InThrMa Solutions for Landlords

InThrMa has helped Rich Zellmer, a Boston landlord, cut energy costs, improve tenant comfort, and increase managerial control over his properties. His three rental properties were originally single family homes, and were later converted to separate rental units sharing a common boiler. Although this configuration prevented him from having to buy a separate boiler for each rental unit, it presented significant financial and management drawbacks. Learn how Rich addressed multiple challenges with InThrMa EMS.

The Problem

Multiple tenants, one thermostat

In each property, only one tenant had thermostat control for the entire building. "Everyone has a different comfort level, and I used to get calls from tenants asking me to ask their neighbors to turn up the heat. It was bad for my tenants, and it was a really inefficient use of my time. "

Tenant misuse

Because tenants weren't paying for heating, they had no incentive to conserve energy. They would leave the heat on while at work or open the windows rather than turning down the thermostat. This type of use resulted in $400 monthly winter heating bills for each property. "Of course, I eventually have to pass these costs on to tenants through increased rent, but then my properties look overpriced compared to others."

The Solution

Rich considered installing a zonal system to give every tenant temperature control over their unit, but found it to be prohibitively expensive for his 11 tenants. What's more, while zonal controls would address their comfort needs, it would not solve the problem of tenant misuse. As landlord, he would still have to pay for the heating.

Using InThrMa's remote monitoring and control technology, Rich has found the most affordable solution to address these problems. With the installation of an internet-enabled thermostat from one of InThrMa's partners, Rich can control the thermostat himself from his web portal or smart phone. Remote temperature sensors in each apartment allow him to optimize the heating for each unit.

The Benefits

Reduced Costs

Remote monitoring and control has reduced Rich's winter heating bill, on average, by $160 per month. The majority of this comes from regaining control over thermostat settings from tenants. "Because I pay the utility bill, I have an incentive to use the system more efficiently. I've been able to identify and reduce a great deal of wasted heating. My tenants know that the by default, the heat shuts off from 10-4. If they plan on being home during that time, they let me know and I can change the setting immediately."

InThrMa's diagnostics and alerts have enabled Rich to spot other opportunities to cut costs. The remote temperature sensor alerted him when a rental unit was significantly cooler than the others. This helped him find a leak in the ductwork. "I've also had tenants who prefer cooler apartments, and just open windows to achieve this. The temperature sensors let me know, and I can follow up with the tenant to install ventilation covers. They are more comfortable, and I save money."

Rich estimates that the system pays for itself several times over each year. Tenant comfort and managerial control are additional benefits.

Improved Tenant Comfort

InThrMa can measure temperature in multiple locations using remote sensors. Rich can view this from his computer and adjust the thermostat to optimize the comfort of all of his tenants. "I am able to fine tune the thermostat to make sure all rental units are within a comfortable margin"

Better Managerial Control

All of Rich's thermostats and temperature sensors can be accessed and controlled from a web portal. The simple interface makes manual overrides to one or all of the thermostats simple. "It takes me one minute to change a thermostat setting when a tenant calls me."

Landlord temperature compliance

Rich is required to maintain a minimum indoor temperature for his tenants when the outdoor temperature crosses certain thresholds. InThrMa has helped Rich accomplish this. InThrMa gathers real time weather data given Rich's zip codes and automatically changes his thermostat settings to ensure compliance. In addition, InThrMa maintains an audit trail of daily temperatures, 24x7. If landlords are ever taken to court by tenants for tenant comfort related matters, this can be an important tool in the landlord's defense.

For more information click or call: www.inthrma.com info@inthrma.com (510) 256-0258