



DOOR COUNTY TOURISM ZONE COMMISSION

Administrator's Report

MAY 2017

Compliance: Late Letters Sent

- The number of *January 2017* "No Reports" letters sent: Eighteen (18) to owner managed properties on 3/15/17
 - All properties have reported for January 2017.
- The number of *February 2017* "No Reports" letters sent: Eighteen (18) to owner managed properties on 4/14/17
 - Three (3) remains to report as of 5/9/17.

Unpaid tax/fees/penalties: The total outstanding due as of 5/9/17 is: \$33,722.48 from eight (8) permit holders. \$25,096.31 is the judgment granted in the recent compliance case and an additional \$6,191.10 in interest and attorney fees for the same case accrued since the judgment.

First Notice	Second Notice	Third Notice	Attorney	Settlement/ Payment Plan	Collections
\$ 41.69		\$ 346.16	\$25,096.31	\$ 1,118.43	
		\$ 570.27	\$ 50.00	\$ 119.11	
		\$ 68.91	\$ 6,191.10		
		\$ 110.55			
		\$ 9.95			
\$ 41.69	\$ -	\$ 1,105.84	\$ 31,337.41	\$ 1,237.54	\$ -
\$ 33,722.48	Total Outstanding				

- **Permits:** *Nine (9) permits have been issued since April reporting – Five (5) or 55.6% due to compliance efforts.*
 - *Twenty one (21) properties were permitted during the same period in 2016.*
 - *As of 5/9/17 there are 1034 permits.*
 - *Town of Baileys Harbor – seasonal – compliance*
 - *Town of Egg Harbor – year round – compliance*
 - *Town of Gardner – year round – compliance*
 - *Town of Sevastopol – year round*
 - *Village of Egg Harbor – seasonal – compliance*
 - *Town of Sevastopol – seasonal*
 - *Town of Sevastopol – seasonal – compliance*
 - *Town of Baileys Harbor – seasonal*
 - *Town of Nasewaupee - seasonal*

Unpermitted Properties:

I am currently working on permitting ten (10) unpermitted properties that are advertising online or have contacted the office regarding permitting. Last year at this time I was working on nine (9) unpermitted properties. There have been much fewer new permit applications coming in this year from agents.

- **VRBO/ Homeaway/ Vactionrentals.com** : Currently on VRBO there are 300+ rentals. The format has changed and I no longer can get an exact count. Last month there were 542 (535 prior month) properties for Door County with a few that are located in or around Algoma.
 - VRBO Listing #1017982 – compliance emails 4/25/17
 - VRBO Listing #1032665 – compliance letter sent 3/17/17 and 5/3/17
- The same properties are cross listed on **Homeaway.com/vactionrentals.com** have over 300+ listings.
- **AIRBNB:** Currently on Airbnb there are 173 (up from 162 last month) rentals listed for Door County. Below is the current breakdown of the Airbnb Properties by Municipality. Currently there are six (6) unpermitted properties on Airbnb, three of which are timeshare weeks which are either wholesaler listed or by the week owner. Two have compliance letters sent to the owners and the remaining listing I just found and I am in the process of owner location. The increase of listings over last months total, for the most part, is seasonal, permitted rentals coming back online.

MUNI		# of Airbnb Properties		
2	Baileys Harbor	9		
6	Clay Banks	2		
8	Town of Egg Harbor	23		
9	Village of Egg Harbor	19		
11	Ephraim	5		
12	Gibraltar	9		
14	Town of Forestville	0		
15	Town of Jacksonport	5		
27	Nasewaupsee	5		
32	Liberty Grove	23		
33	Sevastopol	7		
34	Sister Bay	5		
35	City of Sturgeon Bay	29		
36	Town of Sturgeon Bay	6		
39	Gardner	4		
42	Union	1		
46	Washinton Island	14	173	TOTAL IN DC
	NOT IN DOOR COUNTY	7		

