apartment," said Maryanne Marinac, 41, the last long-term tenant in the building, which has about 200 units.

"The certificate of occupancy says it's an apartment. It was never changed. And yet here's the Marriott, operating a hotel."

Marinac, who has lived in her one-bedroom apartment with her husband for six years, said the trouble began in 2003, when the Marriott struck a deal with the building's owner and began renting rooms for between \$200 and \$500 a night.

Although the Marriott calls its "Execustay" location a "corporate apartment provider," critics say it's an illegal hotel.

"The people living there are just visiting," said John Raskin of Housing Conservation Coordinators. "That's a hotel. Period."

The problem, according to officials, is a vague city law that legislators are working to change. Because the Marriott says it only offers a minimum of 30-day stays, it can claim it offers month-to-month apartment rentals, not hotel rooms.

Except the Marriott is actually allowing short-term stays, officials said.

The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement seized a doorman's report, from Oct. 30, 2006 to Nov. 5, 2006, which featured "at least 21 instances of less than one-week stays," according to a June letter from the Department of Buildings to the Environmental Control Board.

The Post was also able to obtain a rate for less than a 30-day stay last week, and online reviews of the hotel reveal short-stay visitors.

Marriott spokesman Roger Conner didn't comment.

angela.montefinise@nypost.com