



**Keep You,  
Your Family  
and Your  
Home Healthy!**

*A Resident Manual  
for Wheeler Terrace  
Residents*

**Wheeler Terrace** was renovated to be healthy housing. To remain healthy, residents need to be aware of possible problems that could occur even after the renovation. Health problems related to your house can include:

**Asthma and Allergies**—triggered by dust mites, mold, tobacco smoke and pests

**Injuries**—from falls, fires, burns, choking and suffocation

**Poisoning**—from household cleaners and other chemicals, pesticides, and medicines

Information on each of these problems is included in this resident manual. Information on other features related to being comfortable in your apartment is also included.

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## Asthma and Allergies

Asthma is a leading reason that children miss school or end up in the hospital. Asthma makes it hard for people to breathe. Sometimes people even die from asthma. This disease has no cure yet, but it can be controlled.

Allergies can also make it hard for people to breathe by causing an asthma attack. An allergy is an unusual reaction to something, like a food or a plant, which is normally harmless. Common signs of allergies are a stuffy or runny nose, itching, or a rash.

## Keep Down Dust Mites!

Dust mites are tiny animals related to ticks and spiders and live in house dust. Dust mites and their droppings are a leading cause of asthma attacks.

- Use zippered plastic mattress and pillow covers beneath sheets and pillow cases. You can buy them at your local department store or through the mail.
- Wash bedding, including blankets, pillow covers and mattress pads in hot water every week. Temperatures above 130°F kill dust mites.
- Keeping your apartment as dry as possible (reduce excess moisture) will also reduce the dust mites.

**Clean your home often.** Since cleaning puts dust into the air, have someone without asthma or allergies do it. Wear a dust mask if you can't find somebody else to clean. (You can buy one at a drug store.)

**Keep clutter down.** Clutter makes it harder to keep a clean home. Store your belongings in plastic or cardboard boxes instead of keeping them in piles or stacks. You can move the boxes to make cleaning easier.



# Mold

Mold produces “spores,” tiny specks you can’t see and that float through the air. When you breathe in mold spores, they get into your lungs. This can cause health problems. People with allergies to mold may have reactions. They include watery eyes, runny or stuffed up noses, sneezing, itching, wheezing, trouble breathing, headaches, and tiredness. Mold can even trigger asthma attacks.

Here are some places you might find mold:

- In bathrooms, especially around the shower or tub, and on the walls, ceiling or floor
- Around leaky bathroom and kitchen sinks
- On wet clothes that are not dried quickly
- On windows and walls where condensation collects
- In closets
- Under carpet

***Mold comes from moisture.*** The best thing to do is to reduce the amount of moisture that allows mold to grow. It’s important to fix any moisture problem in your home right

away. To stop mold from growing, quickly dry or throw away anything that has gotten wet.

- Keep surfaces clean and dry—wipe up spills right away.
- Store clothes and towels clean and dry—do not let them stay wet in the laundry basket or washing machine
- If the humidity is high, don’t keep a lot of houseplants.

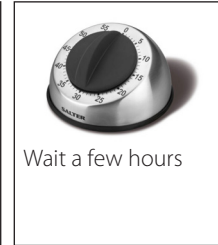
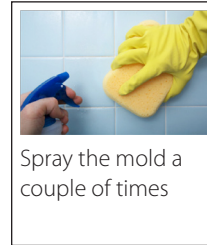
## How do I clean up mold?

Protect yourself when cleaning up mold. Wear long sleeves and pants, shoes and socks, rubber gloves and goggles to protect your eyes. Open a window to let in fresh air while you’re working.

- Clean up mold with a mix of laundry detergent or dishwashing soap and water OR chlorine bleach and soap and water.
- Rinse the area with clean water and dry quickly by wiping away the water and using a fan.

- If you use bleach, follow these steps:
  - Scrub the surface first with water and detergent.
  - Use one cup bleach to ten cups of water.
  - Spray or sponge the bleach on the moldy area. Leave it on about 15 minutes, then rinse the area and dry quickly.
  - Never mix chlorine bleach with products that contain ammonia or acids because you will make a deadly gas.
- Keep chlorine bleach out of the reach of children and pets.

