

## **RENTAL DWELLING PERMIT PROGRAM**

The proposed ordinance is modeled after Athens, Ohio. The city of Wellston also modeled their program after Athens.

I spoke with Steve Peerson, director of Athens rental program. Their program has been in effect since 1975.

They license 5604 units per year. This is 70% of the total residential units in Athens. Early on, they had four inspectors doing inspections. Now they have five with various backgrounds, but none with certified building inspector status since they enforce only the minimum standards.

The cost of their license fee started out at \$65.00 per unit until challenged in court. They hired a company called Maximus to do an assessment of the program. Their evaluation accounted for uniforms, computers, vehicles, clerical, etc. plus indirect costs such as lights, heat, depreciation of vehicles, etc. They determined the fee was too low and recommended it be set at least \$86.00. Therefore city council set it at \$90.00 per unit.

Inspections are done at least once every two years, and then inspectors are rotated to cover different areas each time.

If an issue falls outside of the inspectors expertise, it is incumbent on the landlord to have a certified professional inspect and provide a copy to the inspector.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

I suggest City Council decide what they want the final ordinance to say. Then, they could have a public hearing letting the public voice their opinions or concerns. The public first must know exactly what is being proposed else it will end up being a public debate rather than a hearing. Why have the public arguing points that may not even be a part of the plan? Council then could consider public input for the final ordinance to be drawn up.

This is not new housing regulations. The International Building Code which is already adopted by the city will continue to be enforced. The difference being, it is now being done on a complaint basis only. Properties become badly deteriorated by the time a complaint is made. By inspecting on a regular basis, the landlord would save money in the long run because repairs would be made before the problem became so severe.