




City of Fort Pierce


Residential Rental Properties

A Presentation to the City Commission
November 14, 2016

Purpose

- ▶ The City recognizes the need for safe, decent, and well maintained residential properties within the City.
 - ▶ Implementation of this Ordinance is consistent with Goal 6 of the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan Goals of 2016.
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Why Changes are Necessary

- ▶ The Building and Code Departments receive an average of 10 to 15 calls per month from tenants regarding poor living conditions.
 - ▶ Most calls are reports of residential units that do not meet the basic safety needs of daily life.
 - ▶ The current Housing Code and Property Maintenance Code does not adequately address the violations.
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Violations Reported



Toilet not flushing



Bathtub backing up

Violations Reported



Electrical Issues



Electrical Issues

Violations Reported



Termites



No Smoke Alarms

Violations Reported




Roof Leak




Water Pipe Leak

Work Group and Research

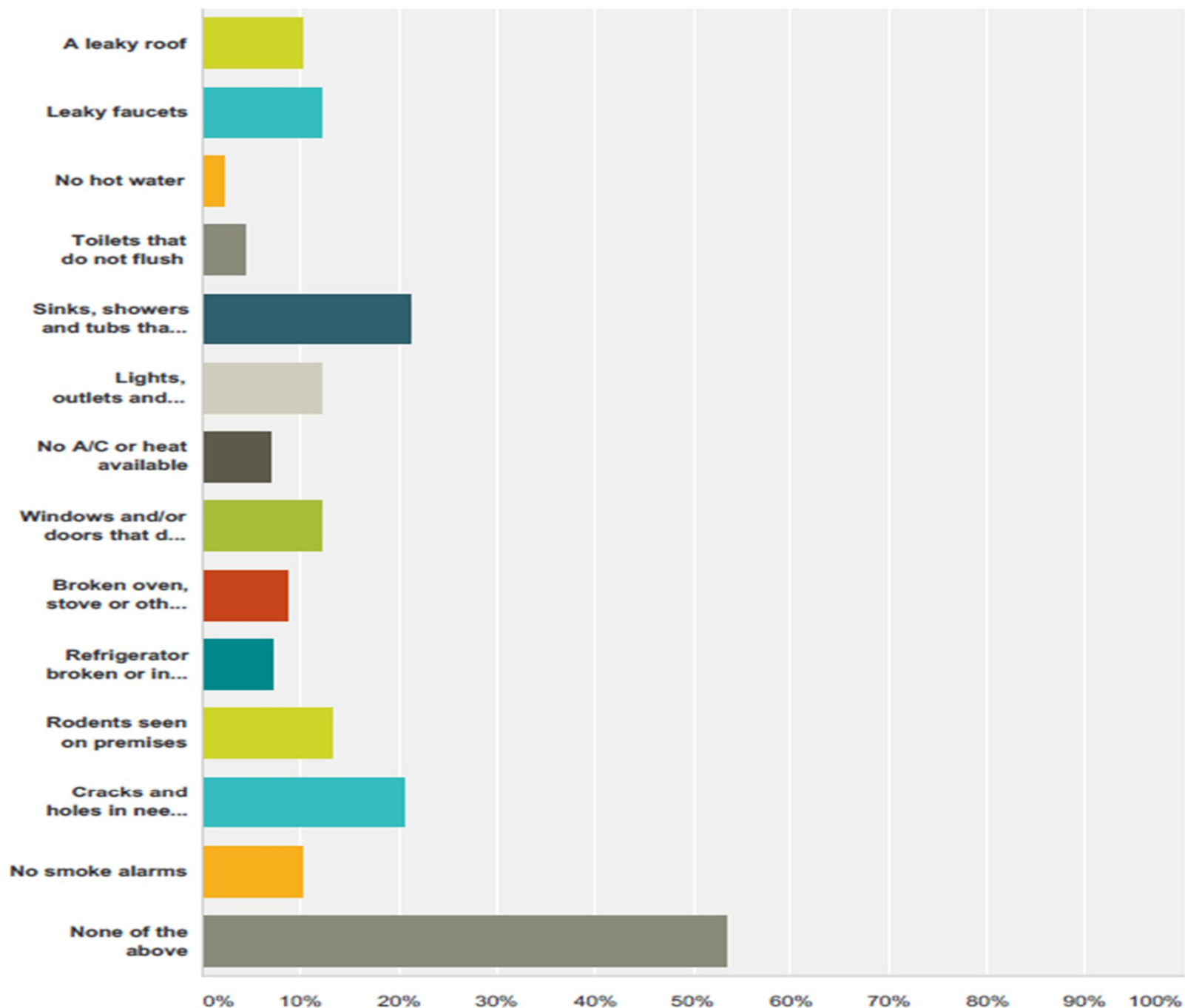
- ▶ A City work group convened with input from City Departments, the Police Department, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, and others to implement procedures to ensure the decency of housing.
 - ▶ A publicly advertised survey to determine the needs and wants of the citizens was launched.
 - ▶ Feedback from landlords, realtors, tenants, and non-profit organizations assisting in our efforts has been incorporated.
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Results of Survey

- ▶ A survey was taken over a period of almost 6 months using the City's web site, social media and a community outreach event.
 - ▶ The City received 646 responses from both tenants and landlords.
 - ▶ More than 50% of survey participants reported that their residence did not have any of the listed issues.
 - ▶ However, a majority of the responses indicated a registration program with mandatory inspections would be welcomed.
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Q5 Do you have any of the following problems? (Please select ALL that apply)


Answered: 558 Skipped: 87



Feedback from Tenants

- ▶ The City needs to require routine inspections. When a tenant makes a complaint to the City, they end up getting evicted.
- ▶ The City isn't doing enough to protect the citizens from 'bad landlords'.


Feedback from Landlords

- ▶ Business Tax Receipt fees and inspection fees will be passed on to the tenants.
 - ▶ Routine inspections would cause unnecessary government regulation.
 - ▶ Tenants are responsible for many violations therefore the issues should be handled by Florida State Statute 83, referred to as the "Tenant Landlord Law."
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Feedback from the Work Group

- ▶ The amount of complaints filed with the City represents approximately 1 - 2% of rental housing properties.
- ▶ The data currently available does not accurately identify rental properties within the City.
 - The number of rental units is estimated to be between 7,500 and 10,500.

Feedback from the Work Group (Cont.)

- ▶ A registration program cannot be implemented fairly when residential rental properties are not accurately identified.
 - ▶ Increased fees imposed by the landlords to offset their costs may reduce the amount of affordable housing units.
 - ▶ Additional funding and staffing would be required to administer a registration and inspection program.
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Recommended Actions

- ▶ Continue addressing violations when complaints are received.
 - ▶ Adopt the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) to replace the Standard Housing Code of 1997 as the Fort Pierce Property Maintenance Ordinance and Housing Code.
 - ▶ Continue to monitor and track common problems and offenders to determine if additional regulation is necessary.
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Recommended Actions

- ▶ Increase public awareness by:
 - Providing informational 'Florida Tenant Landlord Law' brochures.
 - Providing "211" brochures.
 - Providing other contact information for other agencies that may be of assistance.