



It's Time for Year End Tenant & Building Owner Maintenance

By Lang Motes, Senior Vice President

It's that time again – time for tenants and building owners to make a list and check it twice. As a conscientious business owner there are several things you need to review and act on as 2007 draws to a close.

Please feel free to use this checklist to help customize your own list of year end real estate issues to be addressed. Please remember, this generic checklist real estate brokers use is not exhaustive in any way. It should not be confused or misconstrued with your contractual duties you are required to perform or any of your other real estate obligations..

Year End Commercial Real Estate Maintenance Checklist

Tenant Maintenance Responsibilities. This is the “taking care of what you have” portion of the checklist for tenants occupying real estate. Your “specific” responsibilities to perform will vary from single tenant to multi-tenant buildings and are normally spelled out clearly in your lease agreement. I will only touch on a few that generally apply to most businesses under typical leases.

If you lease your space you should consider the following recommendations:

1. **Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (“HVAC”).** Tenants with dedicated HVAC units serving your space normally call for an HVAC Maintenance Program which needs to be serviced probably 2-4 times a year. Schedule your HVAC Contractor to service your units.
2. **Air Filters.** Change all your air filters 4 times a year. If air quality seems to be an issue experiment with higher quality allergy filters and see if it makes a difference.
3. **Pest Control.** Schedule your pest control company for your quarterly treatment.
4. **Outlets.** Check you electrical, phone and internet connection outlets to confirm all are in working condition.
5. **I own the building and I rent space to my company.** If you own and occupy your building, make sure you read the “Owner Maintenance Responsibilities” section of this article for owner specific responsibilities.

Owner Maintenance Responsibilities. This is the “taking care of what you have” portion of the checklist for owners of real estate. Like tenants, you may also have “specific” responsibilities to perform which vary from single tenant buildings to multi-tenant buildings. These specific responsibilities may be spelled out in your loan documentation with your lender as well as lease agreements. So I will only touch on a few that generally apply to most buildings. Keep in mind, if you are the owner and you occupy space in your building you need to perform the Tenant responsibilities in addition to the Owner responsibilities.

If you own your space or building you should consider the following recommendations:

1. **Owner Occupant.** If you own your building and occupy space in your building, please make sure you read the “Tenant Maintenance Responsibilities” for tenant or owner occupant specific responsibilities.
2. **Common Areas.** Inspect all common areas for painting, floor maintenance, ceiling tile maintenance, etc. that needs to be corrected.
3. **Building Exterior.** What deferred maintenance issues need addressing? Inspect the outside of your building for obvious signs of maintenance repair and address these accordingly; Does the exterior paint need attention?; Are the gutters clear of any and all debris and do they flow freely?; Do the windows needs cleaning?



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4. **Parking Lot.** Restripe parking lot as necessary; Check for cracks that need to be repaired; Repair pot holes sooner rather than later before water begins to wash out soil under slab; Inspect and clear storm sewer inlets to prevent ponding or flooding during winter months.
5. **Landscaping.** Have the landscaping reviewed and correct all sprinkler problems and dead plant issues; Have seasonal winter fertilization thrown out; the irrigation company needs to adjust irrigation for winter cycles.
6. **Ceiling.** Replacing a few scuffed up ceiling tiles is not expensive so consider replacing as necessary; Also pay particular attention to tiles with discoloration or wet spots; This typically indicates a roof leak or HVAC problem.
7. **Fire Protection.** Have a fire protection company inspect and test system if necessary.
8. **Lighting.** Fluorescent lights and ballasts sometimes need replacing so determine where you have lights not functioning properly and consider having them replaced; Evaluate replacing failed, old lighting units with new generation fixtures for improved light and cost savings.
9. **Wall Surfaces.** Painting the interior walls of your space is a relatively easy and cost effective improvement.
10. **Flooring.** If you decide to paint or update the interior walls of your space give serious thought to replacing your carpet and wax any vinyl composition tile ("VCT") along with cleaning and resealing tile grout as necessary.
11. **Electrical.** If you identified electrical outlets that have failed during the year or outside security lighting issues, etc. get these fixed.
12. **Roofs.** Inspect and clear the roof of any and all debris and tree branches that are too close or making contact with the building.

In closing, please remember to write down all of the duties that you perform throughout the year. In addition keep all of your preventive maintenance paperwork so you have documentation of your actions.

If you are interested in learning more about tenant or owner maintenance responsibilities, please contact Lang at Indermuehle & Co.

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