



HAPCO NEWSLETTER

Serving Philadelphia's Investment & Rental Property Community

President's Message

Last month, I shared the exciting news about our General Membership Meeting 2026, and now I want to give you the latest updates. This year's meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 8, from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM at the Esperanza Arts Center, and I'm excited to share what makes this event so valuable.

This is your chance to network with fellow housing professionals, connect with vendors, meet the key city departments all in one place, and meet the...



Greg Wertman

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Advertising in the Hapco Philadelphia Newsletter and Website Is a No-Brainer

If your business works with housing providers, property managers, or real estate investors in Philadelphia, advertising with Hapco Philadelphia puts you directly in front of the people who need your services.

Our monthly newsletter and website reaches a highly targeted audience of active landlords and real estate professionals who make decisions every day about services and products for their properties. This includes contractors, maintenance, cleaning, lead inspections, construction, insurance, banking and loans, utilities, property management tools, and more. These are engaged professionals actively looking for trusted...

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Squatters vs. Holdover Tenants: What's the Legal Difference in Philadelphia?

Philadelphia landlords often use the word "squatter" to describe anyone who refuses to leave a property. But legally, there is a significant difference between a true squatter and a holdover tenant. Understanding that distinction is critical, because the legal process you must follow depends entirely on who is occupying your property.

A holdover tenant is someone who originally had lawful possession of the unit under a lease as a tenant. They signed a lease or had a verbal rental agreement. When that lease expires or is terminated, they remain...

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Landlords Making an Impact Beyond Rentals

When people think about landlords, they often think only about leases, maintenance calls, and rent collection. But across Philadelphia, many housing providers are doing far more than managing properties. They are investing in neighborhoods, supporting tenants, mentoring young professionals, and strengthening the communities where they...

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When Evictions Feel Endless: Why the Good Guys Are Punished

Evictions in Philadelphia can feel endless. You do everything right. You provide proper notice, follow the law, and file in court. Yet the tenant remains in the property. They may pay nothing or only partial rent, and they keep filing appeals or requesting extensions. Weeks turn into months. Every additional day adds...

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ADVERTISING IN THE HAPCO PHILADELPHIA NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE IS A NO-BRAINER

By Lauren Andreoli, Communications Coordinator

If your business works with housing providers, property managers, or real estate investors in Philadelphia, advertising with Hapco Philadelphia puts you directly in front of the people who need your services.

Our monthly newsletter and website reaches a highly targeted audience of active landlords and real estate professionals who make decisions every day about services and products for their properties. This includes contractors, maintenance, cleaning, lead inspections, construction, insurance, banking and loans, utilities, property management tools, and more. These are engaged professionals actively looking for trusted partners.

Advertising with Hapco is more than just visibility. It builds credibility. When businesses are seen alongside Hapco, it reinforces trust and positions them as reliable resources in the rental housing community.

In addition to your newsletter and website advertisement, advertisers are included in our rotating Advertiser Spotlight feature in the newsletter. This is a separate dedicated news blast sent to our full subscription list of over 10,000 contacts. Each spotlight highlights one advertiser at a time, giving your business focused exposure and the opportunity to share more about your services, experience, and value to landlords.



The spotlight rotation ensures that each participating advertiser receives dedicated attention, not shared space.

If you are looking to increase brand awareness, generate qualified leads, and strengthen your presence within Philadelphia's rental and investment property community, Hapco advertising offers direct access to your ideal audience.

To reserve your advertising space or learn more about available options, contact us today. We look forward to promoting your business. If you are interested in advertising opportunities, please email us at hapcooffice@hapcophiladelphia.com.



In Memoriam *Willis G. Alston, Sr.*

We are saddened to share the passing of Willis G. Alston, Sr., a former Hapco Philadelphia board member, who passed away on February 9, 2026. Willis dedicated his time and service to our organization, and we are grateful for his contributions.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family and loved ones during this difficult time.



Remembering *Jim Sims*

It is with great sadness that we share with the Hapco community that Jim Sims, a long-time board member, passed away on March 2, 2026, at the age of 74.

Jim was generous, kind, and deeply dedicated to Hapco. Throughout his many years of service, he made a lasting impact on our organization and the Philadelphia rental housing community.

