



**CREATIVE
HOUSING**
**CREATIVE
RENOVATIONS**



Since 1992

Celebrating our 900th Location!

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Happy Holidays from Creative Housing / Creative Renovations

Sometime in the next few months we will achieve a significant milestone in providing a housing option in a 900th location for individuals with disabilities here in Franklin County. The 900 locations are a combination of Creative Housing owned homes, duplexes and apartments in addition to individuals living in private market apartments subsidized by Creative Housing. Whether you are a family member, provider, one of our tenants, or one of our many friends, we appreciate having you join us in our journey. We hope to be the most comprehensive housing program for people with disabilities in the country. We know the means to accomplish this is to provide the best possible service to each and every one of our customers.

Keep Us in Mind for Your Charitable Donations: If you plan a holiday charitable contribution please keep Creative Housing in mind. Your donation will help support our mission to provide safe, accessible and affordable housing to people with disabilities. Creative Housing Inc. has been classified as a 501 c (3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service and contributions are tax deductible.

Patrick Rafter | CEO



CREATIVE HOUSING

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Snow Removal

Creative Housing removes snow/ice only at apartment sites with 3 or more units when there is an accumulation of 2" or more. If you live in a single family home or duplex, please remember to shovel walks and drives at your home.



Cookie Delivery

Your holiday cookie treats are being delivered to you by players and their families from Barcelona United Soccer Club and Pataskala Futbol Club.

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow...

Winter is rapidly approaching, and soon we may have snow covering the ground. Since most of our properties are responsible for clearing their own snow, and snow shoveling can cause stress on your back we wanted to offer a few tips to alleviate the strain:

- Choose a snow shovel that is right for you. A curved handle enables you to keep your back straighter when shoveling. A plastic shovel blade will be lighter than a metal one, and sometimes a smaller blade is better because it prevents you from trying to shovel too much at one time.
- Push the snow, do not try to lift it.
- Stretch your muscles before you begin. Cold, tight muscles are more likely to be sprained or strained.
- Never throw snow over your shoulder. Wet snow can be very heavy and a full shovel can weigh as much as 25 pounds.
- Pace yourself by taking frequent breaks to gently stretch your back, arms and legs.

Looking for a way to reduce the need for shoveling...

Using approved salt mix during lighter snowfalls will help melt snow so you will have less to shovel.

- When the snow starts, evenly spread a layer of approved salt mix on sidewalks and driveway to start the melting process.
- When snow starts to accumulate, evenly spread another layer of salt mix on sidewalks and driveway. Repeat as needed.
- Approved salt mixes permitted to use at Creative Housing properties: Blue Heat, Halite, Subzero Solid Ice Melt, Happy Paws Ice Melt (pet friendly). Rock salt is prohibited as it will damage concrete and lawns.

Holiday safety Tips

Decorations: Choose those made with flame-resistant, flame retardant, and non-combustible materials.

Holiday Lighting: Inspect new and used lighting. Replace damaged bulbs before using them. Do not use frayed or damaged wiring.

Trees: Use artificial trees to avoid live tree hazards. Please remember we do not allow extension cords.

Traveling Away from Home? Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on your house. Put timers on different lights throughout the interior and exterior of the house. Have newspapers, mail and deliveries held or picked up by someone you trust.

Keep the cold air *out!*

The cooler temperatures outside can bring a chill inside. Here are a couple helpful tips to help keep your home warm and cozy, while keeping utility bills down.

- Choose a temperature that is agreeable to all tenants.
- If you leave for the day, reduce the temperature by 1 to 3 degrees.
- Ensure all vents are open and not covered by furniture for maximum air flow.
- Turn the fan to the ON position and open bedroom and bathroom doors. This will help circulate the air, helping maintain a consistent temperature throughout the home.

We often find improperly closed windows when responding to “cold room” maintenance requests. Below are a few pictures to help illustrate how to ensure the window locks are properly engaged.

Example of improperly engaged lock: Locking mechanism is in the fully locked position but not engaged. It is closed over top of the outer window lock receiver.



Example of improperly engaged lock: Locking mechanism is half-turned in the locking position, but not engaged with the other half of the window.



Example of properly engaged lock: Locking mechanism is fully engaged in the lock and there is a visible tight fit at the lock.



GFI Outlets...They aren't just in your kitchens and bathrooms *anymore!*



Have you seen one of these outlets with the “Test and Reset” buttons in the middle around your house? This is what is called a GFI outlet. The most obvious ones are found in the kitchen and bathrooms, however they could be throughout your home as well. **In the event of a partial electrical outage, looking for GFI outlets should be on your troubleshooting list.** Go through and reset each outlet you find throughout the home until the affected area comes back on. Be sure and check for “hidden” GFI outlets behind furniture.

To reset a GFI outlet, locate the button next to the “Test” button that says “Reset” on it, and press it.



