



Property Management

SECURITY AND SAFETY IN RENTED HOMES

One of the things that tenants look for in a quality rental home is the level of safety and security it provides. People with young children, the elderly and women, in particular, are especially safety conscious and this is understandable.

Some of the safety measures you might expect in a rental property are mandatory while others are not necessarily. It comes down to definitions and practicalities.

One of the mandatory safety measures is smoke alarms. These are required in all dwellings and must be hard-wired to the mains electrical system. They cannot be battery operated unless the installation of a hard-wired system isn't possible.

Where that occurs, lithium battery operated smoke alarms are acceptable. The number of required smoke alarms is determined by the positioning of bedrooms and how many stories the dwelling is. If in doubt about any of this, raise the issue with your property manager.

In July 2015 another mandatory measure will be deadbolts on all external, ground floor doors. Deadbolts are generally those which are key-locked from the outside but latch-locked from the inside.

This is the preferred model of the Department of Commerce because in the case of fire or smoke inside the house they are easier to open in an emergency or in darkness.

Until July next year owners are permitted to use other forms of appropriate door locks. Another mandatory form of security starting mid-next year is porch lights

that must be present at the main entry door and operational from inside the dwelling.

When it comes to windows the law provides that they must have reasonable locks or latches that cannot be opened from the outside. This is not prescriptive but comes down to common sense.



If there is a spa or swimming pool in the rental then safety barriers are very important. The type of barrier will depend on when the pool or spa first received local council approval.

Where a safety barrier is considered to not be operating properly the property manager should be contacted immediately. If an owner does not respond to any concerns raised by the tenants in relation to pool and spa safety, tenants should contact their local government authority right away.

The reality is that most owners want to ensure that their properties have good safety and security not simply to comply with the law but to attract and maintain good tenants.

It's important therefore that prospective tenants find a dwelling that suits their needs before signing the lease.

Safety and security is in the best interests of both owners and tenants, so existing tenants who feel their current security measures are inadequate may find that their owner is agreeable to modifications if approached in the right manner.

relax . celebrate . enjoy



TOTAL AUSTRALIAN PROPERTY WORTH \$5 TRILLION AS OF DECEMBER

NEW data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today showed the total value of residential property in Australia hit five trillion dollars for the first time in the December quarter.

The statistics show the value of residential properties rose to \$5.02 trillion in the December quarter, up from \$4.83 trillion in the September quarter.

They also show that the average price of Australia's 9.3 million residential properties is now \$539,400, up from \$496,800 in the December quarter 2012.

Urban Development Institute of Australia (WA) chief executive Debra Goostrey said the growth in property was contributing to the net wealth of Australian families as 95 per cent of Australian residential property was in the hands of private owners.

Housing values in Perth grew 3.5 per cent in December, the second biggest growth rate in the country after Sydney. "Perth is currently enjoying a strong property market with a gain of 8.7 per cent in 2013," Ms Goostrey said.

"Taking into consideration wages growth and interest rate reductions in 2013, UDIA believes that sustainable price growth would be in the range of 6-8 per cent so this growth rate is slightly above comfort levels but not a cause for concern."

Ms Goostrey said the institute's key concern was land supply as its preliminary data showed demand outstripping supply over the next few months.



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