

# TENANCY HANDBOOK

Your Introduction and  
Guide to **Renting** with  
MMJ Wollongong

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# TENANCY HANDBOOK

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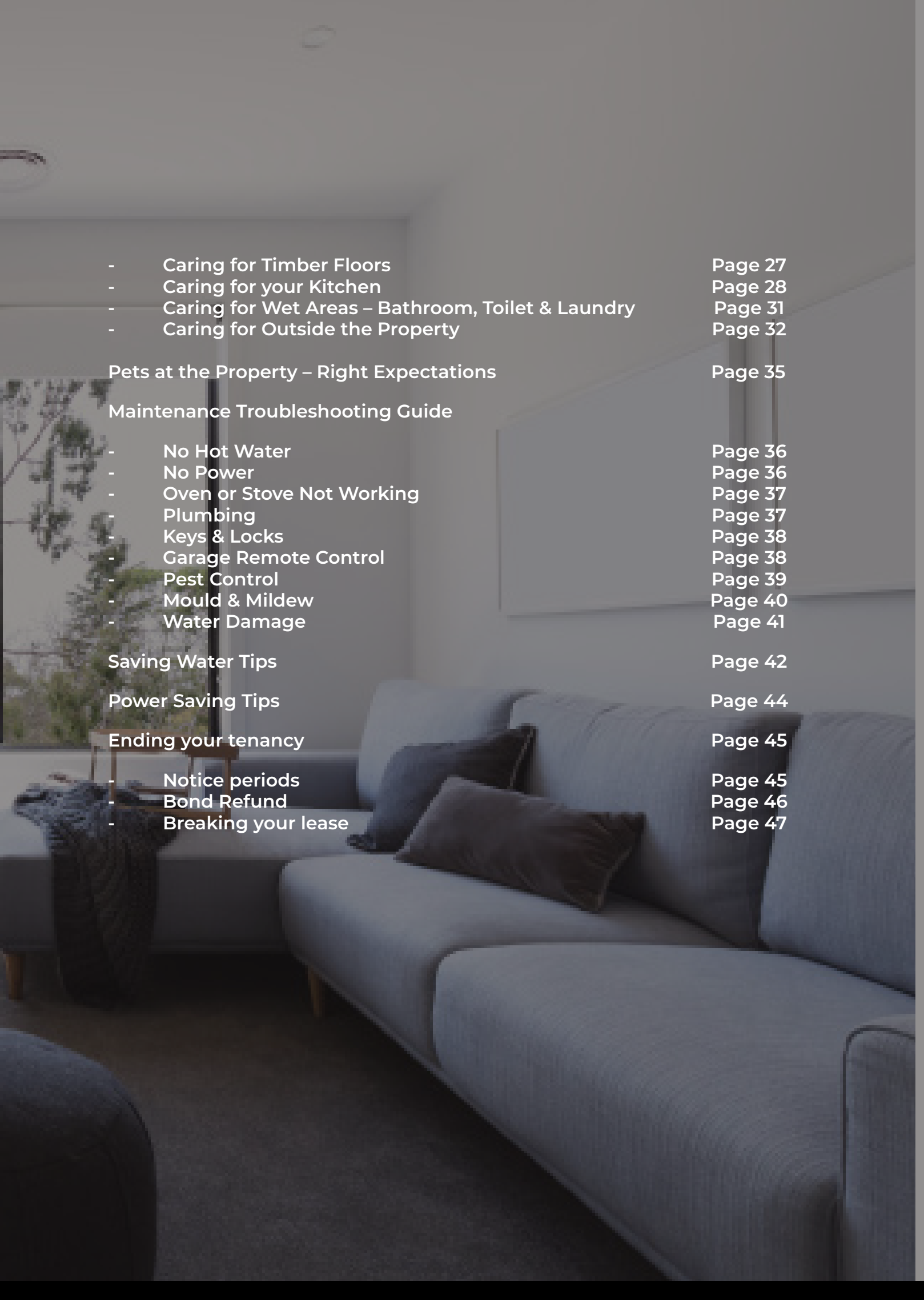
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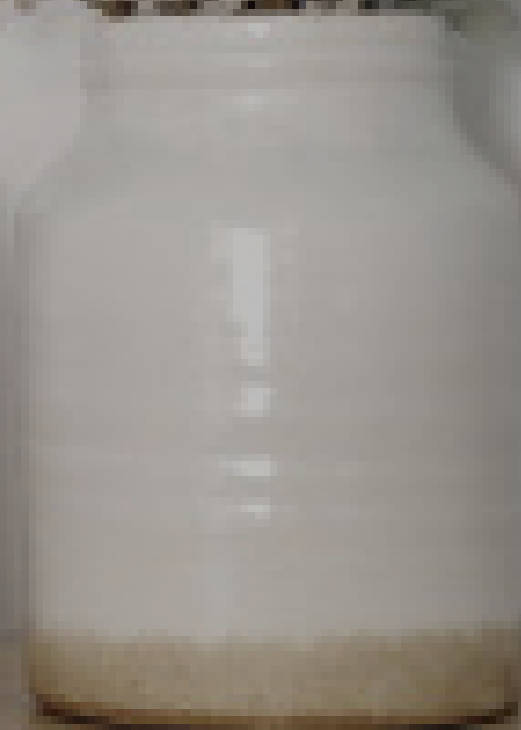
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Mary-Kate Olsen Ashley Olsen

# WELCOME TO MMJ.



As a new client to MMJ Wollongong I would personally like to say "Welcome" and thank you for choosing to rent through our firm.

Our Property Managers and staff are not always in the office when you call in, so if you need to see them to discuss your tenancy, please make an appointment to ensure that they will be available. To make an appointment please phone or email us.

Our office opening hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and we may be contacted on 4229 5555 or email [rms@mmj.com.au](mailto:rms@mmj.com.au)

At MMJ Wollongong, we have a few guidelines which will help to ensure a smooth tenancy and to ensure we have set the right expectations from the beginning of your tenancy. We believe that a smooth relationship can only occur when we all have the right expectations and work diligently to ensure we fulfil our tenancy obligations.

We have a great team of staff at MMJ Wollongong, all of whom take pride in doing their jobs extremely well.

If you have any questions throughout your tenancy, please do not hesitate to contact your assigned Property Manager or Assistant who will be more than happy to assist.

Yours sincerely,

**Matthew Wigger**  
Department Manager

# MOVING INTO YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY.

## Connection of Services.

As the tenant, if you have not already arranged connection of your services with MyConnect, you will be required to arrange the connection and disconnection of all services available to the property which may include but not be limited to electricity, gas, telephone, internet etc.

Any costs associated with the connection of services (even if it is the first time the connection has been made) is the responsibility of the tenant.

If you require or wish to have other services connected to the property which are not currently available, you will need to obtain approval from the landlord (and in some cases the Strata Managing Agent) prior to arranging connection for example: NBN, Pay TV services etc. Sufficient notice is required to obtain necessary approvals as we cannot guarantee same day approvals.

The availability and adequacy of services such as telephone and internet is the tenant's responsibility to investigate in accordance with the conditions of your Residential Tenancy Agreement. You are not required to arrange connection or disconnection of water.

## Tenant Contents Insurance.

It is important to note that should your goods be damaged or destroyed by circumstances affecting the owner's property (i.e. fire, storm damage, power outages etc) then your goods and possessions are *not insured* by the owner.

**Example One:** An electrical fault in the building starts a fire and the property is destroyed. Your possessions will not be covered by the owner's insurance.

**Example Two:** You are away on holidays and the power cuts out due to an electrical fault in the building. You return home to find your fridge/freezer goods spoilt. The owner's insurance will not cover your fridge/freezer goods.

**Example Three:** A storm blows a tree onto the house and in the process, your belongings are damaged. The owner's insurance will not cover your possessions.

In all cases above, quality tenant contents insurance should cover your goods for these given examples. Please check with your insurer for the cover they can provide you. You need to ensure that all your goods are adequately insured as the owner/agent will not be liable for damaged or destroyed tenant possessions.



## **Contact Details**

Once your new contact details are available like a landline phone number and postal address, (if different from your residential rental property address) please email these details to us on [rms@mmj.com.au](mailto:rms@mmj.com.au)

## **Entry Condition Report**

At the time of signing your tenancy agreement you will have received two copies of your entry condition report, a white and blue copy; you will be required to complete the blue copy.

