

June 8, 2017, NEW YORK—Inwood tenants who have been living without gas since October have filed a lawsuit against their landlord demanding that their services be restored. The tenants are represented by Manhattan Legal Services, a program of Legal Services NYC, with funding from the New York City Human Resources Administration.

Con Edison shut off gas service at 100 Cooper Street on October 27th. Residents of the 48-unit building rely on gas service not only to run their ovens and stoves but also to operate washers and dryers in their laundry room. After more than eleven weeks living without cooking gas, hot plates, or any means to cook hot food, the landlord finally provided hot plates to the tenants in December following a demand from MLS attorneys. However, the hot plates are an insufficient long-term substitute for cooking gas, as they are costly to use and create additional hazards.

“We have been working with several tenants at 100 Cooper for over six months now because of the lack of gas,” said **Manhattan Legal Services Staff Attorney Aisha Elston-Wesley**. “These are hardworking tenants, many of whom have lived in the building for several years. They have been patient and have tried to amicably work with the landlord to get the gas restored, but enough is enough.”

“Six months ago, the natural gas to our building was shut off,” said **tenant Kevin Raney**. “We have been patient, we’ve made calls to the management agency, to the city and to ConEd, but little to no action has been taken. Yes, the management agency has offered a single hot plate to each resident. Yes, we’ve been told “soon the gas will be back on” and again it is six months later. We are not asking for much, just the amenities that were offered to us in our leases, and one of those amenities was natural gas to cook our food and dry our clothes.”

To date, the building’s landlord, **100 Cooper Residences LLC**, headed by **Jair Gutierrez**, has not provided an explanation as to why the gas was shut off in the first place. The lawsuit, filed in Housing Court, seeks an order for the landlord to set forth and execute a reasonable plan with Con Edison to restore service to the building.

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