1. Pour some white vinegar into an empty spray bottle.
2. Spray the affected area a couple of times. It will get rid of the mold in a few hours.



## I'm getting mold in my shower— what should I do?

- Wipe down shower walls with a squeegee or towel after bathing or showering.
- Distilled white vinegar kills many species of mildew and mold.

## How do I work my bathroom fan?

Your bathroom fan is always on and although it is hard to see the air blowing, the fan is working and ventilating the bathroom to get rid of extra moisture. You can also hold up a piece of toilet paper to the fan and if it holds it, the fan is working great. If the piece of toilet paper falls, the fan isn't working right.



## What should I do with the range hood fan above my stove?

When you are cooking on the stove, particularly boiling water, turn on the range hood fan from start to finish. This reduces the amount of extra moisture inside your home which means less mold.

To clean the filter in the hood each month:

1. Pop out the filter
2. Scrub it with soap and water
3. Run it through the dishwasher if possible

When your filter is clean, it uses less energy to run and helps keep the air in your apartment healthy.

## Tobacco smoke

Cigarette, cigar, or pipe smoke causes health problems, especially for people with asthma. It is best to quit smoking. Otherwise smoke outside and away from children. The chemicals in cigarette smoke can stay on furniture and fabrics in your home and can harm anyone who enters your home.



# Pests

Many families are bugged by pests. Cockroaches, flies, rats and mice carry disease and can get into food. Roaches and dust mites can make allergies and asthma worse. Fleas and ticks can carry disease. The bites of rats and certain spiders can make children and others very sick.

## Pest Prevention

Having pests in your home is not only annoying but also can be unhealthy for you and your family. The key to pest management is prevention. Make sure to talk to the property manager if you have a pest infestation.

### *Step 1: Identify the Pest Problem*

- Use a flashlight and look in every room in your home for pests and the poop they leave behind.
- Focus on the kitchen and bathroom, where pests are usually the worst.

### *Step 2: Get Rid of the Pests!*

- Reduce clutter: get rid of stacks of newspaper, papers, bags, and cardboard boxes that make good homes for pests.
- Wash hard surfaces to eliminate grease (stove, countertops, appliances and floors).
- Take away food sources: store food in tightly sealed containers, wash dirty dishes right after eating, and make sure people in your home eat only at the table and don't walk around with food.



- Get a trashcan that is covered. Empty trash often.
- Pests need water. Keep them from getting it by fixing leaks and not leaving dishwater in the sink overnight. Do not overwater indoor plants.
- Vacuum thoroughly (HEPA or allergen-reducing vacuums work best).
- Regularly clean floors, windowsills, and other surfaces.

### ***Step 3: Monitor Effectiveness***

- For cockroach problems, use glue boards to see if you fixed the infestation. If you're catching fewer or no pests, then your control is working!

## **How do I clean my floors?**

1. The floors have no wax finish and may be wiped up with a damp cloth and mild soapy water or mild detergent, NOT Clorox.
2. Sweep or use the dust mop once per day.
3. Do not use an excessive amount of water or strong soap.
4. Wipe up spilled grease or fluids immediately.

## **How do I clean my oven?**

The oven in your apartment is self-cleaning. This means that the oven heats up to a temperature of 900 degrees Fahrenheit and the extreme heat cooks off food and spills inside the oven, leaving ash that can easily be wiped out. Before you use the self-cleaning function, please read the owners manual for your oven.

Here are steps for cleaning your oven:

1. Take out the oven racks. You need to clean the oven racks by hand, and then put them back in when the oven is done cleaning.

2. Wipe up any spills and messes inside the oven first, using warm water and a mild soap. Ovens smoke more during cleaning when there is food inside. Wash the inside of the oven door as well.
3. Lock your oven door manually if your model does not lock automatically when you clean.
4. Open a window near the oven or turn on the range hood fan for ventilation. There is a certain amount of smoke when you clean the oven.
5. Turn the control on your oven to “clean” and set the timer for 2 to 5 hours depending on how dirty your oven is, and what the manufacturer recommends.
6. Wait for the cleaning to finish and the oven to cool before opening door. When the oven is fully cooled, wipe up any ash inside.



