



Let's be honest here. Do you religiously pull in the garbage can by 5:00 PM the very next day without fail? Do you fawn over your lawn as if it were your child, ne'er a weed allowed in? And of course, always be sure that you've not parked your car on the street overnight?

If the answer was no, then you probably want to avoid a home with a Home Owner's Association attached to it. Some of their rules can seem meticulous and silly, but regardless of your feelings on them, they *are* rules and there can be fines involved.

If the home you're looking at has an HOA, ask if you can be given a copy of the rules, and how fees will be handled. Our own policy is to make the renter hire a yard person if three warning letters or fines about the front yard have been received, and the payment for the yard person comes out of the renter's pocket. This *is* in the lease.

If you're moving into an HOA, make sure you get a handle on all of the rules and understand them, then do your best to be a good neighbor and abide by these rules, as you've agreed to them.

