Healthy Home Guide
for Residents of The New San Marco Apartments

This document was prepared by LHB, Inc. on behalf of Center City Housing Corporation, National Equity Fund, Minnesota Green Communities, and Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, for The New San Marco Apartments in Duluth, MN.

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Healthy Home Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to The New San Marco Apartments!

This is a very special building, designed to be a comfortable, attractive and healthy environment in which residents can enjoy an improved quality of life. The building was also designed and built–and is cleaned and maintained–in ways that help protect the broader environment. The New San Marco is a pilot project for Minnesota Green Communities and meets their criteria for a healthy building.

The building features many nontoxic building materials, good ventilation and other strategies to improve indoor air quality and protect your health and well-being. Among the many benefits of these strategies is that they should help alleviate problems with asthma and other health issues for people who live and work in the building. The building was also designed to have reduced environmental impacts throughout its lifetime. For example, the building has energy-efficient and water-saving equipment and appliances, and many of its materials and surfaces are made of very durable materials that are easy to maintain and that should last a long time. These strategies save natural resources, reduce waste and lower the cost of operating the building.

In the Appendix at the end of this guide there is a list of some of the green (environmentally preferable and low-toxic) materials that are featured in your apartment home and in other parts of the building. The Appendix also includes a list of resources for more information on green housing.

To keep the building healthy and to conserve natural resources, it is important that its residents and maintenance staff clean, maintain, and operate the building using green and healthy products and practices. This guide presents some of the things that you can do to keep your home environment clean, green and healthy. Many of these things are easy to do, and all of them are worth the time and effort.

In addition to this guide, you should also have owner’s manuals for the appliances in your apartment. Please refer to those manuals for information on maintaining your appliances. If you do not have those manuals, request them from a building manager. And if anything breaks in your apartment, or if you need some other type of maintenance or repair help, please go to the front desk to request help from the building’s maintenance or housekeeping staff.

We hope that you will use this guide and that it will help you to maintain an enjoyable living environment at The New San Marco Apartments.
How to Keep Your Home Clean and Healthy

This part of the manual includes sections on housekeeping and cleaning, trash and recycling, pest control, and the building’s smoking policy.

A. HOUSEKEEPING AND CLEANING

It is important to take care of your home, to keep it clean and pest-free, and to clean it using safe products in order to help protect your health and maintain a pleasant living environment. Here are some recommendations on general housekeeping practices, cleaning products, and clothes cleaning.

General Housekeeping Tips

- **Sweep the floors** of your apartment regularly, preferably at least once a week, and mop the hard surface flooring whenever it starts to get dirty or sticky.
- **Wash any dirty dishes** daily and **clean kitchen surfaces** with a damp cloth whenever they are dirty.
- **Wipe up any puddles of water from your bathroom or kitchen floor** with a dry towel or rag. Mildew and mold can develop in areas that stay wet too long.
- If your toilet overflows and you can’t get it to stop, **report it to maintenance staff** immediately.
- If you see discoloration on surfaces (white, orange, green, brown, or black), see cracked or discolored grout, or smell a musty odor, it might be mold or mildew. **Clean the areas with baking soda or borax.** If the discoloration does not go away or gets worse, notify the building maintenance/management staff.
- Whenever there are odors, cigarette smoke, fumes from cleaning products or other chemicals, or excess moisture in your apartment, **Open the window or use a fan** to help air out the room.
- When you are using your stove, **turn on the rangehood fan.**
- **Clean the grease filter** on your stove’s rangehood when any grease builds up. If you have questions about how to clean the grease filter, please ask the housekeeping or maintenance staff.
- **Don’t use bristly brushes or other abrasive products** when cleaning, as they can leave scratch marks.
- Throw out and **replace used sponges and cloths/rags** if they’re dirty or smelly.
- When using a cleaning product, read its label and **follow the instructions** for using and storing the product.
- **Don’t mix different cleaning products together.** Some cleaning products can be extremely dangerous, and harmful to people and animals when mixed together.
- **Properly dispose** of a container of a chemical cleaning product that is not completely used up, by taking it to the city’s hazardous waste facility. See the next section on Trash and Recycling for more information on hazardous materials disposal.
Cleaning Products

Cleaning your home is important because it helps remove harmful contaminants such as mold and bacteria. But many conventional cleaning products can also cause health problems. The use of toxic cleaning products can be a particular problem for people who have health conditions such as asthma or allergies or who have chemical sensitivities or weak immune systems. Some cleaning products can cause headaches, dizziness, skin irritation, respiratory irritation and asthma, eye irritation or worse; some contain cancer-causing substances, reproductive toxins, central nervous system toxins, and endocrine system/hormone disruptors.