- **Unpermitted Listings:**
 - Unpermitted Listing #1: 15062338 (compliance /timeshare- no leads)
 - Unpermitted Listing #2: 13282955 (compliance /timeshare- no leads)
 - Unpermitted Listing #3: 13752696 – each time I find the owner they take it down only to put it up a few months later. I will be trying one more time to permit if not successful I will refer to legal counsel. No response to final letter - sent to legal counsel on 5/9/17.
 - Unpermitted Listing #4: 18346670 – compliance letter sent on 4/25/17.
 - Unpermitted Listing #5: 155484 – timeshare with no leads
 - Unpermitted Listing #6: 18580024 – looking for owner.
- **TRIPADVISOR/FLIPKEY:** Currently on TripAdvisor there are two hundred nineteen (219) vacation rentals (200 last month).
 - Flipkey listings are forty two (42) last month there were forty six (46) rentals. (all permitted)
- **Facebook** – I have been monitoring the Door County Vacationers and just searching for Door County property listings for pages. I found several of new listings in the Vacationers page, all but one was permitted. The un-permitted property was sent a compliance letter.

- **Craigslist :**

- Listing #5977803938 -Time share for sale or rent. Compliance letter went 3/17/17 and 5/3/17 (previously permitted)
- Listing #6000306300- Eagle Harbor Point Beach – Compliance letter sent (Property has not transferred yet to the new owners. They were advertising prior to the real estate closing. They assure me they will permit as soon as the closing occurs – I am watching property records for the transfer.)

Other news:

- The newsletter has been mailed and the response has been great. It has sparked conversation and permit holders have been stopping into the office to learn more. There also has been a great response to the Silver Membership – I have been forwarding Yvonne the names of permit holders who have stopped in or called so that she can follow up. The newsletter had originally been budgeted to be completed by Hillstrom PR, but instead it was done in office with a review by Hillstrom PR for suggestions.
- The WH&LA sent out an email indicating that not all municipalities had completed the WDOR filing. Seventeen (17) of our municipalities completed filings. In case any questions arise, two (2) were not required to file per the WDOR: Brussels and the Village of Forestville. Deb at the WDOR confirmed that no filing was required for municipalities without any room tax revenue.
- A permit holder stopped in my office and was somewhat distraught over a scam that he was in the middle of on VRBO: an overpayment scam. He has a \$300 reservation that a VRBO member was trying to send him a \$1500 check and wanted the permit holder to refund him the remaining balance. The check was from California but the return address was Detroit Michigan. I put together an email for permit holders to advise them of some of the common scams seen on rental by owner sites. It is at the back of my report.
- Airbnb and San Francisco settled their law suit. It looks like Airbnb will be creating programming to:

Under the agreement, Airbnb and HomeAway will create systems that give San Francisco information about users when they register to list rentals on the online platforms. Based on that information, the city will be able to determine if users are registered with the city and abiding by regulations such as a rule that prohibits the use of affordable housing units for short-term rentals.

Creating and rolling out the system will take about eight months, Airbnb said.

Airbnb will deactivate listings if the city notifies Airbnb and HomeAway of a property that has failed to register.

“We need to protect our neighborhoods,” City Atty. Dennis Herrera said. “While we are happy to see a homegrown San Francisco company like Airbnb succeed, it can’t be at the expense of residents.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Roberts
Administrator

Removed Properties 4/13/17 to 5/9/17

Municipality	Permit #	Removed	Lodging Name	Lodging Address	Owner	Reason for Removal
Town of Egg Harbor	08-56-0912-01	4/14/17	Sunset Cove	6253 Bayshore Dr	Mark McCabe	Property sold.
Town of Gardner	39-50-0744-00	4/18/17	Countryside Motel	3120 Stevenson Pier	Christine Merkel	Property Sold. New permit #39-56-1736-00
Town of Egg Harbor	08-56-0903-00	4/18/17	Bay House	5889 Bay Shore	Myra Fogarty	I am not renting at this time. I may resume renting in the future.
Village of Sister Bay	34-53-0243-02	4/20/17	Northern Lites Orchard 5A	10652 N Highland Unit 5A	Donna Clabough	Trying to sell renting for the summer long term to Door Shakespeare.
Town of Clay Banks	06-56-0664-01	4/20/17	Love Bungalow	528 Lower LaSalle	Brendan O'Connor	Property Sold 9/30/16
Town of Nasewaupsee	27-56-1211-00	4/20/17	Maple Haven B&B	6810 Knollwood Rd	Cheryl Robertson	Property Sold
Town of Sevastopol	33-56-1658-12	4/27/17	Westshore Cottage	5304 Westshore	Kathy Steinmetz	Property Sold
Town of Jacksonport	15-56-1087-12	4/27/17	Lucey Cottage	6190 STH 57	Patrick Lucey	Property Sold
Town of Gibraltar	12-53-1012-01	5/3/17	Peaceful Pines	3724 N Northhaven Dr #34002	Connie Holner	Property Sold.
Village of Sister Bay	34-56-0146-02	5/4/17	Skogland Unit 3	2188 Skogland Unit 3	Ed Spreigel	No longer renting
Town of Baileys Harbor	02-56-1525-00	5/4/17	Cook	7748 W Kangaroo Lake	Richard Cook	No longer renting trying to sell.
Town of Gibraltar	12-56-1355-00	5/9/17	Devon Cottage	3393 STH 42	Mary & Mitchel Heinrichs	Property sold 5/5/17. New owners contacted.
Town of Gibraltar	12-53-0749-00	5/9/17	On Deck Guesthouse	4155 Bluff Circle	Nancy Larson	Owner now living in her house

