



# COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS—Los Angeles County

CoMO-LAC

Volume 1, Issue 4  
MAY 2005

## NEW NEWSLETTER SECTION “CoMO-LAC MEMBERS SPEAK OUT”

INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE

With this issue we begin a new column in our newsletter – part of a “Letters to the Editor Section”. We want to know how you feel and will print your article without editing; however we reserve the right to ask for modifications for the sake of good taste, and accuracy. See “Speak Out” on page 7 in this newsletter.

Our emphasis to problem resolution is **Communication and Unity**. We are voiceless unless we unite as a strong, **Active** group of mobilehome owners.

Also please communicate with us. We can't work on your problems unless we know about them. We are hearing more and more about “out of control managers who deprive us of our property and

civil rights.”

Please go to Yahoo and sign up for our message group to network with our hundreds of CoMO-LAC members. It is free of charge!

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/comolac/>

We continue to get new members at a good rate. CoMO-LAC is continuing its efforts to expand outside of Los Angeles County. To that end, we are recruiting members from San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. And we can say today we have members from each area. In fact we have members from over 40 mobilehome parks.

Today we are 300 members strong and adding about 100 new members/month.

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## KNOW YOUR Mobilehome Residency Law

Mobilehome park managers sometimes do not deal correctly with the issues of utility billing and utility systems maintenance.

MRL Section 798.38 states that park management shall post “in a conspicuous place” the utility rates used in calculating individual home utility bills. These shall be the rates used by the utility company providing the service to the park. If a third party billing company provides the billing, management shall show the name, address, and telephone number of that company on the utility bill. Management must also notify any homeowner whose utility meter is measuring utility usage of common park facilities, and arrange for compensation for that homeowner for the amount of the common area utility usage.

In addition, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Code, Section 739.5 (d), states park management is responsible for maintaining

the utility systems. Paragraph (a) allows management to charge a small “differential” fee on each monthly utility bill in order to accumulate a fund to cover the cost of utility systems maintenance. Management is required to use this money when system maintenance, repair, and/or replacement is done, and not try to “pass-through” these costs to the park residents. If your park tries to “pass-through” utility system maintenance costs to you, make sure they have exhausted this fund first.

Los Robles Mobilehome Park recently won a PUC Court case, including an appeal, that forced their park owner to use the repair fund, rather than a rent increase, to pay for electrical system repairs.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

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**ANTELOPE VALLEY MEETING**

Ralph Weber, CoMO-LAC VP and District Manager, sent out the following press release in April to advertise the first Antelope CoMO-LAC meeting. Ralph made several important observations about CoMO-LAC.

“The primary purpose of the meeting is to introduce Antelope Valley mobilehome owners to CoMO-LAC, a new organization created to give **timely information, advice, and assistance to mobilehome owners who are experiencing unjust abuses by mobilehome park owners or managers.** One benefit is this group will serve mobilehome owners in **the privacy of their homes without the requirement of belonging to a Chapter or Home Owners Association.**

Frank Wodley, CoMO-LAC President, was invited to speak. The April 23rd meeting was a huge success—over 45 people attended from six parks in the area (Thanks to all those who attended). Eighteen signed up for CoMO-LAC membership. Although a recruitment meeting, many asked Ralph and Frank questions concerning problems in their parks. Copies of the Mobilehome Residency Law and CoMO-LAC’s “Request for Assistance” form were handed out. Also many filled out the form “Please Help Us Serve You Better”.

The next Antelope Valley meeting will be scheduled in June. Make a point of attending. The next meeting will focus more on addressing your concerns—bring your questions, bring your friends and neighbors—help make the Antelope Valley a CoMO-LAC stronghold with active members fighting for their rights!

**SELLERS GUIDE**

Most of us own our mobilehome. It is a big investment and when parks interfere with our efforts to sell, we could lose thousands of dollars. This interference of sales of mobilehomes is one of the most serious violations of the MRL we encounter.

How does management interfere? By claiming we can’t sell “**BY OWNER**”, by claiming we must **USE THEM** or **THEIR AGENT** to sell, or by claiming the buyer must see management first. They put up signs at park entrances “Buyers must be approved prior to a sale or “Prospective buyers see Manager”. Often if you have secured a buyer (either by owner or with an agent of your choosing), Management will interfere by not qualifying or not meeting with your buyer.