Remove oven racks and clean by hand



Wipe up spills and messes in the oven



Lock oven door!



Open a window near the oven or turn on the range hood fan



Turn the control on your oven to “clean” and set the timer for 2 to 5 hours



After oven has cooled, wipe up any ash

## How do I clean my refrigerator?

Keep a box of baking soda inside of your refrigerator to absorb bad smells. Wash the food compartments of your fridge in a mixture of two tablespoons of baking soda for every quart of warm water.

## How do I clean my garbage disposal?

The garbage disposal is under your kitchen drain and shreds food small enough so that it passes through the plumbing. It is controlled by a switch and cold water should be running when the disposal is turned on.

To clean the garbage disposal:

1. First, try filling the entire sink with soapy water and running the disposal.
2. If that does not completely clean it and remove a smell, try baking soda and vinegar. Pour about a half a cup of baking soda down the drain, wait a few seconds, and then add the same amount of vinegar.
3. After the bubbling has slowed, add some boiling water and then run the disposal again.

## How do I clean my stove?

1. Remove the burners from the stove by gently pulling them out.
2. Wash everything with a soft cloth and warm water. You may use a mild soap such as Dawn.
3. Rinse everything thoroughly and allow them 30 minutes to dry before placing them back on the stove.

### *You can also clean with vinegar.*

1. Apply vinegar to a soft clean cloth, enough to dampen it but not soak it.
2. Remove the burners and wipe them thoroughly with the cloth, adding more vinegar as needed.
3. Rinse the pieces with water, careful not to get the connection wet.
4. Dry everything before putting them back on the stove.

For hard to wash, stuck-on grease, combine a mixture of equal parts of baking soda and water and allow to sit for about 30 minutes to form a paste. Using a clean cloth, scrub the burner with the baking soda paste until the debris is gone. If this doesn't help, leave the paste on the element for at least 20 minutes and then scrub again. Rinse everything with warm water and dry the coils with a clean cloth.



Remove the burners



Scrub with a cloth and warm water



Rinse



Let dry for 30 minutes

## Can I do anything to my walls?

To clean your walls and cabinets, use a rag with soapy water. Do not use any strong cleaners like Comet or Windex that contain ammonia.





## Injuries

The leading causes of death in the home are falls, drowning, fires, poisoning, suffocation, choking, and guns. Very young children and older adults are the people most likely to get hurt at home. It's important to keep people's age in mind when thinking about safety.

## Prevent Slips, Trips, & Falls

Did you know that your chances of getting hurt at home are much higher than they are at work or school? The good news is that there are simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family.

- Keep your floor clear of anything that may cause tripping. Pick up hazards such as toys, shoes and magazines.
- Clean up spills right away so people won't slip.
- If there are rugs in your home, use non-skid mats and throw rugs.
- Keep your home well lit so you can see where you're walking at night.

## Fires and Burns

Playing with fire can lead to death for children. Storing matches, lighters, and other heat sources in a safe place like a locked drawer will help keep your children from playing with them. Don't let children play near the stove.

Teach your children how to prevent fires, and what to do if there is a fire. Talk about fire safety with your children. Your local fire department can help.

Plan and practice a fire escape route with your family at nighttime.

Space heaters such as electric kerosene heaters cause most burns at home. Keep them out of doorways, halls, or other busy areas. Also, keep them at least three feet from curtains, bedding, or other things that could catch fire. Teach children that heaters will burn.

To prepare, ask yourself:

- Where do I store matches and lighters?
- Have I talked about fire safety with my children?



- Do I have a fire exit plan in case my home catches fire?
- Do I use space heaters safely and with a window open?

### My smoke detector is beeping!

It is important to make sure your smoke detector is in good working order. If your smoke detector is beeping, replace the batteries. Ask the property manager to help you.



## Choking

Everyday foods can cause choking. Hot dogs, nuts, popcorn, and hard candy can easily get stuck in a small child's throat. Don't let your young child eat them. Even drinks, like formula, milk, or juice can make babies choke if they drink them lying down, especially from a bottle. Make sure children drink sitting up.