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Everyday Maintenance Tips

Fire Extinguishers: Your fire extinguisher is good for one year after the date punched on its tag.

Safety First: Remember to always use the proper step stool or ladder to reach high places. Don't stand on chairs, desks or other furniture.

Clogged Toilet: Be sure to have used a plunger before you call Creative Housing for assistance. This helps reduce costs and keep rent as low as possible.

Slow Drains & Clogs: Try Drano, Liquid Plumber, etc.

Thank you for Helping us Keep Low Rents *Sustainable!*

Over the past year we have been working hard to gain the assistance from so many of our provider agency partners, tenants and their families to help control the costs of maintaining and improving the homes. We wanted to take a moment to thank each and every one of you who have embraced our partnership in helping those we serve. Here's a recent example. We had larger than normal water bills and reached out to the provider for the property to ask if they had knowledge of leaking faucets, shower/tub fixtures or running toilets that might not be obvious to our field techs. The provider answered and let us know that there was a running toilet in an underutilized bathroom. Our field technician repaired the toilet and the water usage is back to normal.

Don't Forget Your Pets Safety During the *Holidays...*

The holiday season is upon us, and as you gear up for the holiday season, it is important to remember to look out for dangerous items that are harmful to your furry friends.

- Be careful with seasonal plants and decorations. Securely anchor your Christmas Tree so it doesn't tip and fall. Avoid Mistletoe & Holly which can cause serious stomach problems and kidney failure to animals. Don't decorate with Tinsel which can lead to obstructed digestive tracks. Keep wires, batteries, and ornaments out of paws reach.
- Avoid Holiday Food Dangers. Skip the sweets, chocolate and anything sweetened can make pets very ill. Keep your pet away from the table and unattended plates of food, and secure the lids on your garbage cans. Leave the leftovers; don't feed fatty, spicy and bones to your furry friends.
- Ensure a Pet-Safe Environment. Give your pet their own quiet space to retreat to, complete with fresh water, while you have visitors. Remember as you count down to the New Year please keep in mind that strings of thrown confetti can get stuck in your pet's stomach. Also, many pets are scared of fireworks and loud noises, so be sure to secure them in a safe, escape-proof area as midnight approaches.

Maintenance Call *Reminders*

Emergency Repairs: Emergency repairs will be responded to same day as called into our office at 614.418.7725. During non-business hours, an answering service will contact our on-call representatives for emergencies. PLEASE DO NOT CALL AFTER HOURS WITH NON-EMERGENCY REQUESTS. ONLY EMERGENCIES WILL BE SERVICED AFTER REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS OR ON HOLIDAYS.



Since 1992

Winter Cleaning – Take advantage of the Cold Weather

While the weather outside may be frightful it's the perfect time to do a little winter cleaning of items you wouldn't normally think to clean.

- Go through your pantry/cabinets and throw away whatever has gone bad or won't be used. Pay attention to "use by" dates. Do the same in your fridge. You should also throw away any cans that are dented or are missing labels.
- Clean out the junk drawer. All you need is a trash can and a chair. Throw away odd things that you know you'll never use. Mismatched items, keys you have no idea what they go to, and unidentifiable things.
- Vacuum your register vents to help the warm air flow through your home.

Are you thinking about moving?

Creative Housing wants to remind you to make sure you give us a written 60-day Notice to Vacate letter. We require this notice whether you are moving to another Creative Housing home or moving out to a non-Creative Housing location. This allows us to update our records to prevent the tenant from paying rent after they have moved out. **Please note, rent is charged until we are notified of your move-out date, even if you have already moved out of the property. In addition, all of your belongings have to be out of the property. Rent is charged until your possessions are out as well.** Help us reduce your costs!

From the Desks of our Rent Subsidy Department....

Our department had a very prosperous 2015 and we look forward to adding 75 new rent subsidy openings for 2016! We also added about a half dozen new landlords and look forward to building on those contacts so that we can give our consumers a wider variety of choices when looking for their new home.

What's Happening in Creative Renovations - 2015

Creative Renovations has been working hard this past year to continue to provide safe, accessibility renovations for many clients throughout central Ohio. In addition to hundreds of completed modifications in Franklin County we completed many projects in the surrounding counties as well. In addition, we have continued to educate our community on how either you or a loved one can remain in their home by sometimes making simple accessibility modifications that will assist in keeping you in the home you love. As always our projects included wheelchair ramps, bathroom modifications, safety modifications, alarm systems, adaptable medical equipment, automatic door openers and many other "creative" accessibility projects. We have several more projects in progress and scheduled to be completed prior to the end of the year.



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Spread the word

If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter or be added to our electronic mailing list, please let us know. Also, we welcome articles, advertisements and opinions by Creative Housing tenants. Send items for consideration to:

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