



An Open Letter to KRS Holdings Property Management Company

October 27 2020

Dear KRS Holdings,

Over the past three months, tenants at Sherwood and Wynwood Apartments came together to discuss their concerns with conditions in their communities, the properties you manage. They identified specific, low-cost solutions to their problems, and they brought their collective suggestions to you. Yet for the last three months, with one meager exception, you could not be bothered to acknowledge their concerns, let alone act to alleviate their hardship.

On July 25th, August 6th, and September 14th, the concerns of tenants at Sherwood Apartments were sent to you in letters asking that you issue two visitor parking passes to each unit, replace light bulbs in the outdoor lights, and fix the exterior door to the building (the lock has simply been removed making tenants feel unsafe in their own hallways). On September 21st, the issues raised by residents of Wynwood Apartments were written down and mailed to you in a letter asking for the return of marked visitor parking spots, limitation of towing hours to midnight through 6:00am, effective abatement of pests, and repair of failing floors. On September 29th, we sent a letter highlighting an issue that a tenant at Wynwood Apartments had already brought to you herself. This tenant has spotted 40 mice in her apartment since February, experienced emotional distress documented by her social worker due to living in a building infested with mice, and lost access to a bedroom due to the stench of mouse urine and feces. (The tally has since reached 50 mice.)

While we are pleased to see that outdoor lighting at Sherwood Apartments has improved, the other issues remain unresolved. When we initially contacted you about towing issues you claimed that the parking lot is not big enough to accommodate visitors. We not only provided you with references to the City Zoning Ordinance demonstrating that by the City's own standards, you have plenty of surplus parking but also did the work of mapping out the parking lot using city GIS data and current parking standards to demonstrate the carrying capacity of the parking lot. As of today you have ignored the front door issue and we are still waiting for a timeline on when tenants can expect those repairs to be carried out.

We recently received a document which appears to be your response to the letter we wrote on behalf of tenants at Wynwood Apartments. (We have not received a response to any of the other letters mentioned above.)

In your response, you stated that the towing process is “designed to improve the safety of the residents.” One Wynwood tenant shared that his car was towed one day after his tags passed their renewal date. At Sherwood Apartments, **a home health aide was towed while providing health services to a tenant.** These are only two examples among many. While these practices clearly serve the towing company's bottom line, it is less clear how this practice serves the safety of tenants. The same applies to your

decision to remove visitor parking spaces and refusal to limit towing hours. Your tenants often describe feeling extremely isolated, afraid to have friends, family, or service providers visit due to the excessively aggressive towing practices at your buildings. How does this "improve the safety" of your tenants?

You also explain that "some technologies... should be able to validate violations," though you have given us no indication what these supposed "technologies" are or how they address your tenants' concerns. To be clear, residents **are asking for two simple things - the restoration of visitor parking and the limitation of towing hours** - in order to prevent their visitors from getting towed in the first place. This can be achieved at low cost and without any special "technologies".

Regarding pests, you explain that "a licensed pest control company ... services the property on a weekly basis," and the tenant portal enables you to monitor pest control response times. Please note that in our letter, tenants demanded "the effective abatement of pests". The issue is not how many times a licensed pest control company services the property, but the effectiveness of the service provided.

Regarding dangerously weak floors and stairs, you asked for "specific feedback" and say that you "have not received this feedback from residents..." The instability of many stairs and floors in the common spaces at Wynwood are apparent to anyone who walks on them, so it is telling that you are unaware of which stairs tenants are referring to. It is also notable that this issue, which tenants were eager to discuss among themselves, has apparently not been reported to you. The fact that KRS routinely responds so slowly and inadequately to maintenance requests (a past example: [<https://www.wtvr.com/2016/02/17/issue-that-left-renters-without-hot-water-for-6-months-took-1-day-to-fix>]) obviously disincentivizes reporting on maintenance issues because tenants rightly assume that at best they'll wait long periods for nothing more than a band aid solution.

You encourage tenants to stop by the office for resolution of towing and pest control issues. The tenant with 50+ mice in her apartment brought her issue to the office over and over again for months, and the tenant whose car was towed for barely expired tags stopped by the office with "concerns about a specific incident," yet these issues were not solved. **Substantial change to towing, visitor parking, and pest control, not a few more trips to the office, are needed to address tenant concerns.**

To reiterate: Sherwood Apartments still needs a secure entry and two visitor parking passes per unit. Wynwood Apartments still needs the restoration of visitor parking, limited towing hours, effective abatement of pests, and floor repair. The Wynwood resident with a rodent infestation needs immediate relief, habitable accommodations, and compensation for property damaged by the mice.

We expect KRS to promptly respond in writing to RTDC and, most importantly, take immediate action to meet these demands. Failure to do so will result in further action.

Sincerely,

Richmond Tenants' Defense Council