Fortunately, many alternative, non-toxic cleaning products are now available. And you can find some good, inexpensive products that are not even located in the cleaning products aisle at the store. Some very basic and multi-purpose household substances can be used as safe and effective alternative cleaning solutions for most household cleaning jobs; these substances include baking soda, white vinegar, lemon juice, and salt, as well as hydrogen peroxide and borax. Borax and baking soda are especially versatile household products; they can be used for a variety of purposes. For example, baking soda will clean and deodorize all kitchen and bathroom surfaces (just dissolve a few tablespoons in some warm water, or use the baking soda directly on a damp sponge). A combination of baking soda, hot water, and vinegar can clear drains. And borax, baking soda, or hydrogen peroxide can remove stains and mildew. Alternatively, using a mild soap (like dishwashing detergent or a liquid/Castile soap) with some water will clean most surfaces adequately.

Here is one recipe for a non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner (for cleaning countertops, floors, walls, etc.), but these ingredients can also be used separately:

1 quart warm water
1 teaspoon liquid soap (dishwashing or Castile soap)
1 teaspoon borax
½ cup undiluted white vinegar
Mix ingredients and store in a spray bottle.

If you’re selecting a more conventional cleaning product at the store, look for products that are labeled “nontoxic,” “low VOC” or “zero VOC,” and/or “biodegradable.” Also, look for unscented products (some people are allergic to certain fragrances) and products with recyclable packaging/containers.

Products to avoid:

Avoid the use of chlorine bleach unless it is absolutely necessary to use such a strong disinfectant. Hydrogen peroxide is a good alternative to chlorine bleach. Never use undiluted chlorine bleach or ammonia. Both of these can cause major respiratory irritation.

Read product labels, including the small print. As a general rule, you should avoid all products that are labeled “Danger—Poison.” Products labeled “Warning” are also dangerous, but less so, and products labeled “Caution” are the least harmful of the three, though they can still be hazardous. Also avoid products that are labeled “Corrosive,” “Severely Irritating,” “Highly Flammable,” or “Highly Combustible.” Avoid aerosols when possible; they often contain substances that are flammable and that can contribute to indoor air quality problems.
Avoid using most “air freshener” products, especially if their labels say that they contain paradichlorobenzene. Ingredients like this can cause headaches and other health problems. Avoid using mothballs; instead, store wool items in plastic bags or airtight containers. If there is a moth problem, you can kill the moth eggs by washing the affected garments in hot water or putting them in the freezer for a few days.

Clothes Cleaning

The New San Marco has two laundry rooms. The Efficiency laundry room is located adjacent to the lounge on the first floor. The GRH laundry room is located adjacent to the Dining Room on the lowest level (See Appendix VI – Building Maps).

Before you move into your new apartment, you should wash all of your clothes, bedding and other items made of fabric. If the items are quite dirty, choose the hot water setting on the washing machine to kill any germs. Once you’ve moved in, wash your clothes and bedding regularly: either once a week, or whenever you are starting to run out of clean clothes to wear, or whenever you have a full load of dirty laundry to clean, whichever comes first. When your laundry items are only slightly dirty, you can select the cold or warm water setting, which saves energy.

Choose a laundry detergent that is labeled as phosphate-free, biodegradable, and/or non-toxic. Also, consider selecting an unscented product. Like borax or Arm & Hammer Washing Soda. Only a small amount of detergent is necessary—do not use more than the amount recommended in the instructions on the box/container.

After your clothes are washed move them to the dryer. Select a temperature setting appropriate for your clothes. Typically hotter temperatures are better for heavy items like towels and jeans, etc., while cooler temperatures should be used for t-shirts, sheets, etc.

When you are done drying your clothes, please clean the lint out of the dryer’s lint filter. This prevents the lint from becoming a fire hazard and will help the dryer work better for the next person who uses it.
B. TRASH AND RECYCLING

Your apartment should have a small blue recycling can along with a trash can. Before putting recyclable bottles and cans into the blue bin, please rinse them out with water, so that they don’t attract pests. Please put all recyclable materials into the blue can, separated from the trash.

There is a trash room on every floor of the building. Empty the contents of your blue recycling can into the trash room’s recycling bin and your trash can’s contents into the trash room’s trash chute at least once a week, or every evening if there are any pests in your apartment. You should wash out your recycling can and trash can as often as is necessary to remove sticky residues that might attract pests.

