



## **Green properties give edge to landlords in competitive markets**

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The green movement, including energy and water conservation, continues to grow exponentially. As more and more people become aware of climate change and the effects of pollution and waste on the environment, greater effort is made to be more sustainable and environmentally responsible. Tenants, historically subject to the edict of their landlords, are becoming more vocal and taking extra steps to seek out "green" properties—and they are willing to pay for it. Hence, rather than being a burden to landlords the demand for "green" gives homeowners a golden opportunity to differentiate their properties (particularly in competitive rental markets), reduce operating costs and generate more revenue.

Studies have shown that landlords who invest in environmentally-friendly initiatives generate more profit over the long term than their non-green counterparts. Buildings certified by U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), for example, experience higher occupancy rates and higher rental rates on average. Tax implications include incentives for the installation of energy-efficient appliances, systems and materials and the proactive management of potential carbon taxes.

"Going green" can seem daunting to some, but by making incremental changes, the task is far less overwhelming. Start with a simple project, such as water conservation, which can save upwards of \$1,000 per year per apartment or up to half a million dollars for a 500-unit building. A shower and sink regulator such as The Water Scrooge is quick and easy to install, tamper-proof and reduces water consumption, usually without any noticeable difference to the tenant.

Other easy and inexpensive ways for landlords to show prospective tenants their "green side" include: replacing old and broken appliances with new ones that are Energy-Star rated, encourage recycling by providing easy access to dedicated recycling containers, making sure there are ample trash receptacles in common areas, limiting paper usage by offering on-line applications and rental agreements, insulating doors and windows if the cost for replacing them is too high and using compact fluorescent bulbs in rental units and common areas.

Making even the slightest effort to be more environmentally friendly and making even small changes tells tenants that their landlord is committed to going green, thus caring about the environment, the tenants and the greater good. It's a win-win for all.

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