

Landlords Intentionally Damage Rent Regulated Apartments



📅 December 19, 2016 (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/landlords-admit-intentionally-damaging-rent-regulated-apartments/>)

👤 Alex Verman (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/author/alexvee/>)

📁 Tenants vs. Landlords (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/category/tenants-vs-landlords/>)

On Tuesday, November 29, two infamous slumlords admitted to terrorizing tenants out of their rent stabilized Brooklyn apartments in order to flip the buildings and raise local market prices.

The Israel brothers Joel and Amrom (<https://rentlogic.com/landlord/utfsb9ff3248qt5r>) were indicted last year after tenants at their properties in Bushwick, Greenpoint, and Williamsburg, Brooklyn, complained to the City of constant harassment and intentional property damage. The landlords pleaded guilty to engaging in a scheme to defraud, plus three additional accounts of unlawful eviction.

At a hearing in the Brooklyn branch of New York Supreme Court, the two confessed to

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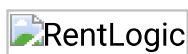


shows-nyc-rent-draining-pockets-bronx-hit-hardest/), and Manhattan are engaging in unlawful tactics to force their renters out. The Israel brothers intended on renovating the properties into luxury units and charging market rate prices.

Recent RentLogic NYC apartment listings put market rate prices for a one-bedroom apartment for rent in Bushwick (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/affordable-apartments-rent-bushwick/>) at around \$2,000 per month.

Residents at 98 Linden Street (<https://rentlogic.com/building/98-linden-street-brooklyn>), the Bushwick building owned by the Israels, complained to the NYC HPD (Housing Preservation Department) and NYC DOB (Department of Buildings) of unliveable conditions, including two apartments without working utilities for 17 months.

The Bushwick property has earned an “F-” rating on RentLogic consistently for the past seven years, racking up 10 severe violations over the last three months alone. The brothers owned two other properties in Bushwick. Both buildings — 386 Woodbine Street (<https://rentlogic.com/building/386-woodbine-street-brooklyn>) and 324 Central Ave. (<https://rentlogic.com/building/324-central-avenue-brooklyn>) — are rated “F” on RentLogic.



The two also owned the “F-” rated 300 Nassau Avenue (<https://rentlogic.com/building/300-nassau-avenue-brooklyn>) in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. In October 2016, former residents were finally able return to their homes after three years of displacement. They were forced to leave in 2013 when the building’s slumlords intentionally destroyed the electrical, heating, and water systems (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/gentrification-brooklyn-developers-demolish-rent-stabilized-housing/>) in the middle of winter.

These tactics sound extreme. But for Brooklyn landlords, it’s only the tip of the iceberg. The Israel brothers admitted (http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/29/nyregion/brooklyn-landlords-joel-and-aaron-israel-arrested.html?_r=0) to everything from demolishing kitchens and bathrooms in their buildings, to inviting strangers to use drugs in common areas and patrol the building hallways with baseball bats.

In some cases, the switch from rent-stabilized prices to market rate is astronomical. Since purchasing their “D-” rated Williamsburg building at 15 Humboldt Street (<https://rentlogic.com/building/15-humboldt-street-brooklyn>), the brothers evicted every single rent-stabilized tenant there. The new renters pay at least \$3,000 per month for each apartment unit. In the summer of 2016, average prices for a studio apartment for rent in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, were over \$3,000 per month (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/much-nyc-studio-apartment-near/>). Since 1990, average rents in Williamsburg and Greenpoint increased by 78.7 percent (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/top-5-fictional-nyc-apartments-girls-gentrification/>)

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his tenants out of their rent stabilized apartments in the East Village and Chinatown, NYC.

Croman’s infamous attempts to destabilize affordable housing in Manhattan in order to profit from market rate rents earned him 20 felony charges in 2015. Many of his buildings in Chinatown, the East Village, and on the Lower East Side have “F” ratings on RentLogic. On top of the over \$1 million (<https://rentlogic.com/blog/much-bad-landlording-cost-nyc/>) that Croman’s firm owed the City of New York in outstanding fines in 2015, his properties are rife with safety and security violations.

The Israel brothers pleaded guilty and agreed to pay \$350,000 in fines – \$250,000 towards 10 of their former rent stabilized tenants, and \$10,000 to the Tenant Protection Unit to help pay the high costs of future housing court claims. The court gave them six months to pay, or else receive a brief prison sentence. There is no word yet on what steps the City will take to hold landlords to account.



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