The Property Manager will take approximately 1 – 2 hours to complete the condition report which is generally undertaken the day prior to when you sign your tenancy agreement. You are then given seven (7) days to read through the report, add your own comments and return to our office.

Upon returning to our office a photocopy of the duly completed report will be taken so both our office and yourself will have a duplicate copy that both parties have completed.

Please take your time when completing the report, inspect the premises and consider taking additional photographs to support any additional comments you wish to make. Please ensure you supply any additional photos when you return your report.

This report is what your property manager relies upon when conducting the outgoing inspection prior to releasing your bond so it is important that this document be treated seriously.

If you have any concerns or feel the condition report doesn't accurately reflect the condition of the property we would urge you to contact the property manager and arrange a joint inspection within the first seven (7) days of your tenancy.

# DURING YOUR TENANCY.



## General Repairs

All non-urgent repairs must be lodged by our tenants online in our Tenant App. Do not under any circumstances send SMS repair requests to your Property Manager's mobile phone number.

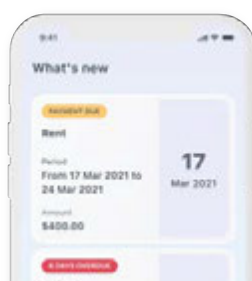
Search for "PropertyMe Tenant" from Apple App store or Google Play store and follow the prompts to setup the app.

Once you have submitted a maintenance issue using the App or Web Portal you will receive a confirmation email. Once the request progresses you will receive email updates on the status so you will never be left wondering where your repair is at and will also know which trades have been assigned to attend along with an estimated completion date.

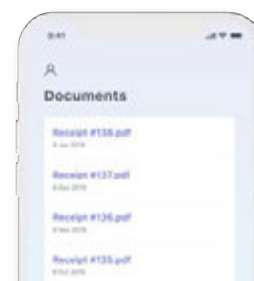
## WHAT YOU CAN DO ON THE PROPERTYME TENANT APP:



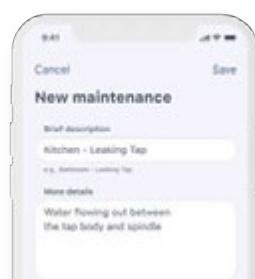
View your agency and Property Manager information



See when your rent and invoices are due



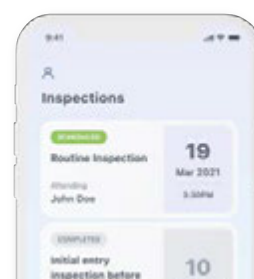
Download and share all relevant leasing information



Log and track maintenance requests



Message your Property Manager directly



See upcoming events and inspections





## **Urgent Repairs**

For urgent repairs, it is important that you contact our office immediately by telephone. Urgent repairs are considered as;

- > A burst water service or pipe
- > A blocked or broken lavatory (toilet) system
- > A serious roof leak
- > A gas leak
- > A dangerous electrical fault
- > A serious storm or fire damage
- > Failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the premises
- > Failure or breakdown of any essential service on the residential premises for hot water, cooking, heating cooling or laundering.
- > Any other fault or damage that may cause the premises to be unsafe or insecure

In the event an urgent repair occurs outside of our normal trading hours, contact details for the landlord's emergency contractors can be found on page 2 of your Residential Tenancy Agreement but are also listed below for your convenience.

### **Electrical.**

Rocar Electric Pty Ltd - 0418 290 601

### **Plumbing.**

Godfrey Plumbing Services - 0401 250 385

### **Hot Water System.**

Godfrey Plumbing Services - 0401 250 385

### **Air Conditioning.**

Camray Air – 0448 201 662

### **Glass Repairs.**

Haines Glass & Glazing - 0412 617 290

### **Locksmith.**

ADC Locksmiths - 4226 6644

### **Storm Damage.**

State Emergency Service - 132 500

Please note: Should any of the above contacts not be available you are welcome to use any licensed & insured trades person within reason and only in the event of an emergency repair occurring outside our normal business hours up to \$1,000.

You will need to supply a detailed invoice to be reimbursed if the contractor is not willing to supply an account.

# Your Safety - Being Aware.

The highest priority always must be for your safety, and the safety of your children, occupants and your visitors.

Some things to be aware of include:

Exposed wiring

Faulty power points and switches

Gas smell or odour

Damage to paving and pathways that could cause someone to trip

Suspicious or dangerous plants in the garden that are poisonous/toxic or that you may be allergic to

Bee swarms coming onto the property mainly during spring, especially if someone is allergic to bee stings

If you need to clean a property with high ceilings or light fittings that are hard to reach, please do so with care and use the appropriate equipment and do not do anything considered unsafe

Loose floorboards that could cause someone to fall through them and cause injury

Loose balcony railings, steps or decking woodwork

Loose or faulty locks, in particular entry doors and screen doors

Broken or cracked windows, and broken/loose window locks

If you notice any of the above or have any other concerns regarding the condition of your property please contact us immediately to discuss.



# Routine Inspections.

As part of your tenancy MMJ will conduct routine inspections of the property to ensure the property is being well maintained and there are no outstanding issues with the property.

Our standard schedule of inspections starts with the first inspection being carried out within three (3) months from the commencement of your tenancy then every six (6) months thereafter.

Please note however that the landlord or the landlord's agent MMJ is permitted up to four (4) inspections of the property in any twelve (12) month period but in any event, you will always be given a minimum of seven (7) days written notice.

MMJ also appreciates that someone be present during the inspection however, if after repeated attempts for access are unsuccessful MMJ will proceed to enter the premises to conduct the inspection in your absence.

Photos- also note that the inspection may also involve taking photos of any repairs required, and a photo of the grounds front and back. It is policy that we do not take photos that may include tenant possessions without your consent. What we look out for at inspections

It is expected that the property be in a clean and tidy condition for this inspection as any cause for concern over the cleanliness or maintenance of the property may lead to further action being taken against you. Below is a brief summary of what we will look out for: -

- 0 Walls, windows and floor coverings are clean, stain free with no damage
- 0 The kitchen area is clean and oven/stove top is free of burnt on food and carbon staining
- 0 Shower, Bathroom and Toilet, Laundry and all tiling are clean
- 0 All internal areas and rooms are fully accessible (not locked)
- 0 The lawns and edges are well maintained
- 0 Gardens tidy and presentable/weeds removed
- 0 No unregistered car bodies or other rubbish stored on the property
- 0 Oil Stains removed to carports, garages and driveways
- 0 All external areas, garages, store rooms etc are all accessible
- 0 Swimming pool/spa - water and sides/bottom are clean

If you have an approved pet please ensure all droppings are picked up and removed prior to inspection and that all dogs or other animals are restrained for the inspection.

# Your Rent Payments.

## **Zero Tolerance Policy for Late Rent Payments**

MMJ Wollongong maintain a strict NO tolerance policy when it comes to rental arrears. Your tenancy agreement ALWAYS requires you to pay your rent on time and in advance .

As a general rule, to ensure you maintain your advance period you should always pay your rent weekly on the same day of the week your tenancy commenced i.e. if you signed your lease on a Wednesday your rent is due on a Wednesday.

You should also commence paying your rent the week after you commence your tenancy as this will maintain your advance payment. If you experience any difficulty in paying your rent, please contact our office IMMEDIATELY as MMJ Wollongong will commence proceedings as follows:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| • 1-3 days in arrears   | - SMS text message sent                                 |
| • 4-6 days in arrears   | - Phone call, SMS text or email                         |
| • 7-9 days in arrears   | - Formal warning letter                                 |
| • 10-13 days in arrears | - Phone call, SMS or email                              |
| • 15+ days in arrears   | - Termination notice to vacate premises will be issued. |

Our follow up methods may cause some people upset, embarrassment and also resentment. However, we cannot apologise for such action as we believe that the rent must be paid on time...all the time! In most circumstances our landlords have taken out a mortgage on the property you occupy and have approved your application ONLY on the grounds your rent will be paid on time...every time!

Therefore, if you believe you may be late with a rent payment, you must notify us at least 3 working days beforehand so we can inform the landlord to prepare and make other arrangements with their mortgage payments, should this be required.

