



Buyers and Renters Arlington Voice

B R A V O
BUYERS AND RENTERS ARLINGTON VOICE
Voz de los Compradores e Inquilinos de Arlington
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Maintenance Problems?

During the time you are a renter, it is likely that maintenance issues will come up. These problems are addressed by your lease, by the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (VRLTA) and a State law called Building Maintenance Code. For instance, in a building or complex of 4 or more units, according to VRLTA, the landlord is responsible for keeping the premises sound and habitable, the common areas clean, and maintaining the plumbing and electrical systems. Tenants are accountable for the cleanliness of their unit, proper disposal of trash and reasonable care of appliances and equipment. Tenants can be charged for the repair of damages caused by carelessness or negligence.

If you have a maintenance problem inside your unit, BRAVO suggests the following:

1st Step: Notify Management in writing. Send by mail or drop off at the office a request for service. **MAKE sure it has the date on it. Keep a copy of whatever you send to them. Do not expect a verbal request given to a maintenance worker to be enough. Tell management in writing. You cannot be retaliated against for requesting maintenance! You are protected by State Law.**

PICTURES OF THE PROBLEM ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED! KEEP ONE FOR YOUR RECORDS! SEND ONE WITH YOUR LETTER TO MANAGEMENT!

2nd Step: Unless it is an **emergency** (see below), wait for repairs. A reasonable amount of time is fifteen (15) business days after mailing or dropping off your **first** request. If you do not receive a timely response, a **second** written notice is suggested (another fifteen days wait). Again, keep a copy of the correspondence for your records.

Examples of emergencies: fire (call the fire department), the smell of gas (call your gas service provider), toilet/sink overflow (call the management company or after hours service number)

If you have no response after this second wait, some options are noted below:

- You can call or write the Arlington County Code Enforcement Office to file a complaint. You will need to give them your address, apartment number, a description of the maintenance problem, and the date that you notified management. A code enforcement officer will follow up with you about the problem.

CONTACT INFO:

Arlington County Code Enforcement Office (703) 228-3232
Gary Greene, Manager Community Code Enforcement (703) 228-3233, or

- Call **BRAVO at 703-685-5100** and ask for assistance in writing a letter to your Management Office that outlines your request, and the time you have waited for a response. It can be written on BRAVO stationery and if you wish, a BRAVO staff member will co-sign the letter with you, **or**
- Contact **Legal Services of Northern Virginia at 703-532-3733** and ask for assistance in writing a 21-30 day notice to management. A 21-30 day notice is an action both landlords and tenants can use when serious problems arise that cannot be resolved through negotiation. It is designed to assist with substantial breaches of the lease such as maintenance problems affecting health and safety. When the landlord or tenant issues a 21/30 day notice, the other party has 21 days to correct the problem OR the tenancy will end in 30 days - the tenant will vacate the property. This practice should only be employed if you, as a tenant, are prepared to move out of your apartment.