The materials that can be recycled within Duluth are:

- **Paper**: Newspaper, magazines, “junk” mail, boxboard, phone books
- **Aluminum** (including bi-metal) cans
- **Glass** bottles and jars (remove and throw away lids, rinse and drain)
- **Plastic bottles** (#1 and #2, remove and throw away the cap, rinse, drain and flatten bottle. Check the number on the bottom of the bottle).
- **Plastic tubs** and lids (#2, 4, and 5 only: check the number on the bottom)
- **Spray cans** (empty)
- **Tin** (steel) cans

Materials that cannot be recycled include: plastic grocery bags, improperly sorted material, tissue or gift wrap, egg cartons, food or grease contaminated material, pizza boxes, paper cartons from frozen foods or other wax or plastic coated papers such as milk cartons, miscellaneous metals (hangers, pipe, pots and pans, etc), window glass, light bulbs, ceramic materials, dishes or drinking glasses, miscellaneous plastics such as toys, dishes, whipped topping or margarine tubs, lawn ornaments. **Do not put these types of items or any trash into recycling bins.**

All of the recyclables listed above can be put into any recycling bin in the building; the items do not need to be separated according to the different types of recyclable materials. They just need to be kept separate from garbage.
Hazardous Waste Disposal

**Hazardous waste materials may not be thrown in the garbage.** They must be dropped off at the appropriate city facility for safe disposal or recycling so that they don’t contribute to the contamination of the air, water, or soil.

Hazardous waste materials include:
- chemical cleaning supplies
- batteries (all types)
- fluorescent lamps/light bulbs
- paint, paint thinners, primers, stains and other finishes
- toxic glues and adhesives
- medical/biohazard waste (including needles)
- pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizer
- computers, TVs, and other electronic equipment
- printer/copier ink/toner
- used motor oil
- compressed gases

For more information, see Appendix III. Recycling Brochure – St. Louis County, MN.
C. PEST CONTROL

It is important to keep your apartment free of pests (such as cockroaches, rodents, etc.), as pests can carry disease. If you find bugs, ants, rodents, or other pests in your apartment, report it to the building’s maintenance staff right away.

Please do not use toxic pesticide products, such as Raid spray. Most pesticides are poisons, and they are often poisonous to humans as well as to pests. Studies have linked some pesticides to cancer, birth defects, and neurological and immune system disorders, as well as allergies. Pesticides should only be used as a last resort and in very small amounts. As a general rule, avoid products that are labeled “Danger—Poison.” If ants are in your apartment, try sprinkling borax where they are coming in; ants do not like boric acid. If you decide that you must use some chemical pest control products, consider using only baits (for cockroaches and ants). And for rodents, traps should be used rather than poisons. Building management staff will be able to help you with these issues.

But the best strategy is to keep pests from coming into your apartment in the first place, rather than to get rid of them later. Standing water can attract pests, as can food—especially greasy foods and sweets—left out on counters or not stored properly. If your apartment is clean and dry, it isn’t likely that pests will want to live there. The following are some specific steps that you can take to keep pests from finding food, water, or hiding places in your apartment.

**Pest Prevention Tips**

- Clean up any open, unsealed food or crumbs. Wrap and seal any leftover food and put it in the refrigerator, or in a cabinet if tightly sealed.
- Do not leave dirty dishes out overnight.
- Clean up spills or sticky substances from all floors and surfaces.
- Keep your kitchen surfaces clean (counters, cabinets, sink, floors, stove, microwave, etc.). Be sure to clean up any grease with soapy water, and dry off any wet areas.
- Sweep, mop, and vacuum regularly.
- Rinse bottles, cans, and containers before putting them in the recycling bins. Clean out the recycling bins to remove sticky residues.
- Take your garbage and recyclables to the trash room on your floor at least once a week. Move garbage and recyclables to the trash room every evening if there are any pests in your apartment.
- Minimize clutter and paper piles that can provide hiding places for pests.
- If you notice any water leaks or moisture-damaged materials in your apartment, report the issue to building maintenance staff immediately.

**Bed Bug Prevention and Control**

Bed bugs are small insects that feed on blood. They are nocturnal, meaning they are active at night. Adult bed bugs are about 1/4-inch long and 1/8-inch wide; younger ones are smaller (often about 3/16 of an inch long, or the size of a pinhead). They have flat, reddish-brown bodies with six legs, and after feeding, they become round and red. They give off a sweet, musty odor. Their eggs are white and very small, and their excrement appears as tiny brown or black spots. Bed bugs are typically found on mattresses, box springs and bed frames, clothing, bedding, furniture
or any dark cracks, seams or crevices in walls or floors. They can travel through water pipes, wall voids, and ducts, and can spread from room to room. Some people who are bitten by them get itchy welts on their skin.