EVICTION will follow if the problem is not fully remedied!

If we have a tenant that is consistently behind despite all our best efforts, we will recommend to the landlord that the tenancy not to be renewed and you may be asked to vacate the property at the end of your lease. Frequent late rental payments will also result in a poor tenancy history and may affect your chances of future rental accommodation.



## **The National Tenancy Database - Rent Default**

In extreme cases, details of the tenancy are lodged on a National Tenancy Database. This will affect further tenancy arrangements with other real estate agents not only in your local area, but across Australia and New Zealand.

This will cause you severe inconvenience and hardship for your future accommodation prospects. It is important to note that all real estate agents check this tenancy database when they receive an application for tenancy. If your details come up, you find they will automatically reject your application.

Therefore we encourage everyone to ensure their rent is paid on time, so that our business relationship remains beneficial for both parties.

Please call us should you have any queries regarding our Zero Tolerance Late Rent Policy.



# Paying Your Rent.

MMJ Wollongong are pleased to provide simple and convenient ways for you to pay your rent. At the time of signing your lease you will have received a DEFT card with your own unique reference number. This reference number can also be found on the front page of your tenancy agreement.

It is imperative that whichever method you do choose to pay your rent that you use ONLY your DEFT reference number as failure to do so may result in your rental payments not being allocated to you.

## **Option One: BPay** **This is MMJ's preferred payment method.**

For BPAY payments, you can pay online or over the phone at participating institutions using the BPAY Biller Code and the DEFT reference number located on your DEFT Card. BPAY payments will normally be credited to our account the following business day.

Our BPAY Biller Code is: 4481

## **Option Two: Internet Funds Transfer**

You may electronically transfer funds directly into the MMJ Residential Management Services Pty Ltd Trust Account into the following account:

BSB: 182-222 / Account: 301 931 473

Ensure your include your DEFT reference number ONLY.

**CASH PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.**



## **Water Usage Payments**

For properties that have separate water metres, you will be issued with a quarterly invoice requiring payment for the water you have consumed.

You will be invoiced directly from MMJ and payment is to be made by the same method you pay your rent but as a separate payment – PLEASE DO NOT PAY SYDNEY WATER DIRECT.

If you are required to pay for water usage this will be indicated on the 2nd page of your tenancy agreement.

## **Dishonoured Payments**

Should you pay by way of cheque and the cheque is dishonoured, or the bank dishonours any other payment made by you, you will be notified by our office and issued an invoice to pay any bank dishonour fees to us within 7 days. Furthermore, should this re-occur, we will also request that you do not pay your rent by that method in future.

## **Calendar Monthly Payments**

Should you wish to pay by calendar month, it is important to note that this is subject to landlord approval and understand that the term 'calendar month' does not refer to 4 weeks or 28 days.

As each month has either 28, 30 or 31 days, then a calendar monthly amount is more than 4 weeks rent. To calculate this properly and evenly, we use this simple calculation.

- a) Weekly Rent divided by 7 days = Daily Rent
- b) Daily Rent x 365 days = Yearly Rent
- c) Yearly divided by 12 months = Calendar Monthly Rent

This calculates 12 equal calendar monthly payments, which will be due on the same date each month (i.e. the 1st of each month).

# Understanding 'Rent in Advance'.

Please ensure your rent is always paid in advance. Some tenants find this concept hard to understand, and some mistakenly believe that the first 2 weeks rent paid is held in trust for use at the end of tenancy, like a bond. It is important to note the first 2 weeks rent paid is for your first 2 weeks of tenancy.

Rent in advance concept is simple to understand. Essentially, you are paying for the time period in advance, and then consume the time period by residing in the property.

Once the time period is finished or consumed, you then pay for the next time period again before using it, by continuing in the lease and residing in the property. This is the meaning of rent in advance.

## **Rent Reviews**

Rent reviews generally occur at lease renewal time or roughly every 12 months and are adjusted in accordance with market conditions. Please also note that a rent review may occur during a 12 month fixed term lease, as long as this is indicated with a clause in the tenancy agreement terms and conditions.

You will be notified in writing of any adjustment to your rent in accordance with legislation.

## **Lease Renewals**

Provided that your rent has been paid on time, and the property has been kept clean and undamaged, the grounds well maintained and the landlord is happy to continue your tenancy, you can expect to receive an invitation of renewal.

Once your invitation is received, it is important that you let us know whether you accept the renewal invitation or what your future intentions may be. If you do choose to end your tenancy we will need this notice in writing from you.

## **Sub-Letting**

Subletting is not permitted without written approval from the landlord. This includes assigning the tenancy over to a third party or allowing other occupants to move in without our express permission. Permission usually involves a formal application being completed and submitted by the prospective tenant/occupant.





# Change of Shared Tenancy / Changing Occupants.

If you are living in a co-tenancy (where there is more than one tenant) and one party decides to move out you MUST advise MMJ so the appropriate documentation (i.e. Change of Shared Tenancy) can be prepared and so we can notify the landlord of your intentions.

If you wish to vacate a co-tenancy and your lease has expired, you must provide 21 days written notice to our office as well as provide the same notice to your co-tenants. If you are plan to change during a fixed term this would be considered a “break lease” and we would recommend you contact your property manager prior to discuss further requirements in this case.

If the remaining occupants wish to have someone else take your place as a new co-tenant they will be required to submit an application form to our office and they are NOT permitted to move into the property until formal approval has been given as the landlord may refuse this request.

Should this situation arise please contact your Property Manager to discuss the matter and they will assist in ensuring all formalities and documents are completed.

However, if you are experiencing issues with your co-tenants not wishing to co-operate this would be out of our control and we will not get involved in personal disputes between co-tenants. In the event of this happening it would be in your best interests to make an application to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal as we can only complete a Change of Shared Tenancy arrangement provided all parties sign.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Any matters relating to the bond for the property must be resolved between the co- tenants as the bond lodged for the property cannot be released in these circumstances.

# Property for Residential Use Only.

The property is for residential use and can only be used a place of dwelling unless otherwise agreed in writing by the landlord. The property cannot be used for commercial, industrial or any illegal purposes. The use of the property cannot breach local council zoning regulations and cannot be in breach of the law.





# Noise/Disruption.

It is important to note that the utmost care must be taken to ensure that you do not infringe on disrupting your neighbours with noise. Loud music, parties or otherwise can disrupt a neighbour's right to peace and the quiet enjoyment of their residence. In the case of units and apartments, particular care must be taken with respect to noise due to the proximity of other properties, usually located on the other side of the wall. This also includes your obligation to ensure that your visitors are not disrupting neighbours when walking from your premises to their parked vehicles.



# LIVING IN A STRATA SCHEME.

If you are renting a unit, townhouse or villa it is more than likely you are living within a strata titled property (or otherwise known as a Strata Scheme). If you are living within a strata scheme you need to be aware of additional by-laws and rules that may apply.

The “by laws” are contained within your tenancy agreement and need to be adhered to at all times as not only do you risk breaching your tenancy agreement you could face a fine of \$550 per by law breach. It is highly recommended that you familiarise yourself with all the by laws and should you have any questions or do not understand any of the terms that you contact and discuss with your property manager.

Decisions relating to the management, repairs and maintenance of the building/complex are made by the Owners Corporation (which consists of all the individual owners within the building/complex) however it is likely that the Owners Corporation will engage the services of a Strata Managing Agent to deal with the day to day management.

The Owners Corporation are required to properly maintain all areas of common property. This generally includes outside walls, shared laundries, stairwells, foyers, lifts and common parking and garden areas (unless otherwise stated in the by laws).

In some cases, parts of the property you are renting are also required to be repaired by the Owners Corporation so in the event repairs are required we need to ascertain who is responsible for them.

Should repairs be required to your rental property which may fall under the “common property” responsibilities of the Owners Corporation we do ask that you allow some time and patience in these repairs being carried out as in most cases they need to be presented to the Owners Corporation for approval and they may need to hold a meeting to discuss further (depending on urgency and costs).

Under NO circumstances are you required to contact the Owners Corporation or Strata Manager directly. All repair and maintenance requests (or even complaints regarding others living in the building/complex) must be directed to our office and we will submit the request to the Owners Corporation or Strata Manager on your behalf.



