

spring newsletter

It's that time of year again: Rent Review!

We will be conducting the next review for rent changes to commence on 1 December 2014. All tenants with income from employment need to provide **pay slips for the period 1 July to 30 September 2014 (or a pay slip showing year to date income)**. If you receive Centrelink benefits and have signed a consent form, we can download your Centrelink income statement; otherwise you need to provide us with an **Income Statement for Housing Authorities** for everyone over 16 years of age living at your property. All tenants must complete the yellow form with details of all household members. Tenants who do not satisfy the requirements for rental subsidy by providing income details will be charged market rent.

Smoke Alarms

It is important to have working smoke alarms in your house!

Metro has engaged a company to provide annual smoke alarm servicing in our capital properties. On the first visit your smoke alarms will be assessed and battery operated alarms will be upgraded to hard wired smoke alarms which means connecting it to mains electricity with a battery back up. Many alarms are already hard wired but we want to make sure that all of the smoke alarms are working properly.

If your smoke alarm is beeping it is most likely alerting you that **the battery needs changing**. Please ensure that you change the battery as soon as possible with a standard 9V small rectangular battery available at all supermarkets.

If the smoke alarm keeps beeping after the battery replacement, please contact Metro Housing. Never remove any smoke alarm as doing so may be putting your safety at risk.

Reminder- under the Residential Tenancy Agreement, Clause 16.4, it is the tenant's responsibility to replace light globes and batteries for smoke detectors on the residential premises.

Not Happy?

Metro is committed to ensuring all of our residents receive appropriate assistance, support and information about their rights and responsibilities as tenants. We expect our staff to treat tenants respectfully and to explain the reasons for any decisions or actions we take. We understand, however, that things can go wrong, mistakes can be made and misunderstandings can occur. If this happens we want to work with you to resolve any problem. That is why we encourage you in the first instance to raise your concerns with the person with whom you are having the problem. If you need support to do this we encourage you to contact a Tenant Advocacy Service (see numbers on opposite side of page) or to have your support worker (if you have one) contact us on your behalf. If you don't feel it is appropriate to deal directly with the person involved you can raise your concerns with the Manager. If this does not resolve your concerns or if your complaint is about the actions or decisions of the Manager the remedies outlined on the following page are available to you.

P.T.O. for continued section

Community Services:

Metro Community Housing **VOCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS:** is an education scholarship program offered to any tenant to assist in costs related to vocational study. This includes:

- A range of vocational university or TAFE courses
- Tertiary education bridging courses
- English language courses
- Accredited vocational training through a private education institution e.g. barista training, forklift licence, large vehicle licence, food preparation course

Scholarships range from \$100-\$500 and will go towards course fees or related costs. They can be given as one off payments or you can apply each year. To apply go to Metro's website under Tenants – Scholarship Program.

<http://www.metrohousing.org.au/>

FACS HSC YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

assists eligible young people living in social housing or on the NSW Housing Register to complete their HSC or TAFE equivalent. Two hundred scholarships are on offer, each one consists of a one off payment of \$2,000 which is administered by the school or TAFE College on behalf of the student.

P: 1300 468 746 (Housing NSW Contact Centre)

E: youthscholarships@facs.nsw.gov.au

Marrickville Council

N.I.L.S. - NO INTEREST LOANS SCHEME:

loans to assist in the purchase of essential white goods (fridge, washing machines etc)

P: 8577 5500

Summer Hill Community Centre

FRUIT & VEG COOPERATIVE:

is a not-for-profit cooperative to source fresh fruit & vegetables from Sydney Markets on a fortnightly basis. To register interest please contact Summer Hill Community Centre on 9799 5800 during business hours (Monday-Friday 9:30am-4:30pm) or email them at admin@summerhillcommunitycentre.org.au

Not Happy? continued...

Metro Housing Complaint Statement

If you are not satisfied with our service or one of our policies you have the right to complain. Please give us a chance to fix the problem. If you want us to reconsider a decision we made, you can request an appeal of the decision.

How do I start the procedure?

- Put your complaint in writing to the Board of Directors of Metro Housing who will refer the complaint to its Disputes Sub Committee. You can contact the board via email at: board@metrohousing.org.au
- The Disputes Sub Committee will contact you to request a meeting to discuss the matter.
- You may have an advocate or support person present and representing you when you meet with the Disputes Sub Committee if you prefer.
- The Disputes Sub Committee can take immediate action when it meets and seek endorsement from the Board of Directors at its next meeting.