We will miss his guidance, warmth, and commitment. Our thoughts are with his family during this difficult time.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 2026 - SAVE THE DATE!

By [Greg Wertman, President, Hapco Philadelphia](#)

Last month, I shared the exciting news about our General Membership Meeting 2026, and now I want to give you the latest updates. This year's meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 8, from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM at the Esperanza Arts Center, and I'm excited to share what makes this event so valuable.

This is your chance to network with fellow housing professionals, connect with vendors, meet the key city departments all in one place, and meet the Hapco board, office staff, and president. Representatives from Licenses and Inspections, Philadelphia Gas Works, Philadelphia Water Department, and the Philadelphia Housing Authority will be available to answer questions about code enforcement, property maintenance, rental licensing, billing programs, and Section 8 participation. Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore Richardson will also join us to discuss city initiatives and policies that impact housing providers.

The evening begins with networking from 6:00 to 7:00 PM, with complimentary food and beverages. The program begins at 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM, giving you the opportunity to engage with speakers and get

your questions answered directly by the people who oversee these programs. Parking is free, and both members and non-members involved in Philadelphia's rental and investment property community are welcome to attend.

Please encourage your colleagues and business friends and contacts in the related professions, including banking, accounting, legal, commercial clientele to join us for a most-rewarding and educational evening. Don't miss this chance to stay connected, learn about new resources, and build relationships across the housing community. I look forward to seeing you there!



Greg Wertman
President, Hapco Philadelphia

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SQUATTERS VS. HOLDOVER TENANTS: WHAT'S THE LEGAL DIFFERENCE IN PHILADELPHIA?

By Lauren Andreoli, Communications Coordinator

Philadelphia landlords often use the word “squatter” to describe anyone who refuses to leave a property. But legally, there is a significant difference between a true squatter and a holdover tenant. Understanding that distinction is critical, because the legal process you must follow depends entirely on who is occupying your property.

A holdover tenant is someone who originally had lawful possession of the unit under a lease as a tenant. They signed a lease or had a verbal rental agreement. When that lease expires or is terminated, they remain in the property without your permission. Even though they are no longer complying with the lease terms, they are still considered a tenant under the law. That means you cannot remove them without going through the formal eviction process. Importantly, if you are still accepting rent or other payments, that person is definitely a holdover tenant, not a squatter, because receiving money establishes a landlord-tenant relationship.

In Philadelphia, eviction filings for holdover tenants are handled through the Philadelphia Municipal Court. Landlords must also participate in the city’s Eviction Diversion Program before a case can move forward. Even if the lease has clearly ended, the occupant’s original lawful entry and any continued payment give them legal protections. Locking them out, shutting off utilities, or changing the locks without a court order can expose a landlord to serious criminal and civil liability under the Philadelphia Code.

A squatter, on the other hand, is someone who never had lawful permission to occupy the property. This could be a stranger who breaks in, someone who moves into a vacant building without authorization, or an individual who gains access through deception. Since there is no landlord-tenant relationship, these situations are not handled through the eviction process. Instead, they are typically addressed through an ejectment action in common pleas court and may also involve law enforcement, depending on the circumstances.

However, many situations that landlords describe as “squattling” are actually holdover scenarios. For example, a former tenant who stays after eviction proceedings were never completed, or a guest of a prior tenant who refuses to leave, is often legally treated as a holdover tenant. The court may consider any



payments made or permission indirectly granted when determining rights, which shifts the matter back into landlord-tenant court rather than common pleas court.

The risk for rental property owners is mislabeling the situation and acting too quickly. If you assume someone is a squatter and change the locks without a court order, but a judge later determines they were a holdover tenant, you could face claims of illegal lockout. Philadelphia courts examine how the person gained access, whether they had permission, and whether any payments were made.

Documentation is critical. Keep copies of leases, termination notices, court filings, and communication records. If someone truly broke in, document the property condition, take photographs, and file a police report immediately. If the individual originally had a lease or came in under a prior tenant’s authority, you are likely dealing with a holdover that requires formal eviction.