**We must be diligent in our efforts to prevent these kinds of MRL violations. When you see this happening in your park let us know. Tell your neighbors and friends who are selling to be careful of such threats to our rights.**

Fortunately for us Clay Harrison, a CoMO-LAC member, has written a wonderful article entitled “**Sellers Guide**” for his website “[servingmobilehomeowners.org](http://servingmobilehomeowners.org)” and it is published here with his permission. Check out his website for other valuable information (See the “Sellers Guide” insert on page 3 & 4.

**NORTHRIDGE MHP PASS-THROUGH**

As you know, Northridge MHP is facing a \$29.12 per month per space pass-through for replacement of old water and gas lines and street work. Northridge residents submitted a 200 page document on December 22, 2004 in opposition to this pass-through; however they were later informed that LAHD did not receive it, although it was date stamped by LAHD!

Residents received a letter dated March 16th (postmarked the 21st) saying that the pass-through was **approved without a hearing**, LAHD gave residents only 15 days from the post marked date to submit individual protests to force LAHD to schedule a formal hearing date. Everyone can attend, but no one knows the agenda yet.

One resident sent in the first protest on March 31st by return signature receipt. To this date residents have heard nothing.

“Pass-through” is an agenda item for the up-coming MHPTF meeting @ LAHD 6640 Van Nuys Blvd. on April 27 at 11 a.m.

**HANDYMEN and ADVERTISING**

We soon will have a section on repair and handymen that other members recommend to do work on mobilehomes in your area. **We need your input!** Send us names of professionals you would recommend and use again yourself. CoMO-LAC is a family, let’s share with each other.

CoMO-LAC is considering accepting advertising in order to generate funds to help members. If you are interested in advertising in this Newsletter, please contact Frank Wodley at 818-886-6479.

It should take a couple months to be up and running with advertising, so look for it in a future newsletter..

## Information contained herein is intended to make the selling of a mobile/ manufactured home less stressful.

The Manufactured Home Owners Consulting Services is dedicated to the promulgation of affordable housing in all of California.

The following Sellers Guide is offered for your convenience.

### **A GUIDE TO SELLING A MANUFACTURED HOME©**

#### First Part

The foregoing is not intended as legal advice

This guide, intended to facilitate the sale of a home in a land lease community, has been developed by Clay Harrison, founder of the Manufactured Home Owners Consulting Services

[Clay Harrison](#) Resides in the Hillsdale Community, Sacramento County, and is the past GSMOL Reg 11 Mgr.

The sale of a home in a land lease community is a private transaction, between the buyer and seller. It is a transaction in which no outside element has the right to intervene, influence, make a determination, or otherwise engage themselves. The normal course of buyer and seller interaction, is protected by law, just as in any other act of commerce.

The management of land lease communities have no authority to inspect your home and space, and impose certain conditions, before you will be allowed to sell your home in place. That authority is vested entirely in the hands of the State Department of Housing and Community Development or other appropriate authority. You should not allow yourself to be intimidated.

Management's use of a check list as a means of determining the condition of your home or space, and imposing conditions to be met before sale, constitutes interference. Such a practice gives management undue influence in a private transaction in which they should not be involved.

The sale of a home in a land lease community, is no different, in terms of involvement, than the sale of a home elsewhere.

Management MAY (it is not required), approve a prospective resident of the community. PLEASE NOTE: THE DETERMINING FACTORS ARE STRICTLY LIMITED TO TWO AREAS ONLY. Those are: the ability to pay the rent (as of the moment, past credit history is not a consideration), and management's ability to determine, based on prior tenancies, if the purchaser will obey the rules of the park. This burden falls entirely upon management. Not the buyer or the seller.

#### **FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED STEPS TO BE TAKEN BY THE SELLER OF A HOME THAT IS TO REMAIN IN THE COMMUNITY**

Keep in mind that from this moment on, all communication with management should be in writing. If any problems develop, your remedies will be greatly diminished by relying on, he said, she said.