Young children like to put things in their mouths. Balloons, toys, and toy parts that are small enough to fit into a child's mouth may cause choking. You also may not be able to get them out if they get stuck.

- Don't let your children play with balloons.
- Keep coins, marbles and buttons away from young children

- Read a toy's package to make sure it's right for your child.
- Learn what to do if your child is choking.



Ask yourself:

- Do I keep a close eye on my children at meals and at playtime?
- Do I pick out toys that are safe and right for my child's age?

## Suffocation

Don't let children play near cars or old appliances. They can suffocate and die if they become trapped in a car trunk or old refrigerator. Young children can get tangled up and suffocate in curtains, window blind cords, and extension cords. Plastic bags and covers are also dangerous. Don't tie toys or pacifiers to children's clothes. Very small children should not wear jewelry around their necks.



## Poisoning

Some products can harm your family's health if you do not use them in the right way. Common chemicals like bleach, rat poison, paint strippers, and drain cleaners can be dangerous. Children can accidentally poison themselves if they play with, eat, or drink chemicals that are not stored safely.

Even very small amounts of chemicals can cause health problems if you touch them or breathe them in. Remember if you spray or pump something, it goes right into the air. When you and your family breathe, these chemicals go into your bodies.

# Household cleaners and other chemicals

To use household cleaners and other chemicals safely:

- Read the label. This is one of the most important steps in using products.
- Look for words like caution, warning, flammable, harmful, danger, poison. These tell you that a product may be hazardous. If you see these words on a label, be extra careful.
- Never mix products unless the label says it is safe to do it. For example, never mix products containing chlorine bleach with products containing ammonia. You will make a deadly gas by mixing these together.
- Keep children and pets away while you use hazardous products.
- Never leave the product or container where children can see it or reach it.
- Don't eat, drink, or smoke when using hazardous products.

- Be ready in case there's an accident: Put the **Poison Control Center telephone number: 1-800-222-1222**, where you can find it quickly in case of an emergency. Tape it to the wall by your kitchen phone, for example.

Make simple and inexpensive cleaning solutions that are healthy and safe!

Borax and baking soda are especially versatile household products. Baking soda will clean and deodorize all kitchen and bathroom surfaces (just dissolve a few tablespoons in some warm water, or use the baking soda directly on a damp sponge). A combination of baking soda, hot water, and vinegar can clear drains. And borax, baking soda, or hydrogen peroxide can remove stains and mildew. Alternatively, using a mild soap (like dishwashing detergent or a liquid/Castile soap) with some water will clean most surfaces.



## Sample Do-It-Yourself Cleaning Solutions

### All-purpose cleaner

For cleaning countertops, floors, walls, etc. These ingredients can be used separately, as well.

1 quart warm water

1 teaspoon liquid soap

1 teaspoon borax

½ cup undiluted white vinegar

Mix ingredients and store in a labeled spray bottle.

### Spray Disinfectant Cleaner

½ cup borax

1 gallon hot water

Dissolve borax in hot water. Wipe down areas to be disinfected.

### Abrasive Cleaner for Counter Tops

Sprinkle baking soda or borax, add juice of ½ lemon and scrub.

### Drain Cleaner/Opener

¼ cup vinegar

¼ cup baking soda

Mix ingredients and pour mixture down drain. Let stand for a few minutes and rinse with boiling water.

### Oven Cleaner

Mix equal parts of castille soap, borax and water. Let mixture set for 20 minutes and scrub with mixture of baking soda and salt.

### Window Wash

Juice from one fresh lemon

2 cups water or club soda

1 teaspoon cornstarch

Mix all ingredients and pour into plastic spray bottle. Shake well.

## Bathtub/Sink Stains

Scrub with paste made from cream of tartar and hydrogen peroxide.

## Soap Film on Fiberglass Surface

Apply baking soda with damp cloth, rub and rinse off residue well.

## Soap Film/Mildew on Shower Curtains

Pour full-strength vinegar on the shower curtain to remove soap film and mildew.

