

CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Unbelievable or outrageous true stories about everyday experiences in real estate management BY LINDA D. REDMOND, CPM®, ARM® | ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL LUKAS

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?



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ONE DAY A TENANT CALLED TO REPORT A BURNING RUBBER SMELL IN HIS OFFICE. I went to his office building and with my “keen sense of smell” deduced that one of the HVAC units had thrown a belt. I called my HVAC company and they checked out the units but could not find anything. The tenant, perplexed, asked, “Do you think it’s a skunk?”

I immediately dismissed the tenant’s skunk possibility. The next morning I went by the office and the odor was stronger. At first I thought it had a rotten banana and burning rubber smell. It wasn’t until I went outside to the HVAC mechanical room that I realized my tenant had been right all along. I definitely smelled skunk!

I immediately went online and researched how to remove skunk smell from a building. I went to the local pet supply store and picked up a bottle of odor remover. When I returned I once again sniffed out the skunk smell and traced it to an electrical outlet in the office wall. It was then I realized the skunk had

sprayed inside the wall. Eight feet of sheetrock, all the insulation and the carpet had to be removed, and the concrete had to be sprayed with the odor remover.

It was then that we found a hole underneath the ductwork coming into the building.

I set two live animal traps outside the mechanical room and to my surprise we caught two skunks in one trap! They also sprayed and the odor got into our fresh air intake. The entire building soon reeked of freshly trapped skunks.

In a panic, I suddenly remembered hearing about a new odor removing product that another IREM Member was promoting. I called her for the product name and soon I had it, ready to try out! At first I was afraid the lemongrass basil scent coming from the machine would just cover the smell up and then I would get complaints of perfumed skunk! But to my surprise, within 30 minutes the building started to smell better. In about 4 hours the office was starting to smell better. And in 5 days the machine had completely removed the odor. My tenants were quite appreciative!



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