# TAKING CARE OF THE PROPERTY.

## **Misplaced Keys**

If you have misplaced your keys during business hours you may come to our office and borrow our office set however please note we do not keep spare sets of keys for all properties.

If you have misplaced your keys after hours, you will need to call a locksmith to assist you in gaining access back into the property. This will be at the tenant's cost.

IMPORTANT! Most modern window flyscreens can only be removed from the inside of the property. Attempting to remove them from the outside will result in damage to the flyscreen frame work, and will result in the flyscreen having to be repaired or replaced at your cost. This may cost more than what it would cost to have a locksmith attend the property to allow you access back in.

## **Property Damage**

If property damage has occurred you are obligated to let us know immediately, or on the next business day if occurring on a weekend or public holiday.

## **Air conditioners**

It is important for you to clean your air conditioner filter at least every three (3) months. This will ensure your air conditioner continues to work in peak condition and will maintain good air quality for the occupants of the property.

Please also note that if an air conditioner breaks down due to filters and vents not being kept clean, costs to rectify the damage or even replace the unit might be charged to tenants.

## **Heaters**

Please ensure any combustion heaters are kept clean of ash build up, and also ensure a protective mat is placed in front of the heater to protect against coals and ash falling out and singeing/damaging carpets or floors.

For other heaters, please ensure that no combustible or flammable material is placed on or near heaters to avoid a fire risk.



## **Fireplaces**

If the property you are renting has a fireplace, this cannot be used unless you have been given permission from us in writing. Sometimes these are ornamental, or the flue/chimney has been blocked up. Using them could cause a fire to occur. If you are permitted, please ensure a spark catcher is always used in front of the fire to protect carpets and flooring from coal burns and ash damage.

## **Pot Plants**

Please always keep pot plants outside the property. Pot plants placed inside on hard surfaces, tiles and floors like lino, may leave a circular indent, stains and damage. Pot plants placed on carpet areas run the risk of carpet rot underneath, should moisture overflow or escape even with plates and containers placed underneath to attempt to prevent this.

## **Aquariums**

Like pot plants, aquarium stands can leave rust marks to floors and can cause carpet rot if placed on carpets. Furthermore, if placed on carpets the weight of the aquarium filled with water may cause permanent indentations and damage in the base of the carpet pile.

## **Strict No Smoking Policy**

All properties have a strict 'no smoking inside' policy. If tenants still choose to smoke inside the property, they will be responsible for specialised cleaning and deodorising of the inside of the property to reduce and eliminate unpleasant smoke odours. This can easily run into the hundreds of dollars and is charged to the tenant.

If you are renting a unit, villa, townhouse or other strata titled properties you will also need to be aware of the strata by laws relating to the complex as some are now registered as "Non Smoking" including all outdoor and common areas.

## **Fixtures and Fittings**

If you wish to install or remove any fixtures or fittings, you must request this beforehand in writing.

## **Tenant Painting**

It is company policy that tenants do not paint any part of the property themselves. We have found in the past that some tenants have not painted the property to a professional standard, resulting in a professional painter being called in to rectify work. It is a policy that any painting can only be carried out by experienced, professional painters with our written permission.

## **Smoke Alarms**

In accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act the landlord is responsible for installing smoke alarms to your rental property and these will be noted within your entry condition report. Where a smoke alarm is of the type that has a replaceable battery, the landlord (or a contractor employed on behalf of the landlord) will put a new battery in at the commencement of a tenancy.

Once the tenancy has begun, you as the tenant will be responsible for replacing the battery if needed. Fire and Rescue NSW can assist elderly tenants or those physically unable to change a smoke detector battery.

Landlords have the right of access to your property to fit or maintain smoke alarms after giving at least 2 days' notice. Some of our landlords have engaged the servicing of a third party, Landlord Compliance to maintain the smoke alarms throughout your tenancy and these will be done at least on an annual basis. If the landlord has contracted a third party then they will be provided with your contact details so access can be arranged.

Neither the landlord nor the tenant are, except with reasonable excuse, permitted to remove or interfere with the operation of a smoke alarm fitted in the rented premises.

Should you have any concerns with the operation of your smoke alarm please notify MMJ IMMEDIATELY.

## **Picture Hooks**

If you wish to install any new picture hooks, please let us know in writing what type of hooks you wish to use and where you wish to install them. Please assess the type of walls that are in the property, and the type of picture hooks that are suitable. We will let you know in writing before you are permitted to install appropriate picture hooks.

## **Washing Curtains**

Most curtains and netting are machine washable but it is vitally important that this be established before any washing occurs. Drapes may only be suitable for dry cleaning, so please check all labels first. Sun damaged, brittle curtains or netting may disintegrate should they be machine washed, so it is best to check the strength of fabric by gently tugging on the material with your fingers. If the material easily pulls apart in your fingers, the material is unsuitable for washing.



## House Cracking and Movement

Please let us know if you notice any cracks to walls, ceilings and movement. If cracks were in place when you moved in, please let us know if you notice them worsening or growing larger. Please either report these in writing or point them out to us at the routine inspection.

## Termites

Termites will quickly eat through a property and can cause extensive damage. Signs like wood becoming brittle (doorways, skirting boards, wood roof beams etc). Sounding hollow when tapped or knocked and/or with the presence of mud deposits are the tell-tale signs of termites, other than obvious signs of seeing termites themselves. Another warning sign inside can be blistering/lifting paint to inside walls, as they are known to eat away the paper backing to gyprock walls, allowing the plaster to crumble away allowing the termites to come to the wall surface, staying just under the paint lining.

Wood lying around outside and even wooden furniture outside can attract and encourage them. Dripping outdoor taps next to the house can also cause damp and favourable conditions for termites to be attracted.

If you see any signs of termites, or termite damage please bring this to our attention immediately.



These mud deposits indicate active termites.



# General Cleaning.

It is expected that the property be kept reasonably clean, and this is also a tenancy agreement requirement.

Pay attention to:

- a) Walls, switches, power points, skirtings, doors and doorways - please keep these free from marks and dirty finger marks.
- b) Cobwebs/dusting - please remove cobwebs to windows, walls and ceilings. Keep vents dusted. Light fittings and ceiling fans - keep them dusted regularly.
- c) Curtains/blinds - keep these cleaned, dusted and (if suitable) machine or dry clean curtains and netting on an annual basis.
- d) Windows/sills/window tracks and flyscreens - keep regularly cleaned and dusted. Please note most modern windows are easily removed from their tracks by lifting the sliding window up at the bottom, and pulling this out for easy cleaning.
- e) Floors - please keep regularly swept and mopped. Floors in the kitchen and wet areas may need to be scrubbed to keep surfaces, tiles and grouting looking clean.
- f) Ventilation - please ensure that all rooms are kept adequately ventilated to avoid problems associated with condensation, causing mould and possible health problems.
- g) Wet Areas, bathroom, toilet and laundry grouting/tiles - please ensure all tiles are kept free from grime, soap scum and mould.





# Caring for Timber Floors.

Though it's relatively simple to care for timber floors, there are a few things you should avoid:

- Too much moisture
- Excessive dirt
- Dragging furniture or heavy objects across them. To avoid scratching the floors, fit the underneath of all furniture legs with protective pads. Check that dust and grime don't build up under the pads over time, as this, too, can cause scratches if you slide the furniture.

## **1. Check the finish of the timber**

If you're moving into a new home with timber flooring, be sure to check which finish the floors have, as this will affect how you should clean and maintain them.

## **2. Keeping them clean**

Give your timber floors some TLC with a regular sweep or vacuum. Regardless of the floor finish, it's important to regularly remove dust and loose particles that could cause scratches. A soft-bristled broom, vacuum cleaner or electrostatic mop are your best bets. Wipe up every day spill's straightaway with a dry cloth or paper towel. Placing floor mats outside the entryways to your timber floors can also help stop some of the dirt, sand and grit from landing on your floors.

## **3. Mop**

And although you should never mop waxed floors, you can freshen up polyurethane floors with a quick mop. But remember water is the biggest enemy of timber floors, so if you're using a conventional mop, wring it out well; never flood the floor with water. And don't use water that's too hot, as it can damage some finishes. Use cool to lukewarm water with a pH-neutral cleaning product that's recommended for your finish.

Avoid harsh cleaners, such as bleach, and vinegar, as it's acidic and can dull floors over time.

