

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHFA offering assistance to Swissvale apartment residents

Online apartment locator managed by PHFA can help identify nearby affordable rentals

HARRISBURG – The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency has reached out to local government officials offering assistance to residents of an 18-unit Swissvale apartment building who recently were given 30-day eviction notices due to reported hazardous conditions in the structure.

The agency has already developed a customized report that local assistance providers can use with residents to help them find affordable apartments nearby that are currently available. This information has been presented to local officials.

The customized report was developed using the online apartment locator resource available at www.PaHousingSearch.com. This Web tool helps people find rental units in Pennsylvania with amenities and features of most interest to them, and there is no cost to use it. Landlords also can enter apartment listings at no charge. Additionally, PHFA has offered to provide an expert on-site to help residents with their housing search.

“The online apartment locator proved its value following the flooding in eastern Pennsylvania last September when we used it to assist families displaced from their homes,” said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Brian A. Hudson Sr.

“It can help these residents in the same way. They can get the apartment locator information from their local assistance providers, or they can go directly to PaHousingSearch.com and easily do their own apartment search. This information should be of tremendous help for them in finding alternative affordable housing.”

People without Internet access can call a help center weekdays from 9 am until 8 pm to get assistance from an operator, who will perform an apartment search for them. The toll-free number for the help center is 1-877-428-8844.

PaHousingSearch.com was launched last April and now receives at least 30,000 visits monthly from people doing apartment searches or landlords entering listings. It is funded by four state agencies: the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Public Welfare, the Department of Community and Economic Development and PHFA.

The online apartment locator is open for use by everyone – not just by people in emergency situations.

The apartment building in Swissvale affected by the evictions is the former Longfellow School located on McClure Avenue next to the Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale. According to news reports, residents of the building have until the end of February to find new housing.

“We are concerned for the people affected by these evictions, and PHFA will continue to monitor the situation to look for other ways we can help,” said Hudson.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Reporters wanting a local interview with PHFA are asked to please contact Brenda Wells, director of the western region for the agency. She is based in Pittsburgh. Brenda can be reached at 412-429-2868 during normal business hours.

About PHFA

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency works to provide affordable homeownership and rental apartment options for older adults, low- and moderate-income families, and people with special housing needs. Through its carefully managed mortgage programs and investments in multifamily housing developments, PHFA also promotes economic development across the state. Since its creation by the legislature in 1972, it has generated \$10.5 billion of funding for more than 147,000 single-family home mortgage loans and 83,000 rental units, while saving the homes of more than 46,000 families from foreclosure. PHFA programs and operations are funded primarily by the sale of securities, not by public tax dollars. PHFA is governed by a 14-member board.

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