



# WOODLAND PARK a p a r t m e n t s

For Immediate Release  
Contact: Andrew Zacks  
Phone: 415-595-4321

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## **Court Rules East Palo Alto Rent Board Acted Improperly**

A San Mateo County judge ruled on Friday that East Palo Alto's Rent Stabilization Board has not been properly constituted for over a year. The Court also ruled in favor of numerous requests by Woodland Park Management Company, manager of more than seventeen hundred apartments in East Palo Alto, forcing the City and its Rent Board to follow the provisions of its own rent ordinance.

Woodland Park Management and lawyers representing the City appeared in front of San Mateo Court Judge Quentin Kopp to argue that East Palo Alto Rent Board's failure to properly process rent registration documents was illegal. The court ruled that Woodland Park's attempt to comply with the law requiring the company to submit annual rent registration documents and pay an annual fee was unlawfully rebuffed by the City on June 30, 2008.

Additionally, the Court ruled that East Palo Alto's failure to appoint landlord representatives to the City's Rent Board meant that the Rent Stabilization Board was illegally constituted. City Law requires that the Rent Board have a total of ten members. Three are required to be homeowner representatives (with one being an alternate), four are required to be renter representatives (with one being an alternate), and three are required to be landlord representatives (with one being an alternative). The East Palo Alto City Council has not appointed a landlord representative to the Board for at least the last 18 months.

Judge Kopp also ruled that East Palo Alto's failure to complete its obligation to mail out rent registration statements and bills by the required June 1, 2008 deadline means that the City could not validly impose a higher registration fee after that date. City Law requires that East Palo Alto landlords register their units in June each year. The City also requires that landlords pay a registration fee each year. Woodland Park Management attempted to comply with the law and submitted registration forms and fees in late June to meet the deadline for all their apartments in East Palo Alto. The forms and fees were returned by the City. The city attempted to impose higher fees after the legally set deadline. The Court ruled against the city on this matter.

"My clients have bent over backward to work with the City, to obey the law and follow the rules," said Andrew Zacks, of Zacks Utrecht and Leadbetter of San Francisco the attorney representing Woodland Park in Court. Zacks added, "The Judge clearly stated that the Rent Board acted improperly and, in my opinion, the Rent Board acted as if they were above the law by illegally excluding landlords from participation in the decision."

(more)

5 Newell Court • East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Tel: (650) 324-6180 • Fax: (650) 324-1202  
Leasing: (650) 324-5220 • Emergency: (650) 924-0319



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Zacks concluded by saying, “Clearly the Judge agreed with us that it’s just plain wrong to exclude anyone’s input from the governmental process. If the City won’t even obey its own laws, what kind of message does that send to the community?”

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