Never use steam mops on wooden floors; they can strip the floor finish (particularly water-based finishes), and the moisture can penetrate the floorboards, causing cupping. However, some floor-care companies, sell mop systems that allow you to very lightly mist the floor and mop it with a machine-washable microfibre cloth. These systems are great for homeowners who don't want to deal with lugging around mop buckets.

# Caring for your Kitchen.

## **Chopping Boards**

Please ensure chopping boards are used on bench tops, so that bench tops are preserved from unnecessary cut marks and associated damage.

## **Bench-top joins**

Be on the lookout for joins in the bench-top that have gaps, and the surface laminate has started to bulge or lift at a join. Please let us know if this is starting to occur as this may indicate moisture has seeped into a join and is swelling the chipboard wood underneath.

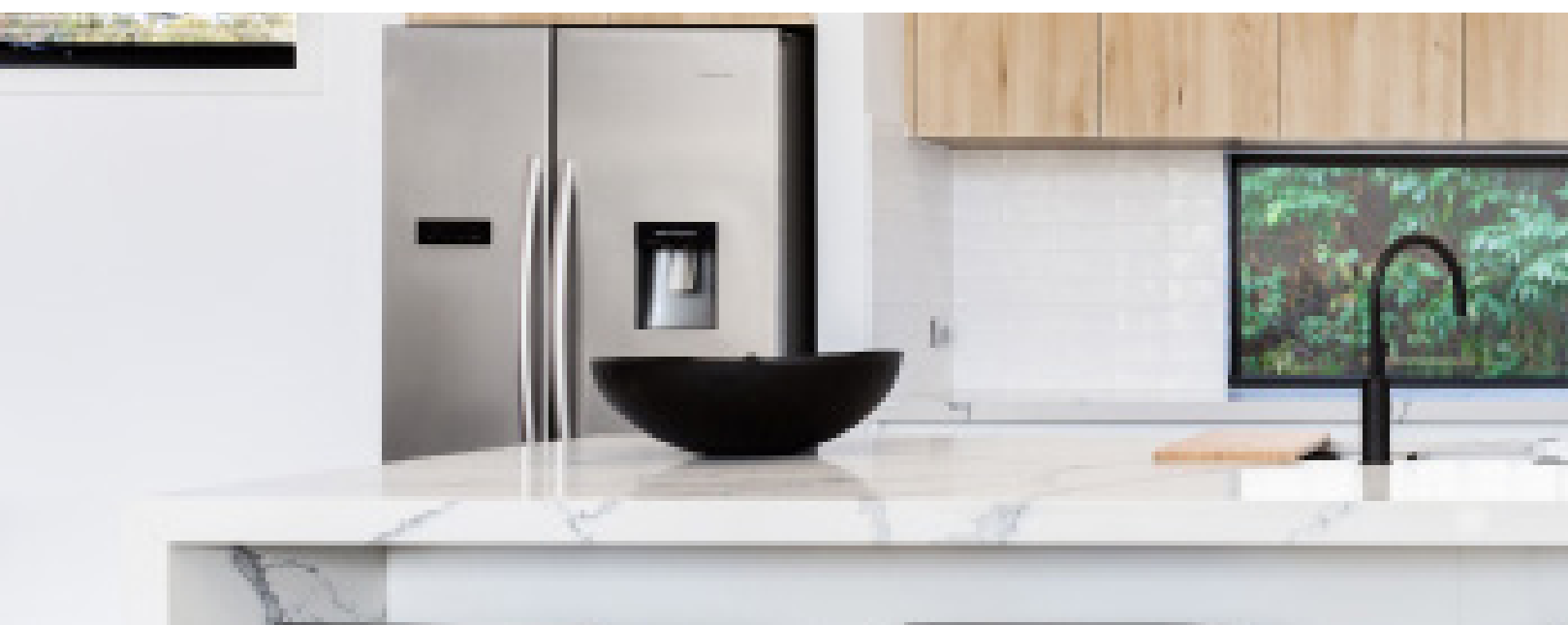
## **Grouting/Tiling/Taps**

Be sure that if you notice grouting or silicone sealing coming off/loose around any tiles near or around the taps and/or taps dripping/leaking to let us know by repair request. If moisture should get in between tiles, this can damage the wall behind, and even seep into chipboard that is usually present in bench tops causing swelling and irreversible damage to the wood.

## **Exhaust Fans/Vents and Range hoods**

Please ensure any vents, exhaust fan or range hood filters are kept clean and kept free of grime build up. From time to time these should be taken down and removed to be soaked in hot soapy water, and then scrubbed clean.

Please use extreme caution when removing these and if you believe this to be unsafe (i.e. a high exhaust fan), then let us know.





## **Oven and Stove Tops**

Please ensure that stove tops, grillers and ovens are kept free of burnt on food. Food, crumbs and spills when left long enough become burnt on, blackened and carbonised, making them very difficult to remove.

Please use care when using scourers as these may scratch and damage enamel surfaces. When cleaning stoves/ovens with oven cleaners be sure to read and follow the product instructions carefully, as even though these types of products are very effective, they tend to contain harmful caustic fumes and require rubber gloves to be worn at all times when using the product.

Please also check that the product is suitable to the type of surface you are applying this to, as some surfaces like stainless steel may become permanently marred/stained using an oven cleaner.

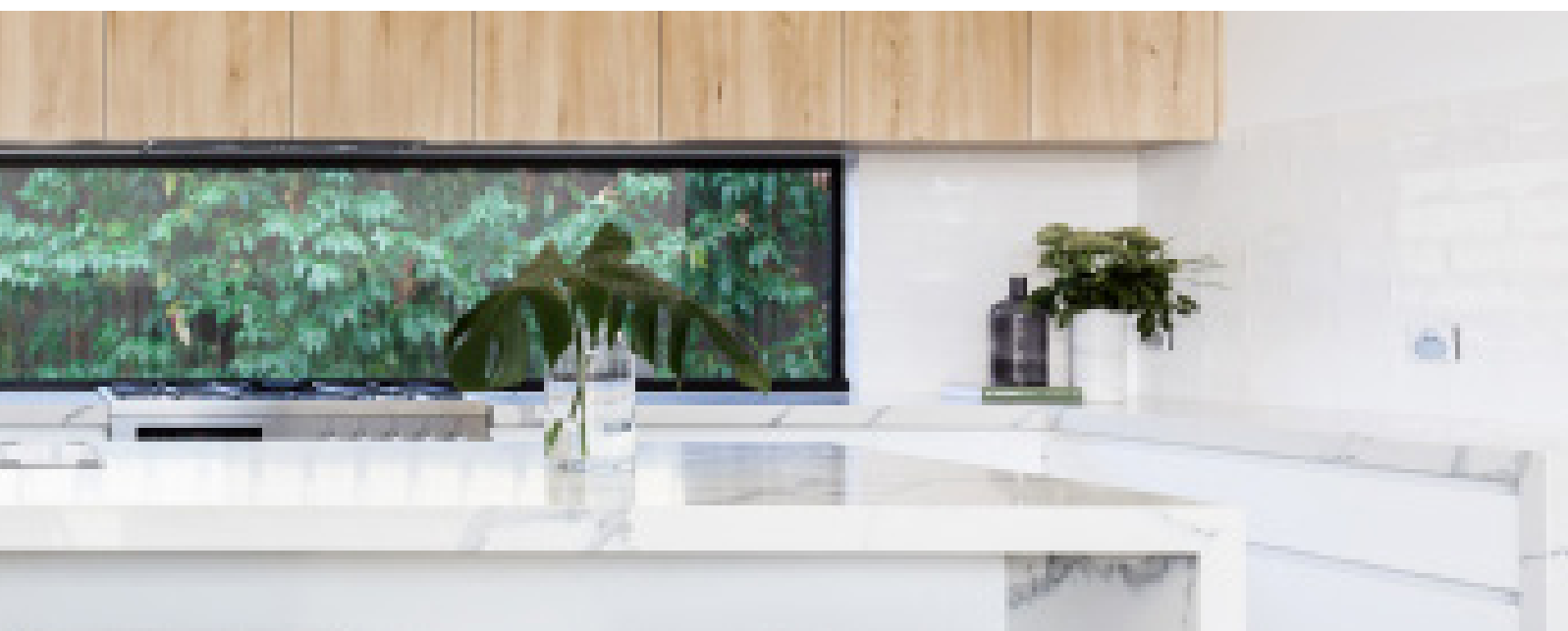
## **Cupboards/Drawers**

Most cupboards and drawers are lined with white lining, which is great for easy cleaning. However, substances spilled like sauces will in time prove difficult to remove and may leave permanent stains. Cupboard shelving, doors, doorframes and inside drawers/cutlery tidies should be cleaned at least on an annual basis.

