



Horton holds her daughter Breah in their building.
Photo: JEREMY SPARIG/METRO

Foreclosure catching up to renters

So far this year, 6,700 renters swept up in their landlords' defaults

From Williamsburg to the South Bronx, landlords who bought at peak prices or had bad loans, are finding themselves unable to repay their loans. Their victims are their renters.

Tanjarnea Horton, whose Bedford-Stuyvesant building has been in the foreclosure process for more than a year, had heat steaming in all summer long, but none in the winter. Other problems plaguing her eight-unit building at 874 Greene Ave. include a roach infestation, unlit hallways and squatters, she said.

A court-appointed receiver, BPC Management, collects rent and maintains the building. But Horton, 23, said: "They just don't want to deal with it." BPC declined to comment.

The number of buildings with five or more units that entered the foreclosure process during the first half of 2009 jumped by nearly 60 percent over 2008, according to NYU's Furman Center for Real Estate. Meanwhile, single-family homes entering foreclosure dropped by 4.4 percent.

Renters caught in foreclosed buildings are "not getting the same amount of attention as single homeowners," said Elana Shneyer, of the Pratt Area Community Council. "In New York City, it has big implications."

TIPS

What do you do if your rental building is foreclosed? Take some advice from Pratt Area Community Council's Elana Shneyer:

- 1** If it's rent stabilized, you have a right to stay in your apartment.
- 2** If not, a lender who takes control or a new owner must let tenants stay for 90 days or until their lease is up.
- 3** You have to pay rent to the landlord or a court-appointed receiver during foreclosure.
- 4** You're entitled to heat, hot water and basic services. If those basic needs aren't met, call 311, a housing rights group or legal aid services.

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