It is critical to prevent bed bugs from being brought into the building. Here are some rules for prevention, as well as tips for getting rid of them if they do appear.

**Preventing the Introduction of Bed Bugs**

- **Before you move in and bring clothing and bedding into your new apartment, wash the items in hot, soapy water and dry them on the hottest dryer setting.** Freezing the materials at less than 0 degrees for several days is also known to kill bed bugs. Ask building management if the second method is an option.
- When bedding is brought into the building for washing or is removed from your unit, seal the items (e.g., sheets, blankets, pillows, and pillow cases) in a plastic bag before transporting them into or through the building to avoid spreading the infestation to other areas.
- **Used mattresses and bed frames are not allowed into the building.**
- The mattress provided in your unit is encased in a permanent plastic covering to prevent bug infestations. If you notice that the plastic covering is torn, please notify the building management staff.
- **Eliminate excess clutter,** particularly near beds and clothes, to reduce the number of places where the bugs can hide.

**Getting Rid of Bed Bugs**

- **Notify building management or maintenance staff if you notice any bed bugs in your apartment.**
- Wash any infested bedding or clothing with hot, soapy water and dry it on the hottest dryer setting. Or the owner or building manager might freeze the materials at less than 0 degrees for several days.
- Use hot, soapy water or rubbing alcohol to wipe surfaces where the bugs are living.
- Vacuum cracks, crevices, and other hiding places in walls, floors and furniture where adult bed bugs or eggs are found. Dispose of the vacuum contents in a sealed trash bag.
- If a mattress with bed bugs on it is torn and/or infested, it will probably need to be thrown out, as the bugs can live inside the mattress where they can’t be reached. Do not treat mattresses with insecticides unless building managers can verify that the treatment is non-toxic to humans.
- Eliminate excess clutter particularly near beds and clothes, to reduce the number of places where the bugs can hide.
- Have building maintenance staff seal up any cracks where the bugs are living.
D. SMOKING POLICY

Smoking is not allowed in any of the common areas of the building. It is only allowed inside apartment units or outside the building. If you smoke outside, please do not stand near the doors to the building or any open windows.

If you smoke, please use an ashtray and throw away the butts in the trash. Make sure butts are not still burning when you throw them in the trash. Do not let cigarettes or cigarette butts burn the counters, floors, carpets or other surfaces in your apartment, and please do not drop cigarette butts on the walkways or sidewalks outside. Thank you.
How to Save Energy and Water

Conserving energy and water resources benefits the environment in a variety of ways. For example, using less electricity reduces fossil fuel emissions from power plants, which reduces air and water pollution, and that helps protect everyone’s health.

In addition, the less energy and water used in the building, the less money the building owner will have to pay for these utilities. The more money the owner saves on utility bills, the more funding will be available to support services and programs that could benefit you and the other residents of the building.

Saving Energy

**Lights**

- **Turn off lights and any electronic equipment** whenever you’re leaving your apartment or when you do not need them to be on.
- **When the light bulbs burn out in your apartment, notify building staff,** who will provide energy-efficient replacement bulbs for you. Be careful not to break the fluorescent bulbs—they contain small amounts of mercury, which is a hazardous substance. Do not throw away fluorescent light bulbs. The building’s staff should take them to the city’s hazardous waste facility or to an approved collector for proper disposal.
- **Bathrooms have occupancy sensor light switches** that will automatically turn the light off after a set amount of time when no activity is detected. You can, however, still turn the lights off with the switch when you do not need them to be on.

**Heat**

- **Make sure that the temperature in your apartment is comfortable and the heater is not set too high.** During cool months, the highest temperature that a thermostat needs to be set for is about 68 or 69 degrees, and it should be set at a lower temperature or turned off when you are not at home, during warm times of the year, and at night. If the building temperature is too hot or cold, or if your heater will not turn off, notify the building management.
- **Do not leave the heat on when you have the window open,** or open the window when you have the heat on – Having the window open at the same time that the heat is on wastes energy so only do this for a short period of time while smoking or to air out the room.
- **Keep your heater clean and dusted.**
- **Do not place furniture next to the heater** as that can block the heat from entering the rest of the room.

**Other**
- **Clean the dust off of your refrigerator coils** twice a year. Remove the grill at the bottom of the refrigerator and clean the coils in front and back; pull the refrigerator out to sweep and dust behind it. If you would like to be shown how to do this, or if your refrigerator is not working properly, contact building maintenance staff.

- In the laundry room, **clean out lint from dryer lint filters** before or after each load of laundry. This helps the machines run more efficiently and prevents the lint from becoming a fire hazard.

- Turn off computers and TVs when not in use.

