

## **What's new with HOME Line!**

### **April through June 2010**

#### Policy Advocacy

- HOME Line and Legal Services Advocacy Project teamed up for a multi-year Minnesota Tenant Bill of Rights campaign to make Minnesota law more tenant-friendly. On May 11th, Governor Pawlenty signed HF 2668, making the portions of the Tenant Bill of Rights the law in Minnesota. The measures in this years Tenant Bill of Rights will make Minnesota law more tenant-friendly and save tenants millions of dollars through revisions to policies on tenant screening fees, late fees, attorney fees, and security deposits.

#### Tenant Hotline

- Our tenant hotline served 2,904 callers this quarter, prevented 18 evictions, helped tenants recover over \$25,000 in wrongfully withheld security deposits and rent abatement (rent returned for substandard living conditions).
- These numbers continue to show the growing use of technology to help tenants get the information they need. 9,040 visited our website this quarter, a 35% increase over the first quarter of this year, 2,859 accessed legal forms, a 19% increase over the first quarter, and 151 people emailed our attorneys for legal advice, a 43% increase from last quarter.
- The top four caller issues were: repairs, evictions, security deposits and foreclosures. Foreclosures continue to affect renters, accounting for 11% of all calls.

#### Tenant Organizing

- HOME Line Organizers sent out over 10,000 newsletters to low-income tenants throughout MN.
- HOME Line organizer and Section 8 Voucher holder/tenant leader weigh in on discussions with HUD to reform the Section 8 program in Washington D.C.
- HOME Line Organizers assisted tenants in 5 project based Section 8 buildings representing 289 units of affordable housing in Clearwater, Coon Rapids, Hopkins, Maple Grove, and St. Paul.
- Minnesota Tenants Alliance added 14 new members to its Action Network.
- HOME Line Organizers doorknocked 4 Metro buildings to do outreach to and to assist tenants who were having serious repair and utility issues in their buildings.

#### Treadmill-A-Thon

Like many Non-Profits, HOME Line faces reduced funding from foundations and government entities. HOME line staff, board, volunteers, and supporters came up with a unique fundraising idea, Treadmill-A-Thon. For 50 hours, over 80 participants ran on the Treadmill in HOME Line's office. Over 400 supporters donated nearly \$20,000 to HOME Line's first official fundraising event held June 14th and 15th. The event not only raised money, it promoted HOME Line's programs, educated people on tenants rights and advocacy and raised HOME Line's profile in the community. For more information on Treadmill-A-Thon, check out our website. <http://www.homelinemn.org/about-us/treadmill-a-thon/>