1. Read and understand, [section 798.74](#) of the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) paying particular attention to sub-section (a).
2. Deliver to management, in person, a signed notice to the effect that your home is about to be marketed, you are hereby requesting a copy of the new resident application, a statement of the rent to be charged to your buyer, and if you should complete a transaction of sale, this document constitutes due notice in accordance with [MRL 798.59](#).

If management has a policy of inspecting homes on resale, you should also include a request for a written summary of any repairs or improvements that will be required. Pay close attention to [MRL 798.73.5](#) Paying particular attention to sub sections (b) and (c).

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3. Do not, repeat, DO NOT provide management with any information concerning the sale. Price, terms, method of marketing, or any other information.
4. Do not, under any circumstances, direct a buyer to management. Handle all of the details yourself. There will be time enough for the buyer to meet with management, after, but only after the sale has been fully consummated.
5. Arm yourself with a [PURCHASE AGREEMENT](#) and Deposit of Sale. (from a stationary store, or write one yourself) Be sure and get a deposit. If the buyer won't provide a deposit, he/she is not a committed buyer. Be sure and include a clause in the purchase agreement that the sale is subject to the buyer being accepted as a resident.
6. Gear all of your advertising so as to be shown by appointment only, do not name the park in the ad. Most parks have a sign at or near the entrance that warns the public to not commit to buying a home until they have checked with management. DO NOT BE MISLED BY THIS. And do not let your prospects be misled. Have your customers come directly to your home. These signs have the effect of causing a house hunter to visit the office, to inquire as to what is for sale in the park. Be aware that management in some parks, are themselves engaging in the re-sales of homes. Management has been known to steer buyers to certain units only, and or, discourage a prospect on the basis of nefarious reasons. A buyer once reported to us that the park owner said: "we don't want your kind living here."
7. In order to protect yourself and the buyer, execute and have the buyer sign, in triplicate, the simple form that [requires management](#) to notify you and the buyer of acceptance in the park. ([see 798.74](#))
8. RESIDENT APPLICATION: Complete this form for the buyer, being very careful of the questions being asked. Some forms ask for bank account and credit card numbers, previous mortgage payments and mortgage company, a net worth statement, as well as other confidential information, that are of no concern to the park. Simply mark these: "non applicable" or NA.
9. Read, and understand [MRL 798.39](#) and explain to the buyer that management can levy a security deposit, in an amount not to exceed two months rent, and that it is refundable following a 12 month period during which the rent is paid in full, when due. The deposit can be in addition to the first month's rent, and can only be charged on or before initial occupancy. Which means; management cannot collect it as an afterthought.
10. You are now ready to escort your buyer to the office. Do not, REPEAT, DO NOT, send your buyer to the office unescorted. Chances are the buyer is just as naive as we all were when we first moved into a park, and will be subject to intimidation by management.
11. Either in step two or seven above, you and the buyer should have received copies of the rental agreement, the park's rules and regulations, and the MRL. Please note that in accordance with [798.15 of the MRL](#), these documents combined, constitute the rental agreement. The buyer should read the rental agreement very carefully. If he or she cannot understand it, they should have it explained by a competent person, preferably an attorney.
12. Please note: [MRL 798.74 \(b\)](#), allows for a fee to be charged to obtain a credit report. If management charges such a fee, that fee must be credited to the first month's rent AND, the burden of obtaining a credit report falls entirely upon management.

SPECIAL NOTE: It is assumed that you have assessed the sale value-not your emotional value-of your home. You have, to the best of your ability, learned what comparable homes, in your park, have recently sold for. And how much, if any, the rent was increased for the new resident. If the rent will be increased on your space-you received this information employing steps two and seven-you have what is known as vacancy de-control. Vacancy de-control has the effect of causing depreciation of value. For every \$10. increase in space rent, the home depreciates \$1,000.

That about sums it up. Questions or additional explanation may be directed to Clay Harrison 916 348 7262, seeclay@foothill.net

Good luck and we wish you the best in your new location.

# REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CoMO-LAC MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT (S): (Please attach copies of documents, letters, pictures that would help us understand the nature of your complaint. Explain if you have written/talked with management or tried to get assistance from another organization. Do you feel your complaint is common in your park? How would you like us to assist you?)