Also keep food in sealable containers to avoid insects and vermin gaining access to food and breeding and creating a disease risk from germs, faeces and urine.

## **Dishwashers**

Dishwashers provided as part of your tenancy need to be cleaned on a regular basis, and any build up of food remains removed.







# Caring for Wet Areas – Bathroom, Toilet & Laundry.

## **Shower Screens**

If you notice cracking to glass in shower screens or shower doors, please report this to us immediately. Wired shower screen glass can crack under thermal expansion (consistent hot and cold temperatures) whereas toughened glass usually only cracks if impacted (hit by something). If the shower screen is cracked due to impact damage, this will in most cases need to be paid by the tenant.

## **Blocked sinks/drains**

Should a sink or basin become blocked, first try a drain cleaning product like draino. Be sure to follow the product instructions carefully. If the sink or basin is still blocked after treatment, please let us know so we can arrange for a plumber to attend to the problem.

## **Foreign objects down drains**

Please take care not to allow children to place toys or other items down drains. If your property has a septic tank system, please do not flush foreign objects like sanitary products down the toilet. Septic tank systems are not able to process this type of material.

If a plumber is employed by us to clear pipes, drains, basins or sinks and it is determined that the blockage was caused by something considered foreign, this expense will be billed to the tenant for payment.



# Caring for Outside the Property.

## **Watering Your Garden and Water Restrictions**

Watering your lawns and gardens must be done regularly within watering restrictions. It is important for you to be aware of what water restrictions are in place for the region. For up to date water restriction information please log onto [www.sydneywater.com.au](http://www.sydneywater.com.au)

## **Watering Systems**

Please ensure that all watering systems are working properly and are checked regularly throughout the tenancy to ensure they continue to work effectively. Watering systems can only be used should current water restrictions allow.

## **Weeding and Shrub Trimming**

Weeding of gardens beds, inside lawns, paths, paving and other outside areas are the responsibility of the tenant. Trimming of bushes and shrubs in and around the garden are also the responsibility of the tenant.

## **Lawn Maintenance**

Please ensure that lawns are regularly mowed and edged, keeping them neat and tidy. Should you wish to have someone regularly mow your lawn, let us know and we would be happy to recommend a service to you. This is at tenant cost.

## **Supplied Hoses/Fittings**

Supplied hoses, fittings and accessories must be kept in good condition and please ensure that everything is returned and in place upon vacating of the property, free of any damage.  
Rubbish

Please ensure any rubbish is regularly removed from the property. This includes car parts, tyres and things like lawn clippings, drink bottles as well as other items that can easily be considered rubbish or general junk. Only household rubbish may be placed inside rubbish containers (i.e. wheelie bins).

For further information including bin collection days for the Wollongong council area; log into [www.wollongongwaste.com.au](http://www.wollongongwaste.com.au) or contact Remondis on 1300 632 360.





## **Oil Drillage**

Any cars parked on driveways, under carports and garages must have a drip tray placed underneath. Only if the vehicle does not drip any oil at all is a drip tray not required.

Please also note that any visitor's cars must be parked off the premises if they drip oil. Should oil drillage occur at anytime, this must be cleaned up immediately to prevent oil seeping in and permanently staining.

Please note any permanent staining will result in compensation being charged to the tenant.

## **Parking on Lawns/Gardens**

It is important that at no time can cars or any type of vehicle be parked on any lawns, gardens or any area not created for, or designated as a vehicle parking area. Damage to lawns and landscaping can be costly. Engine oil drillage to gardens and lawns will also create permanent damage to the soil area, being costly to rectify. Any damage of this type will be charged to tenants in full.



## **Swimming Pools and Outdoor Spas**

Pool/spa cleaning and maintenance, unless it is agreed that the landlord will be supplying a regular cleaning and maintenance service as per your tenancy agreement, this will be a tenant responsibility.

Please note that if regular cleaning does not occur by the tenant, high costs can be incurred to bring it back to its original clean state. If this occurs, this will be at tenant cost. It is also a tenant responsibility to ensure that the pool/spa is kept topped up with water and must not empty the pool/spa without written approval from us.

## **Supply of Pool Chemicals**

Supplying of pool treatment chemicals will be a tenant responsibility, at tenant cost unless otherwise stated in your tenancy agreement.

## **Pool/Spa covers, accessories, equipment and pool furniture**

It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain and keep in good condition any accessories, cleaning and maintenance equipment. This also includes any outdoor/pool furniture supplied. Pool cleaning/equipment must be kept out of the sun and stored responsibly. Supplied pool/spa covers must be neatly rolled or folded up and stored away out of the weather when not in use to preserve its lifespan and usefulness.

## **Pool/Spa Fences and Gates**

We must be notified immediately if fences and gates are not functioning correctly, and the gate fails to self-close promptly when opened.



# PETS AT THE PROPERTY - RIGHT EXPECTATIONS.

Should the landlord have granted permission to keep pets as per your tenancy agreement and/or written and signed pet lease agreement, the following conditions apply for the duration of this tenancy, and any renewal or extension:

- a) Yard Kept Clean - keep the yard clean and free from animal faeces.
- b) Rubbish Kept Cleared - clean up any rubbish/items scattered by the pet.
- c) Flea infestation - in the event of any fleas or flea eggs being present as a result of the animal, you will need to arrange for flea fumigation of the property prior to and upon/after vacating the premises. This is at tenant cost.
- d) No Pets Inside - pets are not allowed inside the residence at any time (unless otherwise stipulated in your tenancy agreement or pet annexure)
- e) Damage Rectification - repair any damage to the premises caused by the animal, and will protect and immediately rectify any damage caused to garden irrigation systems and fittings.
- f) Garden Damage - replace plants or vegetation damaged or destroyed by the pet directly, or indirectly (ie. plants died because a garden irrigation system was damaged by the pet).
- g) Additional Pets - other than any pet listed above and approved by the owner, not keep any other animals of any kind on the rental premises, (even on a short-term or temporary basis), including dogs, cats, birds, fish, reptiles, or any other animals.
- h) Temporary Pets - the tenant will not harbour, substitute or "pet-sit" any other pet and will remove any of the pet's offspring within 45 days of birth (should this occur).
- i) By-Laws and Local Council - abide by all local, city or state laws, licensing and health requirements regarding pets, including vaccinations.
- j) Disturbance and Noise - the pet shall not cause any sort of nuisance or disturbance to neighbours. Noise, day or night, must not disturb others. You must do whatever is necessary to keep the pet from making noise that would annoy others and will take steps to immediately rectify complaints made by neighbours or other tenants.

Failure to comply with these terms shall give the owner the right to revoke permission to keep the pet and is also grounds for further action and possible eviction action.



# MAINTENANCE TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE.

It is not expected that you carry out any repairs to the property however there are some general tips and things you can do which may avoid the necessity for a trades person to attend or at the very least speed up the time it takes to have your repair carried out.

## **No Hot Water**

It is important for you to tell us if your hot water system is gas or electric and where it is located. For gas hot water systems, check that the pilot light is still lit – these can on occasions be blown out in windy conditions.

For electric hot water systems, check the fuse box to see if the fuse or safety switch has been tripped. If a safety switch has been installed you may try switching on again but if it is the older style fuses we do not recommend touching at all but please take note of anything that may look out of the ordinary and report that too us (please feel free to even take a photo).

Are there any leaking hot taps? Have you considered your hot water usage? It is possible that you may have used all your hot water particularly if you have a smaller 50 – 80 litre hot water system.

## **No Power**

There can be several causes to why you may be experiencing a power outage. Have you checked the fuse box and ensured all safety switches are in the on position? Do you have a faulty appliance that may be tripping the power? Are you only experiencing power loss to parts of your property? Have you contacted your energy supplier to enquire on whether there is an outage in your area?