For Hapco members, the takeaway is simple: not everyone who refuses to leave is legally a squatter. Accepting rent or other payments confirms a landlord-tenant relationship, which means tenant protections apply. Acting under the wrong assumption can cost time, money, and legal exposure. When in doubt, consult an attorney before taking possession steps. In Philadelphia’s highly regulated rental environment, the difference between trespass and tenancy can determine your entire course of action.

LANDLORDS MAKING AN IMPACT BEYOND RENTALS

By Lauren Andreoli, Communications Coordinator

When people think about landlords, they often think only about leases, maintenance calls, and rent collection. But across Philadelphia, many housing providers are doing far more than managing properties. They are investing in neighborhoods, supporting tenants, mentoring young professionals, and strengthening the communities where they own property.

At Hapco Philadelphia, we see this every day.

Our members often hire locally, providing steady jobs to contractors, maintenance teams, and small businesses in the neighborhoods where they operate. Others take extra time to connect tenants with rental assistance programs or utility resources when someone is going through a difficult period. These efforts may not make headlines, but they make a real difference.

We also have members who reinvest in properties that were once vacant or neglected, bringing them back to life. By improving housing conditions, they contribute to safer blocks, stronger property values, and more stable communities. In many cases, landlords are the first to address issues that affect an entire street, from exterior repairs to lighting and cleanliness.

Beyond property improvements, some housing providers support local schools, sponsor neighborhood events, or mentor newer investors who are learning how to operate responsibly and professionally. Others volunteer their time with community organizations or serve on boards that advocate for balanced housing policies.

The reality is that responsible landlords are deeply connected to the neighborhoods where they own property. They care about long-term stability, strong tenant relationships, and sustainable investment. When housing providers take pride in their properties and their role in the community, everyone benefits.

If you are a member who is making an impact beyond your rentals, we would love to hear your story. Hapco exists not only to advocate for housing providers, but also to highlight the positive role our members play throughout Philadelphia.

Together, we are doing more than managing properties. We are helping shape stronger neighborhoods and a healthier housing market for the city we all call home.



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WHEN EVICTIONS FEEL ENDLESS: WHY THE GOOD GUYS ARE PUNISHED

By Lauren Andreoli, Communications Coordinator

Evictions in Philadelphia can feel endless. You do everything right. You provide proper notice, follow the law, and file in court. Yet the tenant remains in the property. They may pay nothing or only partial rent, and they keep filing appeals or requesting extensions. Weeks turn into months. Every additional day adds more stress and more financial burden. Mortgages, taxes, insurance, and maintenance continue, but rental income stops.

It is obvious why this is so frustrating. Even tenants who were not responsible or did not follow the rules are often given extended time in the property. Meanwhile, landlords who do everything legally, who maintain their units, and who try to provide safe housing are left waiting. They follow the law, they do their job, and they are punished by delays and lost income. The system feels unfair, over-regulated, and stacked against the people who are doing the right thing.

Repeated appeals and extensions are not just inconvenient. They are stressful and financially harmful. Every extra court date, every procedural step, every continuance is more time that a landlord cannot rent the unit, cannot collect full rent, and must continue paying expenses. The rules may be intended to protect tenants, but in practice, they often reward bad behavior and punish responsible rental property owners.

The emotional toll is real. Watching a tenant remain in a unit while the court process runs its course can be exhausting. Following the rules and still facing delays makes the system feel unbalanced. Landlords do not need to be told it is stressful. Losing income each month while tenants exercise the right to contest, appeal, or extend their stay makes that obvious.

The unfairness is clear. Good landlords who follow the law, maintain their properties, and provide safe housing are often the ones who bear the cost, while tenants may use the system to prolong occupancy. Many landlords understandably ask why the responsible ones are at a disadvantage.

While it is still important to keep documentation and follow procedure, the main takeaway is this: landlords are expected to be patient, responsible, and law-abiding even when the system works against them.



Losing months of rent and bearing ongoing expenses while waiting for lawful possession is a reality in Philadelphia, and it is obvious that this is both stressful and unfair. The frustration is real, and it is shared by every responsible property owner who has faced extended appeals and repeated delays.

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Serving Philadelphia's Investment & Rental Property Community

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