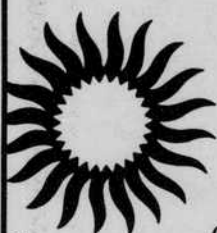


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are *basic* rights**

Oregon law provides fundamental protection to renters

By Steven Neuman
for the EmeraldEugeneans have been endowed with certain inalienable
renter's rights.Among these rights, the protection of the tenant figures
highly. However, many students just don't know the rights
they already have as tenants.ASUO Community Outreach Coordinator Megan Hughes
works actively with renter's rights issues."Students need to be aware of their rights. Ninety percent of
University neighborhoods are rental properties, and that
means that it's the primary housing for campus," she said.
"There is a constant turnover from year to year, and the prob-
lem is most students don't bother to learn because they're in
and out so fast."The current rights of Eugene tenants are the result of the
statewide Oregon Landlord and Tenant Act, not a city hous-
ing code. Several efforts are currently under way to adopt a
city ordinance or ordinances to replace the Landlord and
Tenant Act.According to the Oregon Landlord and Tenant Act, a land-
lord is required to make repairs, the rental unit must have ba-
sic safety and it must meet sanitation and livability standards.
These include effective waterproofing and weather protec-
tion; hot and cold running water connected to a sewage sys-
tem; safety from fire hazards; working keys, locks and win-
dow latches; no garbage or rodents in the unit or public spaces
around the building when tenants move in or throughout the
tenancy; adequate plumbing, heating and electrical equip-
ment maintained in good working order; and garbage removal
unless otherwise specified in writing."The landlord and tenant can agree in writing that the ten-
ant will fix certain things if the agreement is not an attempt
by the landlord to get away from the duty to repair. The writ-
ten agreement must state the amount of the payment for re-
pair, and it must be a fair amount," according to the Landlord
and Tenant Act.In the instance that a tenant complains about the need for a
repair, the landlord cannot retaliate by varying rent rates,
withholding services, serving an eviction notice, threatening
eviction or filing an eviction case after a tenant.

A key right often overlooked is that landlords may not

Turn to Rights, page 7B

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