

Finding Extra-Value Apartments Easier; Check New Website for AMA FIVE STAR Certified Properties Statewide

If you're looking for an apartment to rent in the Valley, Tucson, Sierra Vista or Yuma, then consider properties that are committed to providing renters and their families more value for the dollar and caring customer service.

They are certified in the voluntary Arizona Multihousing Association (AMA) FIVE STAR program. These communities partner with nearby homeowners, businesses and other rental housing to seek ways to make the neighborhood safer, cleaner and more attractive, vibrant and appealing to all who live and work there.

A list of the more than 100 certified communities is on the Arizona Multihousing Association website www.azama.org. On the home page, scroll down on the right side of the screen to "RENTERS' RESOURCES." Click on it then click on "FIVE STAR-Certified Properties" for a complete listing by city and town or in alphabetical order.

"Too many apartment communities operate as 'communities unto themselves,' states AMA FIVE STAR Subcommittee Chairperson Allen Glidewell. "They are isolated from surrounding homeowners and businesses. This can result in mistrust, skepticism and resistance to apartment properties, which further fragments the neighborhood to the detriment of all who live there. FIVE STAR seeks to change this."

Those properties operate with a higher standard of management practices and neighborhood involvement than required for basic membership in the statewide trade association for the apartment and rental-housing industry.

FIVE STAR properties join a neighborhood alliance, block watch, or homeowners' association. If none exists, they seek to form such a partnership.

The rental communities host two or more annual neighborhood activities such as pool safety for children, identity and vehicle theft prevention tips, removing graffiti in the area, serving as a neighborhood voter registration and polling site for elections, or joining a neighborhood task force to address local issues.

They participate in the police-run Crime Free Multi-Housing Program and conduct criminal, credit and rental history background checks of potential apartment residents, as allowed by law.

Among other FIVE STAR requirements are: keeping the exterior and interior of all units in compliance with all applicable state and local health, safety and nuisance laws and ordinances; abiding with federal, state and local fair housing laws; complying with the Arizona Residential and Landlord Tenant Act; and joining the FAX NET 1 criminal information faxing service.

For homeowners and businesses, AMA FIVE STAR helps attract and retain quality renters.

“They take pride in where they live,” continues Glidewell. “They don’t cause trouble and care about the safety, appearance, vibrancy and economic health of the neighborhood – just as the homeowners and businesses do.

“These qualities help property values, both residential and commercial, and the overall appeal of the neighborhood.”

Besides the website, information about AMA FIVE STAR is available by calling the association at 602-296-6200 or toll-free 800-326-6403.

Potential renters also can look for the FIVE STAR logo in the advertisements of