

So what's on your Spring cleaning agenda?

Our agenda has been: *Be nice to the house.* I admit we started before Spring and other than about 16 doors to paint I have almost finished.

Next task will be to confront the weeds in the garden.

If that's my agenda for my own home, what do you think should be done to your investment property?

Last week, I took our handyman to a house in Eastwood. The plan was to Spring clean the garden.

"Denis knows so much about plants" Alex told my wife. I admit it is an interest.

So we walked around the garden as I dictated and Alex made notes: Cut that Frangipani back to the original trunk. (The old tree was tied to the french doors of the house). Those Camelias need a trim to stop the overlap on the

path. And so we moved on.

Lots of tenants are not gardeners. I did courtyard reno recently. The owner loved it and so did the tenants. Three weeks later my new plants were not looking so good.

However, we can't leave our investment properties suffer, because in the long run we are the losers.

If you let your unit, townhouse, villa go unmaintained no one will want to rent the property. And believe me that does happen.

An owner has a onetime housing commission house and very little had been done to it.

Because the owner didn't like trees, it was not difficult to convince him to let us trim into something manageable. But no one wanted to rent the property.

It had a large eat-in kitchen with original painted cupboards. We urged him to do something about it. He shuddered at the \$10,000 quote, but finally, he agreed.

The new kitchen was basic, but it breathed new life into the room.

It was rented within 2 weeks and at a higher rent.

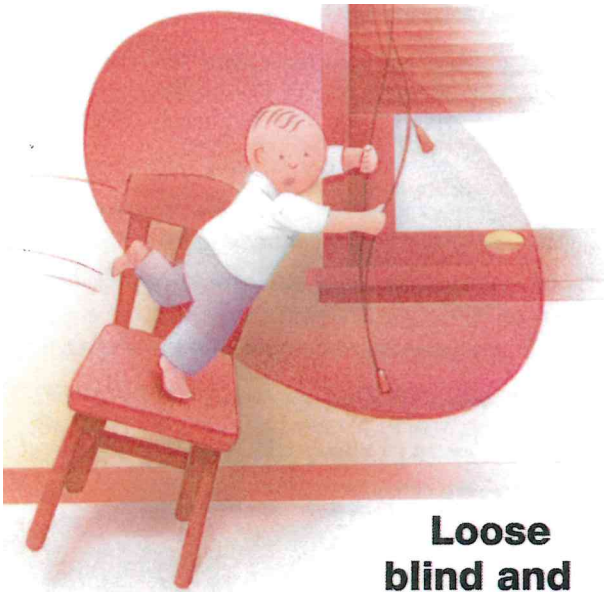
A higher rent is the "silver lining" to this costly cloud. Your accountant will remind you that your outgoings will be tax-deductible. So that's 2 silver linings.

I guess a third one would be that you stand a good chance of letting to a better quality tenant who will look after a renovated property.

As at the beginning of September, I am project managing 5 renovations: 2 are almost complete and 3 are in various stages from waiting on quotes to organizing timetables for the tradesmen.

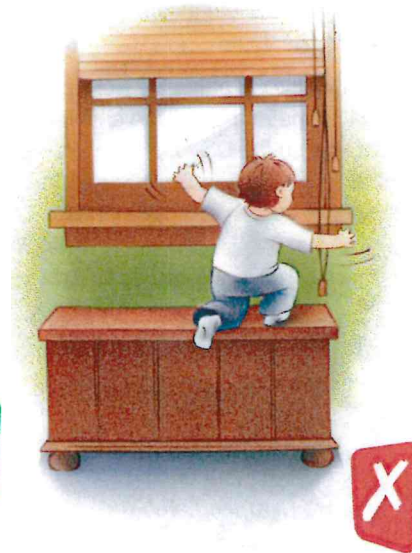
Spring is a great time to check out your own investment. You can call Lyn who will arrange an inspection time with the tenant for you.

There is no time like Spring to do a few maintenance jobs.



Loose blind and curtain cords can kill

Fix them out of reach so kids are out of danger



Blind and curtain cord hazards

Loose blind and curtain cords/chains—particularly those with loops—are dangerous.

Children have died when the loop went over their head or they got tangled in loose cords while:

- sleeping in a cot or bed where cords are hanging
- playing near cords
- standing on a chair, sofa or bed to look out a window.

Children do not understand that a cord/chain wrapped around their neck can tighten and strangle them in just a few minutes if they sit down, roll around or climb down to the floor.

Between 2001 and 2008 at least 11 children have died in this way. Nine of these were children under three years of age. In the US, a child aged between seven months and 10 years dies each month after being strangled on curtain and blind cords.



The information on this page has been extracted from a brochure prepared by The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission.

There are more details on the brochure. I just wanted to draw your attention to the problem that loose cords can create.

Our installers are very careful to make sure the cord is fixed to window frames or architraves in order to protect inquisitive minds.

If you want more details information can be had by visiting the website: www.productsafety.gov.au

The Commission has a Facebook, Twitter page as well.

You can even call them 1300 555 727