## Toilet Lime Deposit Removal

Pour full strength white vinegar in the bowl, let sit for several hours. Scrub with sturdy brush.

## Spot Remover

Club Soda

Pour on fresh spots and stains to remove wine and foods from clothing, carpets and liners.

## Pesticides

Pesticides are things like bug spray, pet flea collars, rat poison, and garden weed killer that can prevent and kill pests. Pesticides can pose a real danger if you do not use them in the right way. Some may cause poisoning, birth defects, nerve damage and even cancer. They can make allergies or asthma worse. Breathing fumes or dust from pesticide powders and sprays can be harmful. Touching a floor where pesticide was used can also be dangerous.

Children are especially at risk. When they crawl and play on the floor and lawns, they can come into contact with any pesticides used there. Young children put their hands, toys, and other things in their mouths. They may have touched pesticides on the floor or grass.

To use pesticides safely:

- Read the label and follow the instructions. Use only the amount directed for the purpose listed.
- Place all pesticides, including baits, out of the reach of children.
- When using a pesticide, keep children away until it has dried or for the time the label recommends.

- Protect your skin, your eyes, and your lungs while using pesticides.
- Always wash your hands after use. Never smoke, eat, or drink while using a pesticide.
- Look for signal words. All pesticide labels including words such as Caution, Warning, or Danger to warn you about a product's hazards.



## Medicines

When medicines are taken in the wrong amount for the wrong reason they can be very harmful. It is important to keep medicine out of the reach of children and to teach them that although some medicine looks like candy, it is always important to ask an adult before eating pills. Its okay to give your children vitamins, but make sure to explain to your child that vitamins are a kind of medicine some people take to keep them healthy and strong.



## Store Safely

Do you store hazardous household products safely?

- Keep them away from children. A locked, secure place is best.
- Store them in the package, can, or bottle they came in. Never put them in another container (especially one for food or drink)! This helps prevent poisoning and keeps the label instructions with the product.
- Keep containers and packages dry. Close them tightly.
- Set containers inside a plastic bucket in case of leaks.
- Keep products away from heat, sparks, or fire.
- Store batteries and flammable chemicals like gasoline in the shade, away from direct sunlight.





## Comfort

Feeling comfortable and safe inside your home is very important to your health. Having the correct temperature, enough light and air circulation all make your home more comfortable and you healthier!

## How do I work my thermostat?

The thermostat located in your home has been pre-programmed for your comfort and for easy use. You may adjust the temperature in your home by simply pressing the up or down arrows. You may switch from heat to cool by sliding the bottom tab over to the appropriate setting. Management is happy to assist you with programming the thermostat if you need help. To save money on utilities, make sure to keep the temperature set no higher than 72 in the winter, and 77 degrees in the summer.



## Should I know anything about my air vents?

Do not block any of the vents. It will obstruct the air circulation in your apartment.

## How do I use and clean my windows

During the summer days or when it is hot, close your windows, blinds, shades or draperies. This will prevent heat from coming into your apartment.

Clean the glass with a mild dish soap and water. Do not use cleaners that contain ammonia or oil/petroleum based products. Rinse completely with clean water and wipe dry with a soft cloth to avoid water spots.

## Why does my toilet have two different ways to flush it?

To save water and money, your toilet has a dual-flush: this means for liquid waste you push the left button (half-filled circle) and for solid waste you push the right button (fully filled circle.)

- If the toilet is running or leaking, contact maintenance to fix it.
- If your toilet makes ANY noise once the flush cycle is complete, it is leaking!
- Put waste such as Kleenex and insects in the trashcan instead of the toilet.
- If the button sticks, use a little bit of WD-40 to loosen it.

## Why does my shower have weak water pressure?

Your shower uses a low-flow shower head to reduce the amount of water you use and save money.

## Lights

If you use CFL (Compact Florescent Lights) bulbs, they will last a long time and save energy.

- You can save more than \$40 in electricity costs over the lifetime of the bulb
- The bulb uses about 75% less energy than standard bulbs and lasts up to 10 times longer
- The bulb produces about 75% less heat, so it's safer to operate and doesn't heat up your apartment



