



Communications Department

Ken Lynch
Communications Director
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374
Office 623-222-1400
Direct:623-222-1420
www.surpriseaz.gov

For Immediate Release

Council amends ordinance to help with problem properties

Surprise, AZ (June 24, 2010) The Surprise City Council approved an amendment to the Rental Accountability Ordinance Thursday night that will help identify nuisance rental properties and require property managers and owners to improve them.

The approved amendments allow the City to be more proactive in engaging property owners to clean up crime ridden or blighted properties.

Among the changes:

- Properties will be declared a nuisance and the property owner notified if the owner continues to rent to a tenant they know, become aware of, or reasonably should have known, violated a state or federal law on or near the property. If the property owner does not use available background information to discover a likelihood of such behavior occurring among tenants, it will be considered evidence that the owner “reasonably should have known.”
- Owners and managers will be in violation of the ordinance if they fail to take appropriate action when a renter has four or more City code violations within six months or a high volume of police service calls are made to the rental property.

In a separate action, the Council agreed to:

- Increase the business license fee for rental units from \$100 to \$200.
- Allow for rebates totaling \$100 for landlords who attend a landlord/crime prevention training session once every three years and who use a crime-free lease addendum.

“Council was clear that they do not want property values negatively impacted by landlords and renters that fail to maintain a quality living environment,” says Economic and Community Development Director Jeff Mihelich. “This enhanced ordinance will give us the tools we need to keep our neighborhoods beautiful and well maintained.” Anyone in violation of the ordinance will face a civil or criminal violation.