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR OUR FILES: (Do you have any organization for mobilehome owners in your park? If so, describe. Is it helping? Are there any residents active in helping others? If so, we would like to have their names and contact information—CoMO-LAC is seeking volunteers to help. Other information you think would help us in helping you and others?)

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SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM TO: CoMO-LAC, P.O. BOX 4821, CHATSWORTH, CA. 91313-4821

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT. EXPECT A REPLY UPON RECEIPT.**

## **CoMO-LAC Members Speak Out**

This is the beginning of a new column in our CoMO-LAC newsletter – part of a “Letters to the Editor Section”. We want to know how you feel and will print your article without editing; however we reserve the right to ask for modifications for the sake of good taste, and accuracy. These are opinions of our members, not necessarily those of CoMO-LAC.

### **Park Owners, Managers, and Homeowners: A Short Comment**

Mobilehome owners need the correct game plan when dealing with cantankerous owners and managers. The basis of dealing with them has three components. Each component is equally important. They are: (1) rental agreement, (2) park rules and regulations, and (3) mobile home residency law. Before doing battle with a manager, a homeowner should be well versed as to the terms of these three documents. My rental agreement spells out the responsibilities of management as to maintaining the club house and common grounds. Our Park rules and regulations govern the operation of the park. A homeowner who is not knowledgeable of these two documents is at a distinct disadvantage. And finally, when you are not well acquainted with the mobile home residency law, you are totally vulnerable to the whims and manipulations of park owners and managers.

Dwight Blackwell,  
La Verne Casitas

### **Stop Playing Games with Your Owner/Management Group**

It's time to stop playing games with your owner/management group. They are all now in a mode of "ignore" the homeowner. They have completely forgotten that they are employed by and work for US. WE PAY THEIR RENT/SALARY!

If YOU acted this way toward YOUR employer, you would be looking for a new job.

The simple solution we at Indian Hills found was take them to small-claims court in Chatsworth. Six homeowners had enough guts to pay the \$22 fee and sued the park owner & management company for a variety of non-service related items and failure to perform. The result was: three out-of-court money settlements, two of our three major projects underway and the firing of the management staff.

See? ... these people are completely helpless when they can't have an attorney to cover their rear-ends in court. They turned belly-up when we told them that CoMO-LAC was going to nail them to the wall, and they caved-in. The time has come to defend your rights as a homeowner, gather a core group of strong individuals and drive over to the court-house and blast this group of elite park owners and their mis-management companies that constantly harass & threaten you as an individual! ... It worked for us, it can work for you, too!

"UNITED, WE STAND!"

Jim Rowe  
Indian Hills MHP

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

**LEGISLATIVE CORNER**

**WARNING!      WARNING!**

It has come to our attention that a Northridge MHP resident received two calls—one from someone posing as a CoMO-LAC representative asking for donations of \$100.00, and another posing as a “State Tax Authority Representative” asking for information about CoMO-LAC members and stating that CoMO-LAC Board members were being paid.

Please note that your information on file with CoMO-LAC is kept confidential. We have never made, nor will we make, phone calls asking for donations. And no board member gets paid, all are volunteers as per our Bylaws.

CoMO-LAC is already a success and there are those that would like to discredit CoMO-LAC and its leadership, to make it less effective. This is a common practice in mobilehome parks to attack those who actively help their friends and neighbors.

SFV CoMO-LAC Meeting April 16th

The following suggestions were made:

1. Let’s have a meeting to compare individual park Rules and Regulations to the MRL.
2. Let’s start advertising in the newsletter to generate funds to be used for legal assistance.
3. Let’s ask members for recommendations of handymen and others who do repair work.
4. Let’s continue the monthly SFV meetings.
5. Let’s all share our problems and ways to resolve them.

Approximately 30% of the members of the State Assembly and State Senate represent districts in Los Angeles County. This is a powerful voting group that can significantly influence the rights and quality of life of mobilehome residents. Several of these legislators are on committees that must approve mobile home bills.

The following four bills are before the legislature now for consideration.

SB40 – (Senator Dunn), which authorizes the State to place in a receivership status any mobilehome park that repeatedly fails to correct serious health and safety violations. We feel this is one of the most powerful bills in recent memory regarding the well being of mobilehome residents.

