



QUIRK
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pty. Ltd.

landlordnews



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ISSUE 033 **SUMMER 2011**

A complimentary newsletter prepared exclusively for our Landlords as an update on Property Management issues and our Real Estate office.

We don't wish to be intrusive. If you do not wish to receive future editions of Landlord News please contact us and we will immediately remove you from our mailing list.

from the property management department



Welcome to the summer edition of Landlord News. It is the international financial markets that continue to dominate world news. Whilst the Australian economy seems to be in reasonably good shape, it's not all roses - nationally, auction clearance rates and consumer spending are both down resulting in the Reserve Bank cutting interest rates. The major banks reacted swiftly in passing on the rate cut obviously mindful of the negative reactions and publicity of the past. Our financial markets will however, continue to take their lead from the events in Europe which some economists have labeled the 'GFC Mark 2'.

In this issue we provide some details of the REIV's submission regarding state property taxes, tips on installing solar panels and Christmas saving and party ideas. With the festive season fast approaching, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Xmas. Enjoy a happy and safe festive season and all the best for a prosperous 2012.

Kind Regards... Jessica, Rita and Tenneille.

CHRISTMAS STRESS BUSTERS



The advertising started weeks ago and we're all being reminded that Christmas is now only a short few weeks away. Whilst it is 'the season to be jolly', sometimes preparing for Christmas can be far from a jolly experience – in fact many people regard it as not only the most expensive time of year, but also one of the most stressful. We've come up with the following ideas to help you this Christmas:

Presents: Set your budget - write a list of who you would like to buy for and put a price limit beside each name. If it adds up to too much, review your limits and/or the list itself. Shop with your list - taking your list with you will keep you on track and prevent any budget blowouts. Consider a 'Kris Kringle' for family or group presents – that way you will only have to buy for the one name you pull out of the hat, but don't forget to set a price limit! Perhaps consider buying presents just for the children, not the adults.

Parties: Make a list – start planning a couple of weeks before your party by jotting down ideas in a note book. Clean out the fridge – in the week prior to your party, aim to consume everything in your fridge that's not earmarked for the party. Do your big house clean the week before – that way on the day you'll only need to do a quick whip around. Share the load where you can – put a couple of people in charge of drinks, ask someone else to supply dessert or a salad or even some ice for the esky. It will make your life easier and helps get other people into the Christmas spirit. Good luck!

rental statistics PROPERTIES VACANT: **4**
as at 30th November 2011 NEW PROPERTIES VACANT: **1**

OFFICE NEWS

Christmas Trading:

Our office hours during the Christmas / New Year period are:

Saturday, 24th December	CLOSED
Sunday, 25th December	CLOSED
Monday, 26th December	CLOSED
Tuesday, 27th December	CLOSED
Wednesday, 28th December	9:00am to 2:00pm
Thursday, 29th December	9:00am to 2:00pm
Friday, 30th December	9:00am to 2:00pm
Saturday, 31st December	CLOSED
Sunday, 1st January	CLOSED
Monday, 2nd January	CLOSED

Normal office hours resume on Tuesday, 3rd January 2012

Office Closure

Our Office will be closed Thursday, 26th January 2012 for Australia Day public holiday.

Landlord News Online

In an effort to reduce our impact on the environment, we are encouraging receipt of your quarterly newsletter, Landlord News electronically.

Registering is easy! Simply call our Office on **5623 6062** or email us at info@qre.com.au.



INTEREST RATES

For the sixth consecutive year, the first Tuesday in November was not just about the Melbourne Cup with the Reserve Bank (RBA) announcing a cut in interest rates by 25 basis points. While economists remain divided about the likelihood of a further cut prior to Christmas, the retail sector is hoping that the rate cut will entice some consumer spending in the lead up to Christmas. So what to do? Although you may be tempted to spend the extra money, financial experts recommend locking in your payments at the amount prior to the rate cut. Making 'extra payments', will make a considerable difference to the amount of interest you pay over the course of your mortgage. Also, you will create a financial buffer that you can draw on in the event that you experience a change of circumstances that affect your ability to make your mortgage payments.

BUYING SOLAR

With power costs set to rise dramatically over the next few years, the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems – commonly known as solar panels is gaining popularity. Consumer group Choice has warned homeowners should do some basic homework before they commit to installation. Asking the right questions will put you in a stronger position to get the best product and service:

- **Check the qualifications of the installer.** The good news is that Australia has an accreditation scheme. To be eligible for solar credits, your designer/installer must be accredited by the Clean Energy Council – that means they're deemed qualified to design and install PV systems. Ideally you should also look for an accredited company that's been in the business for awhile with a good reputation and an established track record, relevant experience and specialist expertise.
- **Make sure you read the contract** – including the 'fine print' for warranty details and any hidden costs. A short warranty period should ring alarm bells. Manufacturer warranties or guarantees range from 5 to 25 years. Remember your solar system should last at least 25 years, so the longer the warranty the better.
- **How many panels and capacity do you need?** Be wary of 'over the phone' or 'standard' quotes. Your installer should conduct an on-site visit to investigate details like roof angles and exposure to sunlight before giving a design plan and quote. Solar panels work best when they're north facing, pointed directly at the sun, at the correct angle and not blocked by trees or shading.
- **Our final tip** - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!



THE PERFECT TENANT

As a Landlord, you may have a picture of the 'perfect tenant' in your mind. This may come from your past experiences – both good and bad or just an idea you have. Occasionally, we are asked not to rent a property to certain parties: for example - single mothers or couples with young children with the owner wanting a professional couple, corporate executive or the elderly as their tenants. As your Property Manager, we respect that as the owner of the property one of your priorities (apart from having the rent paid on time) is that your property is well cared for. These items are top of our list as well! However, it is important to be aware that both State and Federal laws prohibit us from taking discriminatory direction from a Landlord. By law you cannot discriminate against: colour or race, the unemployed, children, sexuality or religion, and the list goes on. In our experience, we have learnt that it is not the status of a person that determines if they are a quality tenant, but the references they supply. We have had many single mothers and families with young children that have been exceptional tenants – just as we have had working professionals and elderly tenants who have left properties in a poor state. As your Property Manager, you can be assured that we have your best interests at the forefront of our actions during the tenancy application process. And we are mindful that a quality tenant, who can afford the rent and will care for the property comes in a variety of forms!

COMING UP

December 2011

1: World AIDS Day

3: Eureka Day

3: International day of people with a disability

January 2012

**23: Chinese New Year:
Year of the Dragon**

February 2012

1-29: Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

14: Valentines Day

19-26: Donate Life Week

21: Shrove (Pancake) Tuesday

REIV LOBBYS FOR STAMP DUTY REFORM

The REIV has welcomed the recommendation to reform state taxes from the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) Inquiry into a State-based Reform Agenda. REIV CEO Enzo Raimondo said that there is broad agreement that stamp duty was an inefficient tax that needed to be replaced. "In the past few years the current and former state governments have supported the abolition of stamp duty. The review of Australia's tax system by Dr Ken Henry described it as 'inconsistent with the needs of a modern tax system'. The REIV acknowledges that it is not possible to simply remove it as the State Government will require a replacement revenue source which is why we welcome the recommendation from VCEC that an agenda for reform be developed and we particularly welcome the idea that there should be a timetable for state taxation reform." The REIV submission encourages a range of reforms including:

- Removal of stamp duty on GST (tax on tax) in non-residential transactions.
- Cease the application of higher stamp duty rates on investors.
- Index the rates so that the proportion of tax paid does not increase.