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Neighbors come together after Gardner condemns Aspen Place Apartments



VIDEO LINK - [KSHB-TV Channel 41 Reports on tenants being given only 48 hours to get out of their apartments.](#)

By: [Fernanda Silva](#) KSHB 41 News

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GARDNER, Kan. — Gardner residents stepped up to support their neighbors and friends Wednesday to help them move after the [city of Gardner condemned the Aspen Place Apartments](#). The city said the complex has serious health and safety hazards, including issues with water, sewer, and road systems.

After the city put up the notices, apartment residents had less than 48 hours to pack up leave their homes. The residents said if it weren't for the community support, they wouldn't have been able to comply with the order.

Micah Norman (below) is one of the many volunteers. She decided to go to her old apartment complex to support her former neighbors.



“It is such a horrible situation to be in, and we wanted to make sure that everybody had their needs met in one way or another,” Norman said.

Volunteers say there’s a broad range of needs that go beyond water, food, boxes, and tape. Families need help packing, as well as “a shoulder to cry on,” according to Trish Courtney, a volunteer who came to help.

Families barely had time to reflect on what happened and say they just had to get busy.

Chris Kiger lives at Aspen Place Apartments. As soon as he finished packing his place, he started helping his neighbors.

"You've got people that you know going into other people's houses, people that they don't know," Kiger said. "They're letting you in to help pack your whole house if you need it. I'm excited about how the community is working together.

It's been very heartwarming to see everybody come together as a community and embrace the families," Courtney said.

Delbert Bailey, (below) who is 70-years-old and disabled, is one of the neighbors receiving support.

"I wouldn't be getting out of here if it weren't for them helping me," said Bailey.



He says he and many neighbors feel hopeless.

"I have no option but to move now."

City officials say KDR Realty, the apartment owner, has numerous violations, including issues with trash, sewer systems, and leaking sewage onto roadways.

According to the city, the recent condemnation was triggered when a fire truck sank into the street.

“After inspecting the road, and determining that fire apparatus could no longer reliably respond to an emergency medical or fire call, it became an emergency life safety issue and led to the city’s action to condemn the property,” a city officials stated in an email.

KSHB 41 also reached out to the Aspen Place Apartments managers. They refused to comment and said they are focused on helping tenants.

KDR Realty owns the complex and did not respond to requests for comment.

A nonprofit lawyer at the scene offered a legal opinion on the situation.

"I believe, in my opinion, that raises another claim that the landlord is actually unlawfully excluding them from this premises because the landlord allowed it to get so bad that now the city is saying everybody's got to get out," said Nick Blessing, (below) staff attorney at Kansas Legal Services.



Some tenants can only remain optimistic.

“Hopefully, this time it will work out for us,” said Bailey.

KSHB 41 reporter Fe Silva covers education stories involving K-12

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