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**New laws and tougher economy change the equation for renters.
Tenant rights guide gives renters the tools needed to navigate new world of renting.**

HOME Line releases *How to Be the Smartest Renter on Your Block*

Amid a tough rental market and with the 2010 Minnesota Legislature making significant changes to tenant – landlord law, HOME Line wrote *How to Be the Smartest Renter on Your Block* to help renters find, get and keep rental housing. Based on real-life concerns HOME Line hears from thousands of callers to its tenant hotline, the book gives the best ways to handle and avoid the most common rental problems.

How to Be the Smartest Renter on Your Block follows the rental process from beginning to end, with several chapters on more unique rental housing situations. It begins with advice on how to find and apply for an apartment, and shows how to understand the terms of a lease. Next, several chapters cover common issues a renter runs into once they've moved in – repairs, noisy neighbors, right to privacy, and more. The book also addresses what to expect when a renter moves out of an apartment, and how to make sure a security deposit is returned. Newer issues are also covered – landlord foreclosure and bed bug infestations. Lastly, the book provides advice on how tenants can organize together to hold their landlords and their elected officials accountable.

Mike Vraa, HOME Line's Hotline Director and Managing Attorney notes, "HOME Line's attorneys have more than 30 years of combined experience on Minnesota tenant-landlord law and helping tenants serve as their own advocates. We know the questions renters have, and we know how to answer them. We know what tenants need to know to be successful renters."

HOME Line provides free legal, organizing, education, and advocacy services so tenants throughout Minnesota can solve their own rental housing issues. Since 1992, HOME Line's Tenant Hotline has saved our 135,000 callers \$16.5 million as well as prevented an estimated 9,240 evictions. In 2010, more than 11,500 callers received free legal advice from HOME Line staff and volunteers.

The time is ripe for the release of this book. In 2010 the Minnesota Legislature made changes to tenant – landlord law, significantly improving the rules for application screening, attorney fees, late fees, along with many other issues.

"HOME Line's *How to be the Smartest Renter on Your Block* provides a fresh look at landlord-tenant law," notes Chip Halbach, executive director, Minnesota Housing Partnership. "But this book is much more than a restatement of the law; it provides tenants viable options for handling the variety of difficult rental situations they might run into."

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