How to Protect Yourself from Online Rental Scams

As reservations and inquiries are coming in from online booking sites, we thought it might be a good time to remind permit holders using rental by owner sites, that it's not just renters who need to be careful. Sometimes hosts can be defrauded by potential guests too. We've already heard of a very persistent scammer trying to rent in the area using the over payment scam... so please be aware. If a potential guest is trying to pay you more money than the reservation please contact the online site that you are listing your property with and report the situation. If you feel that you are a victim of a scam, please contact your local law enforcement agency.

While the list below includes some of the common traits being used in scams, legitimate travelers can also share some of these characteristics. An inquiry that meets any of these criteria should simply put you on alert. Just remember, none of these red flags alone is enough to indicate that an inquirer is definitely a scammer.

The best way to protect yourself is to get to know who you are renting to — before they arrive. While email may be convenient, we strongly encourage owners and managers to speak with potential guests before confirming their reservations. This enables you to learn more about them and their trip, and answer any questions they may have.

Let's take a look at the most common red flags that will help you identify a scam inquiry.

Language

If the inquirer demonstrates a poor grasp of basic language – spelling, punctuation and grammar – they could be a scammer.

Email

Is the email coming from an email provider you've never heard of? Does the email address correspond with the name in your inbox? If the two don't match, it could be a fake.

Too much information

Have they written above and beyond what you'd expect an inquirer to write? Are they giving you a life story? This is a big red flag when it comes to scams. So don't believe everything you read.

Occupation

Be wary of any potential guests that make a point in declaring their profession for one reason or another, especially if they say they are a religious figure, sea captain, doctor or member of the armed forces.

Surprises

If the traveler mentions they are arranging a surprise trip for someone else, let this be an alarm bell. Surprise trips can fall through at any time.

Payments

If they offer to pay more than your stated rate, this is another warning sign. A classic overpay scam involves guests sending more money than stated via check or money order, and likely enough, it turns out to be stolen. Before you can realize this, they'll be sending you messages asking for the overpayment to be returned to them (many will use the excuse of travel departments making a mistake). Recently, this scam has come into play using credit cards, too. The scammer reserves a property, and (over)pays by card. They'll ask for the extra amount back via bank transfer, making up an excuse why it can't go back on the card. Only once funds have been sent will it come to light that scammers had been using stolen credit card details.

Finally, if a renter provides you with unsolicited payment information in their initial inquiry, you should steer well clear of this potential scam traveler.

Missing profile information

When it comes to inquiries, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Trust your gut with this one. If the traveler doesn't send any inquiry questions or have any phone number listed on their profile, have your suspicions.

Incorrect property details in their inquiry

Receiving an inquiry from someone who refers to your penthouse apartment as a "cute cottage" should raise a few red flags, too. This could likely be a blanket message they've sent to multiple owners, waiting for one unsuspecting host to fall victim to this scam.

Date inconsistencies

If you have a potential guest inquire about specific dates, then tell you their dates to rent your property are flexible, this could also be a scam.

General perception

A lot of scams could be avoided if hosts truly go with their instinct. If it sounds too good to be true (paying you extra for a low-season week), it probably is!