Answers to the above possible scenarios are extremely useful to know as it will assist in attending to your repair in a more timely manner – however, if the power outage is a result of your own personal faulty appliance you need to be aware that you may be charged a call out fee by the contractor.



## **Oven or Stove Not Working**

We find that many repair requests regarding a stove/oven not working are not a result of a faulty appliance but is related to how the appliance operates. If an operation manual is not located at the property these can easily be found on the internet

Is there a timer on the oven that needs to also be turned on? Is there power to the stove/oven? Is there a safety switch around the kitchen that needs to be turned on (this may look like a light switch and would be near the stove)? Is the fuse switched on in the fuse box? If you have attempted all the above and are still experiencing issues please contact our office immediately for further assistance.

## **Plumbing**

It is extremely important that you do not pour fats, oils, food scraps or flush any foreign objects down the drains or toilets in the property. These items do not break down and over a period of time can cause the drains to block and you could also then be held accountable for the cost of unblocking a drain or toilet.

In some cases, the drains may require a simply “flush” or clean – have you tried to unblock with a plunger or used a chemical dissolver such as “Draino”? If you have tried anything it is important to let your property manager know so we can relay this information back to the landlord and contractor.

All leaks & blockages should be reported immediately as to delay repair could lead to damage or further repairs being required.

If you are experiencing no water to the property you can contact Sydney Water directly on 13 20 90 to enquire if there is a fault in the area but it is also recommended that you check your water main to ensure no one has turned it off.



## **Keys & Locks**

It is not guaranteed that MMJ will hold spare keys for your property so it is extremely important that care is taken of your keys as you will be required to replace them at your own cost if you do lose or break them.

You must not replace, alter or remove any key or lock without the landlord's approval or without reasonable excuse but if this is done you will be required to provide our office with a copy of the key or opening device within seven (7) days.

MMJ staff will not attend your property if you have locked yourself out. In this unfortunate event, you will be required to contact a locksmith and pay for any expense incurred as a result.

## **Garage Remote Control**

A common issue with a garage remote control not working is the requirement for a new battery. We recommend that prior to reporting an issue with your remote control that you first replace with a new battery and if you are still experiencing issues please contact our office as this will indicate a further fault possibly with the motor or sensors.



# Pest Control.

Dealing with pests and vermin in a property can be a very unpleasant experience however it is important to note what your responsibilities are if this situation ever arose.

If you believe there is an infestation at the property at the commencement of your tenancy it is extremely important to advise our office immediately as it is generally only the landlords responsibility -if the issue was present at the commencement of your tenancy.

Below is a table obtained from the NSW Fair Trading website which can be used a general guide in determining who is responsible when an infestation occurs: -

<b>PESTS &amp; VERMIN</b>	<b>LANDLORD IS RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>TENANT IS RESPONSIBLE</b>
Ants	If present at the start of the tenancy.	If present during the tenancy
Bees & Wasps	If present in a wall cavity or similar OR at the start of the tenancy.	If present during the tenancy
Birds	To remove and seal off any entry points.	-
Cockroaches, Fleas & Spiders	If present at the start of the tenancy.	If present during the tenancy
Mice & Rats	If present at the start of the tenancy.	If present during the tenancy
Possums	To remove and seal off any entry points.	-
Snakes	If present at the start of the tenancy OR if caused by the landlord breaching the conditions of the agreement.	If present during the tenancy
Termites & White Ants	At the start & throughout the tenancy	-

# Mould & Mildew.

Mould & mildew issues could be experienced within your property and this is a matter in which we treat with the utmost seriousness, however as the tenant you need to be away of your obligations.

In accordance with your tenancy agreement “the tenant agrees to control mould, mildew and dampness by adopting a regular cleaning routine, ensure adequate ventilation, operate exhaust fans where fitted and lifestyle practices that reduce the accumulation of condensation”.

Some simple tips to assist in adhering to the above would include: -

- Using exhaust fans where fitted when showering, bathing, cooking, or when using a clothes dryer otherwise open window;
- Limit drying your clothes on indoor portable lines;
- Open windows and doors when weather permits to improve ventilation;
- Wipe down any moisture/condensation that may build up on windows and walls;
- Limit the use of humidifiers, fish tanks, indoor plants and un-flued gas heaters as these can increase humidity in the property
- Do not over clutter the property and keep furnishings away from direct contact with walls.

The landlord is required to keep the premises in a “reasonable state of repair” so if there is an underlying issue that could be causing mould, mildew or dampness within the property that is outside of the tenants control they must take appropriate action.

If you are experiencing any issues or have concerns regarding mould, mildew or dampness within your property it is extremely important that you report it to us IMMEDIATELY.



# Water Damage.

Should you notice water damage to a wall adjacent to a shower recess, bathroom basin etc please let us know immediately. This can be identified by bubbling or peeling paint, or even water or mould marks to the flooring/carpet. This usually identifies either loose tiles or a broken/leaking pipe in the wall, and will need attending to immediately to prevent further damage from occurring.



# SAVING WATER TIPS.

Since most of the water usage occurs inside the home, we have put together some useful water saving tips to help you reduce your water usage and save you money.

## **In the Kitchen**

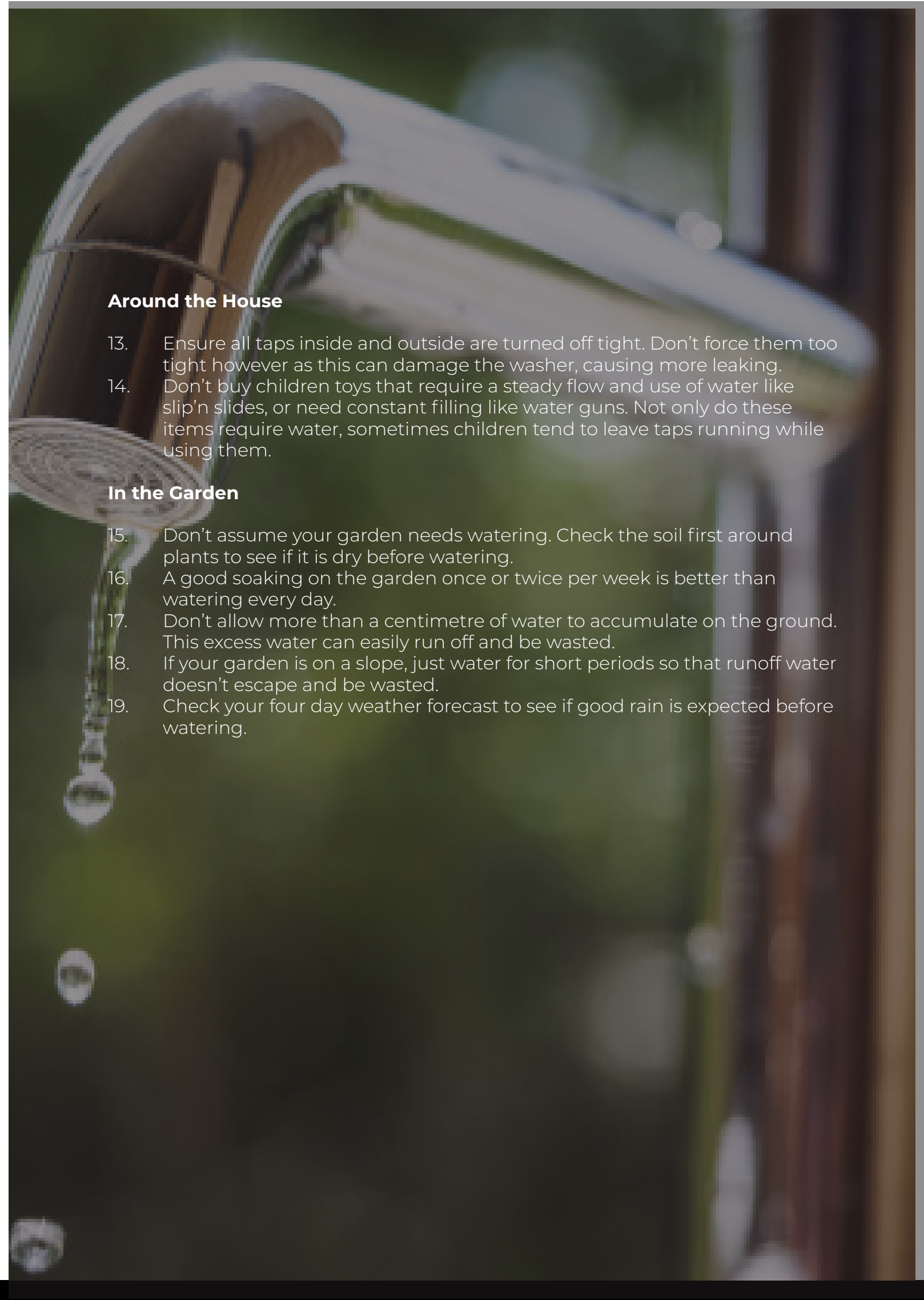
1. Don't let the tap run while you wait for it to warm up or cool down, without first placing the plug in the sink to collect all the water. You can also run this initial water into a container, which can be poured onto the garden or into pot plants.
2. Try filling your sink by half, just enough to cover your dishes when washing them.
3. Save all your dishes until the evening and wash them all in one go.
4. Start by washing the least dirty dishes first, and then the leave the dirtiest till last.