How do I appeal a decision?

You can appeal against a decision or action by the Board of Directors or staff on the basis that the decision was unfair or a denial of natural justice. Where the person with the complaint considers Metro Housing has acted outside its authority or has breached its policy they should refer to the **Disputes Policy** (<http://www.metrohousing.org.au/downloads/disputes.pdf>). You also have the right to seek remedies outside Metro Housing, e.g. **Housing Appeals Committee** (<http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au/>)

How will the appeal be dealt with?

An Appeals Sub Committee appointed by the Board of Directors, comprised of two directors and an independent person, will meet with you within two weeks of Metro Housing receiving a written request for a meeting. The subcommittee will make a recommendation to the next Board of Directors meeting.

What is the NSW Consumer and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) ?

NCAT was formerly known as the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal. Landlords and tenants can apply to the Tribunal in relation to any breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement. If tenants are not complying with their obligations under the terms of the lease (i.e. to pay rent on time, to keep their premises in a reasonable state of cleanliness, to not cause a nuisance or annoy neighbours with their behaviour) then we will make an application to the Tribunal. We generally need to issue you with a Notice of Termination before we can apply to the Tribunal but this does not mean we want to or will end your tenancy. We will try and work with you to come to an acceptable agreement but if this can't be achieved then the Tribunal member will make a determination. **As a tenant you also have the right to make an application to the Tribunal if you do not believe Metro is meeting its obligations as your landlord.** You can obtain further information about tenancy matters from the Department of Fair Trading (number below).

Tenancy Advice can be obtained from:

Inner West Tenants Service – Marrickville Legal Centre P: 02 9559 2899

Address: 338 Illawarra Rd, Marrickville NSW 2204
Advice hours: Monday–Friday 9:30–1:00, 2:00–5:00

Greater Sydney Aboriginal Tenants Service P: 02 9698 0873

Address: Shop 8, 21 Regent Street, Redfern 2016 W: <http://nswats.com.au/>

Advice hours: Monday–Friday 9:00–5:00

Tenants Advice Line P: 1800 251 101

Hours: Monday 10:00–1:00 and 2:30–5:30

Department of Fair Trading P: 13 32 20

Tenant Survey

To help us gain an understanding of how we can best assist our tenants we undertake annual tenant surveys. The surveys are conducted by the NSW Federation of Housing on our behalf to ensure independence. Surveys will be sent out to you by the Federation in **late September** with a return paid envelope to return it. The survey can also be done online. The Federation provides us with overall results but survey forms are not provided to us so that your confidentiality is protected.

Southern Cross Vet

PROJECT HOPE:

provides funds to assist pet owners with low incomes to get veterinary treatment for their animals

P: 9516 0234 E:

sam@southerncrossvet.com.au

MYSTERY DEPOSITS

Please remember to ALWAYS include your name or agent number when making rent or non-rent deposits. If you do not include them we have no way of knowing who the payment is from.

Also please check your rent statements against your deposit information, that way you can be sure we have the right information.

If you believe you may have forgotten to include your name or agent numbers please check the unknown deposits below and give us a call. In doing so you must provide evidence from the bank (deposit slip). Please phone reception if you are unsure of your agent number.

DATE	AMOUNT
14/10/13	400.00 (Petersham Br.)
14/11/13	309.80 (Leichhardt Br.)
29/11/13	300.00 (Dulwich Hill Br.)
09/01/14	60.00 (Mortdale Br.)
10/06/14	100.00 (Kingsgrove Br.)
12/06/14	351.35 (Jeffrey - Newtown Br.)
17/07/14	480.00 (Kingsgrove Br.)
18/07/14	90.00 (Dulwich Hill Br.)
24/07/14	474.70 (Pagewood Br.)
25/07/14	370.00 (Ref: 421520 Everyday Account)
08/08/14	400.00 (Summer Hill Br.)

Our Location:

Suite 208, Lvl 2, 1 Erskineville Rd
Newtown NSW 2042

P: 02 9565 4599 F: 02 9557 9308

E: reception@metrohousing.org.au

Postal Address:

PO Box 1198, Newtown, 2042

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

10am – 4pm

Wednesday 1pm – 4pm

Friday by appointment only

You can also [contact us online](#).

<http://www.metrohousing.org.au/>

