

Suggestions on ways to minimize - Transfer of Arrearages to the Tax Roll

- Do credit checks on prospective tenants. This may give insight into whether the tenant will be reliable for the rent and/or utility payments. Wisconsin residential rental practices law allows landlords to collect the actual cost, up to \$20, for a credit report on a prospective tenant.

ATCP 134.05 Earnest money deposits and credit check fees*

(4)(a) Except as provided under par. (b), a landlord may require a prospective tenant to pay the landlord's actual cost, up to \$20, to obtain a consumer credit report on the prospective tenant from a consumer reporting agency that compiles and maintains files on consumers on a nationwide basis. The landlord shall notify the prospective tenant of the charge before requesting the consumer credit report, and shall provide the prospective tenant with a copy of the report.

- Ask the utility to send duplicate copies of bills or late notices. **(Currently we send copies of the late notices to landlords who have made us aware they own a property and it is a rental unit.)**
- Have the utility service put in the landlord's name and increase the rent to include the cost of utilities.
- Change the rental lease to include language making tenancy dependent on payment of utility bills. If the tenant fails to pay utility bills, the landlord can bring an eviction proceeding.
- Deduct unpaid utility bills from the tenant's security deposit. Wisconsin residential rental practices law allows a landlord to withhold unpaid utility bills from a tenant's security deposit.

ATCP 134.06(3) (a) Security Deposit Withholding: Restrictions*

- (a) A landlord may withhold from a tenant's security deposit only for the following:
3. Payment which the tenant owes under the rental agreement for the utility service provided by the landlord but not included in the rent.