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## Ordinance Change

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### **New noise ordinance means landlords can be cited for noisy or unruly events on their properties**

A new noise ordinance passed by the Minneapolis City Council in February will add new tools to help keep neighborhoods clean and livable. On July 1, 2006, Minneapolis Police will begin enforcing the new ordinance, which means landlords and property owners may receive administrative citations for noisy or unruly activities occurring on their properties.

The City Council passed the ordinance in response to neighborhood complaints that police lacked an effective set of tools to manage the noise, litter, and unruly behavior that accompany many house parties and residential events. The new rules permit police to first warn and then fine landlords and property owners who refuse to take appropriate action to correct problems of noisy or unruly behavior in the residences they own or manage.

Beginning July 1, police will mail warning notices to property owners or landlords when they have good evidence that a "noisy or unruly assembly" has occurred on their residential property. "Noisy or unruly assemblies" are defined as gatherings of people between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. on residential properties whose noisy or otherwise illegal conduct would be likely to cause significant discomfort or annoyance to people of normal sensitivities.

The notices warn property owners and landlords that they could be fined if there is another noisy or unruly assembly at that address within the next 180 days. There is a 21-day grace period after the initial warning is mailed, which means landlords can't be fined for noisy activities during that time. This grace period gives property owners and landlords the chance to take steps to correct the problem before their properties become eligible for fines.

The measure asks property owners and landlords to work with police to implement a plan to reduce the frequency and severity of similar activities in the future. If the property owner or landlord takes appropriate measures, the notice can be rescinded.

In a duplex or multi-unit dwelling, property owners or landlords will get warnings for activities as they occur in each individual unit. Police will issue fines when repeat activities take place in units that have previously been the subjects of warnings. Fines may also be issued if the incidents involve a common participant or occur repeatedly in a common or outdoor area of the property.

Property owners and landlords who are fined have the right to contest the fine. They may also challenge a police decision not to rescind a notice if they believe that they have taken reasonable steps to prevent reoccurrences. Appeals will be heard by administrative hearing officers who will decide whether police acted appropriately.

The first administrative fine issued for a property will be in the amount of \$200. Fines will continue to double with each additional incident over a 24-month period. Community members, landlords, or property owners who have questions about the new process should call the neighborhood crime prevention specialist located in their police precinct.