- Unplug chargers when not in use.

### Saving Water

- When using a sink or the shower, **don’t run the faucet longer than is necessary for your task**. When you turn a faucet off, make sure that it is all the way off.

- If you hear the sound of dripping or trickling water in your apartment or notice that your faucets are leaking, or your toilet is running too long after it has been flushed and you can’t get it to stop, **notify the building’s maintenance staff** right away so that they can fix the leak.

- **Try not to take really long showers.** Keep shower time under 10 to 15 minutes.

- When using a clothes washer, **try to clean fairly full loads** whenever possible. For small loads of laundry, select a light-load setting—if the option is available on the washing machine—so that less water is used.
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I. Green Materials and Systems in The New San Marco Apartments
(partial list)

This is a summary list of some of the green materials, finishes, furnishings, systems, equipment, and appliances that are featured in The New San Marco Apartments:

- Re-use of existing urban site next to bus routes and within walking distance of downtown.
- Overall energy efficiency—34 % more efficient than state code.
- High efficiency steam heating and hot water system.
- Natural daylighting, energy-efficient lighting and controls.
- Super-insulated building envelope.
- Ceiling fans in efficiency units.
- Energy Star appliances.
- Low maintenance landscaping not requiring irrigation.
- Continuous ventilation of bathrooms for moisture control.
- Healthier, low-VOC paints, sealants, and adhesives.
- Durable building materials—brick exterior, solid surface flooring.
- Construction waste management plan was used to reduce waste sent to landfill.
- All windows are operable and are energy efficient.
- Bathrooms have occupancy sensors that turn off lights when not in use.
- Showerheads are 1.5 gpm restricted/low flow type.
- Toilets are 1.6 gpm low-flow type and use less water than traditional toilets.
II. Resources for More Information on Green Housing

Green Communities
www.greencommunitiesonline.com

Global Green USA
www.globalgreen.org

U.S. Green Building Council
www.usgbc.org

Building Green
www.buildinggreen.com

Healthy Building Network
www.healthybuilding.net

Energy Star
www.energystar.gov

Greater MN Housing Fund
www.gmhf.com/research/construction/green_building/projects.htm
III. Recycling Brochure – St. Louis County, MN

Attached is a copy of the St. Louis County, MN recycling guide. The guide also includes information on hazardous waste and drop-off locations. For further information or questions, please contact the St. Louis County Solid Waste Department at (218) 749-9703 or 1-800-450-9278.
IV. DTA Transit Map

Below is a copy of the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) general information and attached is a routes map showing all bus and streetcar routes in the area. For questions about DTA service, call (218) 722-SAVE.

Duluth Transit Authority

General Information

The Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) provides regular route and STRIDE (Special Transit Ride) services in the cities of Duluth, Proctor, and Superior, Wisconsin. The DTA operates 41 buses during peak hours on 27 routes.

All DTA buses are wheelchair accessible and seasonally equipped with bike racks. For the safety and security of its passengers, DTA buses and the Downtown Transit Center are constantly monitored by security cameras.

The DTA, which was legislatively created by the Minnesota State Legislature in 1969, is governed by a nine-member board of directors, who regulate all policy matters for the Authority.

DTA base fare is $1.25 for adults and $1.00 for riders 18 and under during weekday peak hours. The weekday off-peak and weekend fare is $.60 cents for everyone. Peak hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the week. Transfers are FREE.

The DTA also offers unlimited-ride 31-Day passes for adults and teens, University-subsidized U-Pass Program for local colleges, and an employer-subsidized Commuter Pass Program.

The DTA maintains 122 neighborhood and passenger shelters and park & ride lots in Woodland and Piedmont.

Contact DTA at:

Transit Information Line
Phone: 218.722.SAVE
Fax: 218.722.4428

Customer Service
Phone: 218.722.4426 Ext. 325
Fax: 218.722.4428

Lost and Found
Phone: 218.722.4426 Ext. 325
Fax: 218.722.4428

Duluth Transit Authority
2402 W Michigan St
Duluth MN 55806
218.722.SAVE
218.722.4426
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1. Emergency Phone Numbers
   - On-Site Security:
   - Police: 911
   - Fire: 911
   - To Report Vandalism:

2. Local Hospitals and Clinics:

3. Local Weather
   - Radio Station(s):
   - TV Station(s):

4. Emergency and Evacuation Instructions:
   - For Tornadoes:
   - For Blizzards/Snow Storms:
   - For Fire:
   - For a Gas Leak:
   - For a Health Emergency:
   - For a Safety Emergency (e.g. someone with a gun, or threatening bodily harm, etc.):