SB106 – (Senator Dunn), which authorizes the continuation of mobilehome park inspections by the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) Agency.

SB765 – (Senator Dunn), which requires a mobilehome park owner to clean up sewage spills in a thorough and timely manner. Current Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) requires only that sewage system leaks be fixed, with no provision for cleanup.

AB954 – (Assemblymember Coto), which establishes the right of mobilehome resident organizations such as ours to meet privately without fear of interference by park management personnel. Management harassment of these organizations is all too frequent in California parks.

We feel these bills provide assurance of mobilehome residents’ enjoyment of their quality of life, and continue to protect their rights under the law.

We ask all our members to contact your State Assemblymember and State Senator and urge them to support these bills both in committee and floor votes. To find your legislators, check the Legislators/Legislation button on the CoMO-LAC website or your local phone directory.

**LA CITY—KNOW YOUR LAHD MHPTF REPRESENTATIVES**

The Mobile Home Park Task Force (MHPTF) is an advisory group established by the Rent Adjustment Commission (RAC) in order to provide a forum which allows full discussion of issues in mobilehome parks. The members are mobilehome owners, mobilehome park owners, and industry representatives who meet to discuss and resolve issues and provide advice and recommendations to the Rent Adjustment Commission. Current members are:

Representatives for mobilehome owners include: Don Brown, Pasadena, Tom Conroy, Pacific Palisades, Anthony Sansone, Canoga Park, Marion Steveson and Frank Wodley, Chatsworth.

Representatives for park owners include: Clint Lau, Hermosa Beach; Bill Schweinfurth, Burbank, Sharon Keyser, LA; and David Evans, Fraizer Park. A Task Force meeting is scheduled April 27th in Van Nuys—important issues discussed will be noted in the June CoMO-LAC Newsletter—including Interference of Sales by Parks, Criteria for a Pass-Through, 10% rent increases upon title change, and other issues. Look for it then.

## CoMO-LAC

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### LINKS

servingmobilehomeowners.org  
(Clay Harrison's Website)  
scmoa.org  
(Sonoma Co. M/H Owners Assoc.)  
cityofla.org/lahd  
(LA Housing Department)  
cesinaction.org  
(Coalition for Economic Survival)  
seniors.org  
(Congress of CA Seniors)

### MESSAGE BOARD

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/comolac/>

## COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS

### - LOS ANGELES COUNTY

#### Membership/Renewal Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Park Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Space # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Join: Dues are \$12.00/Year (\$15.00 after 6/30/05)**

Please mail to:

**CoMO-LAC, P.O. Box 4821, Chatsworth,  
California. 91313-4821**

## MAY MEETING SCHEDULE

**MAY 1ST. NOTE: E-mail Alert: CoMO-LAC will send all members with an email address a TEST email on May 1st. If you do not receive this, please call us and let us know. Either we do not have your email address or have an incorrect email address. This is important as we want to be able to communicate with you all between newsletters via e-mail. Thank You!**

**MAY 7th: Kona Kai and Riviera MHP.** Riviera Clubhouse, 8801 Eton Ave., Canoga Park Recruitment Meeting. 11:00 am-1:00 pm

**MAY 14th: SFV CoMO-LAC MEETING Chatsworth (Metrolink)** 11:00 am- 1:00 pm. Chamber of Commerce Meeting Room, 10038 Old Depot Plaza Rd, Chatsworth. (West-Canoga, South-Devonshire)

**MAY 14th: Oakridge MHP,** Oakridge Clubhouse. Sylmar Recruitment Meeting 2:00pm-4:00pm. Everyone invited.

**MAY 17th: LAHD Public Hearing,** Van Nuys, 11am. Marvin Braude Meeting Room at intersection of Van Nuys and Sylmar . All mobile-home owners should attend. Stand up and let the LAHD know what's going on!

**MAY 21st: CoMO-LAC BOARD MEETING,** Chatsworth (Metrolink) 11:00 am- 1:00 pm. Chamber of Commerce Meeting Room, 10038 Old Depot Plaza Rd, Chatsworth. (West-Canoga, South-Devonshire)

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