## **In the Bathroom**

5. Don't leave the tap running while you are brushing your teeth, or having a shave. If shaving, then perhaps fill the sink partially for rinsing your razor and face.
6. When waiting for the shower water to warm up, place a bucket in the shower to catch this water, and pour onto the garden later.
7. Take shorter showers and even purchase a 4 minute egg timer and adjust your showering routine to 4 minutes.
8. If your family members prefer a bath, and if your shower is over the bath then allow the showers to be taken first with the plug in, and the last person to use the water can have their bath last. You might need to top up with warmer water to get the right temperature!

## **In the Laundry**

9. If your clothes are not very dirty, only use the shortest wash cycle on your washing machine.
10. Pre-treating stains before washing will reduce the chance of the need for re-washing after coming out of the washing machine.
11. Instead of using the woollens and delicate cycle on a washing machine, consider hand washing these items.
12. Older washing machines use enough water per cycle to fill a bath!



### **Around the House**

13. Ensure all taps inside and outside are turned off tight. Don't force them too tight however as this can damage the washer, causing more leaking.
14. Don't buy children toys that require a steady flow and use of water like slip'n slides, or need constant filling like water guns. Not only do these items require water, sometimes children tend to leave taps running while using them.

### **In the Garden**

15. Don't assume your garden needs watering. Check the soil first around plants to see if it is dry before watering.
16. A good soaking on the garden once or twice per week is better than watering every day.
17. Don't allow more than a centimetre of water to accumulate on the ground. This excess water can easily run off and be wasted.
18. If your garden is on a slope, just water for short periods so that runoff water doesn't escape and be wasted.
19. Check your four day weather forecast to see if good rain is expected before watering.

# POWER SAVING TIPS.

Keep windows covered - in the heat of the day ensure windows are covered by curtains, blinds or shutters.

Shut off the air-conditioner - don't leave your air-conditioner running all day when at work, or keep it running throughout the night.

Keeping cooled rooms centralised - when cooling a central room, keep the doors closed to cool it more quickly and efficiently.

Moderate is best - use the economy setting on air-conditioners to maintain moderate instead of cold temperature.

Use electric blankets - instead of warming a room before going to bed, just heat your bed with an electric blanket then switch this off before going to bed.

Close doors - keeping doors closed is one way to keep heating centralised to certain living areas, conserving heat and power.

Door snakes - ensure gaps at the bottom of doors are blocked up by door snakes to stop cold drafts and help keep rooms warm.

Exhaust fans - close doors with rooms that have exhaust fans like bathrooms and the kitchen, as cool air will enter the home through these vent holes.

Extra clothing - wear extra clothing when it gets cold, and throw an extra blanket on the bed.

## Other useful Power Saving Tips

Use cold water - use cold water for your washing machine instead of warm or hot water.

Drying clothes - if it's sunny hang your clothes to dry outside instead using the clothes dryer.

Lights - switch off lights after use and do not leave lights on in rooms if not being used.



# ENDING YOUR TENANCY

## Notice Periods.

If you want to end your tenancy when the fixed term period of the agreement is due to run out, you will need to give at least 14 days' notice. This notice can be given up to and including the last day of the fixed term.

If you want to end your tenancy after the fixed term has ended (and you have not signed another agreement), you will need to give at least 21 days' notice. This notice can be given at any time and does not have to line up with the rent payment cycle. You must pay the rent up to and including the day your notice ends and you vacate.

Your notice must be in writing and signed by all tenants as listed on the tenancy agreement and can be submitted to our office as follows:

- > Email rms@mmj.com.au (all notices sent by email must be sent to this address and not your property manager's email address)
- > Post PO Box 1400, Wollongong NSW 2500 (you need to allow/add an additional 7 business days to your notice to allow for postage time frame)
- > In Person You may deliver the notice in person or complete a vacate notice form in our office located on the Ground Floor, 6-8 Regent Street, Wollongong

Upon receipt of your notice to terminate your tenancy we will then confirm receipt by email which will include all information and requirements to vacating the property including a total amount of rent owing until your vacate date.

At this point we will also notify the landlord and commence advertising of the property 14 days prior to your vacate date.

Our Leasing Consultant will also be in contact with you to arrange an inspection for prospective tenants during this period. Your co-operation in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

# Bond Refund.

At the end of your tenancy you will no doubt want your bond refunded quickly after you vacate. For your full bond to be paid quickly, you will need to ensure the following:

- a) Rent - any outstanding rent are paid promptly.
- b) Property Ready - the property is cleaned and returned to the condition as noted in your entry condition report. The property must also pass the final inspection conducted by this agency.
- c) Outstanding Accounts - please ensure that any monies outstanding like water, any damages, compensation amounts and break lease fees are paid promptly (a final water usage account will be calculated at the final inspection).
- d) Keys - ensure that all keys, remote controls etc have been returned.
- e) Bank details & forwarding address – we need to provide this information to NSW Fair Trading when releasing the bond. NSW Fair Trading no longer issue bond refund cheques and will only direct deposit into your nominated account.

If all the above items have been met to our satisfaction, we can then refund your bond. Delays to this in all cases relates to one or more of these items not being met.

Upon receiving your notice to vacate you will receive a detailed vacate pack to assist in the moving and cleaning process.

We encourage all tenants to be present at the final inspection however please respect that we need to schedule these appointments to suit our daily schedules. If you cannot be present, you will receive a final inspection report including a list of any outstanding items that may require attention.



# Breaking your lease.

Upon signing your tenancy agreement, you are agreeing to remain in the property for the fixed term as stated within your tenancy agreement. However, should your circumstances change and you need to vacate you will need to provide 14 days written notice and there will be penalties involved in doing so.

For fixed term tenancy agreements of not more than 3 years: -

4 weeks rent if less than 25% of the fixed term has expired,  
3 weeks rent if 25% or more but less than 50% of the fixed term has expired,  
2 weeks rent if 50% or more but less than 75% of the fixed term has expired,  
1 weeks rent if 75% or more of the fixed term has expired.

The break fee is payable in addition to the rent which is due and payable until the day you return vacant possession. This is a fixed fee so there are no additional charges such as advertising or reletting costs however, should the landlord secure a new tenancy shortly after you vacate you will not be entitled to any form of refund.

Your bond is not to be used to pay the break lease fee. The break lease fee must be paid on or before you return vacant possession of the property.

There are some circumstances where you may break the lease without penalty by giving 14 days written notice as follows:

- > You have accepted an offer of social housing (e.g. from Housing NSW)
- > You need to move into an aged care facility or nursing home (not a retirement village)
- > You have obtained a final apprehended violence order against somebody you were living with that excludes them from the property
- > The landlord has put the premises on the market for sale, and you were not told before signing the lease that the property would be sold

MMJ would require evidence to support your notice if given for the above reasons. Should your circumstances change at any point during your tenancy we highly encourage you to first contact your Property Manager to discuss your options.



# DISCLAIMER.

MMJ Residential Management Services accepts no liability in the information provided within this document.

This information is intended to assist tenants in having repairs and any other issues that may arise during the tenancy dealt with in a timely matter and to ensure that maintenance at the property is kept to a minimum.

Under NO circumstances should tenants attempt to carry out any works that may inadvertently cause damage to the property, themselves or others.

