



City of Washington Rental Inspection Requirements

This handout is designed to assist landlords and tenants with the basic regulations adopted for rental properties.

This handout **DOES NOT** address all code related items. For more detailed information please refer to Chapters 147 and 157 of the City of Washington Municipal Code.

EXTERIOR PROPERTY AREAS

- Grading and drainage must be maintained to prevent erosion and accumulation of stagnant water.
- Proper precautions must be taken to prevent or eliminate rodent infestation.
- Accessory buildings and fences must be maintained, structurally sound and in good repair.
- Sidewalks are safe from trip hazards and snow.
- Yards must be maintained and mowed.
- Cisterns and similar water storage facilities shall be fenced, safely covered or filled in such a way as not to create a hazard to life or limb.

EXTERIOR STRUCTURES

- Property address needs to be placed on the principal building. All numbers must be a minimum of 4" in height, shall be legible from the street and 1/2" in width.
- Exterior walls shall be free of holes, breaks and loose or rotting materials and otherwise, properly maintained.

- Drains, gutters and downspouts, where present, must be maintained and not discharged in a manner to create a nuisance.
- Stairways, decks, porches and balconies shall be structurally safe, sound and in good repair.
- Chimneys and towers shall be structurally safe, sound and in good repair.
- Handrails and guards shall be firmly fastened, maintained and capable of supporting normal imposed loads.
- Windows, skylights and door frames shall be kept in sound condition, good repair and weather tight. If window required for emergency egress, they should be easily operable.
- From April 1st to October 31st, outside openings required for ventilation shall be supplied with tightly fitting screens.
- Doors shall be maintained in good condition and with locks at unit's entrance being tightly secured. If a door has a deadbolt, the lock shall be operable without the use of a key, tool or special knowledge or effort.
- Basement hatchways shall be maintained to prevent the entrance of rodents, rain and surface water.
- Doors, windows (within 6' of the ground) and hatchways for units shall be provided with devices designed to provide security for the occupants and property within.

INTERIOR STRUCTURES

- Interiors shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and in clean, sanitary condition. The owner of multi-family units(s) shall maintain the shared and public areas of the structure(s) and exterior in a clean and sanitary condition. Occupants shall keep that part of the structure which they occupy in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Structural members shall be maintained in sound condition and good repair.
- Stairs and walking surfaces shall be maintained in sound condition and good repair.
- Handrails and guards shall be firmly fastened and capable of supporting normally imposed loads maintained. Every exterior and interior flight of stairs having more than four(4) risers

shall have a handrail on one side. Every open portion of a stair, landing, balcony, porch, deck, ramp or other walking surface which is more than 30" above the floor or grade shall have guards. Detailed information on guards and handrails are available at the Building Department at City Hall.

- Every interior partition, wall, floor, ceiling and other interior surfaces shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

RUBBISH/ GARBAGE / YARD WASTE

- All exterior property and premises and the interior of every structure shall be free from any accumulation of rubbish and garbage.
- Rubbish and garbage shall not be stored outside for more than 48 hours except in a covered, leak proof container.
- Exterior property and premises shall be free from any accumulation of yard waste in compliance with Chapter 105 of the City Code of Ordinance.

EXTERMINATION

- Structures shall be kept free from insect and rodent infestation.
- The property owner shall be responsible for extermination **prior** to renting or leasing and in the public or shared areas of the structure.
- The occupants shall be responsible for the extermination during their occupancy of said dwelling structure or unit.

LIGHT AND VENTILATION

- Habitable spaces with exterior facing walls shall have at least one window.
- Common halls and stairways in multifamily occupancies shall be lighted at all times with at least a 60 watt incandescent bulb or equivalent for each 200 square feet of floor area with spacing not greater than 30 feet.
- Other habitable space shall be provided with natural or artificial light sufficient for safe occupancy.
- Bathroom and toilet rooms shall comply with ventilation requirements for a habitable space, except that a window shall not be required in such spaces equipped with a mechanical ventilation system discharged to the outdoors or to a properly vented attic.

- Clothes dryer exhaust shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Alternative ventilation devices are permitted if compliant with the Mechanical Code.

PLUMBING REQUIREMENTS

- Dwelling units shall contain its own tub or shower, lavatory, toilet and kitchen sink which shall be maintained in a sanitary condition.
- Rooming houses shall have at least 1 toilet, lavatory, tub or shower for each 4 rooming units.
- Bathrooms shall provide privacy and shall not provide the only passage to a hall or other space or exterior. A locking device shall be provided for all common or shared bathrooms in a multiple dwelling.
- Plumbing fixtures shall have adequate clearance for usage and cleaning.
- If a hazard is found, the Inspector shall require the defects to be corrected to eliminate the hazard promptly.
- Every fixture shall be properly installed, maintained, connected to a legal sewer system and provide a sufficient supply of water to fixtures as per the Plumbing Code.
- Water heating appliances shall be properly installed, maintained and capable of providing an adequate amount of hot water, not less than 110 degrees, per the Plumbing Code.
- Every plumbing waste and vent stack shall function properly and be kept free of obstructions, leaks and defects per the Plumbing Code.

MECHANICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Dwellings shall be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 65degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms and bathrooms. Cooking appliances and portable heating units shall not be used to provide heating to meet requirement.
- Mechanical appliances, equipment and systems shall be installed and maintained in a safe working condition per manufacture's installation recommendations and the Mechanical Code.

ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Dwellings shall be served with a minimum 3 wire, 120/240 volt, single-phased electrical

service having a rating of not less than 100 amps. The size and usage of appliances and equipment shall serve as a basis for determining the need to additional facilities in accordance with the Electrical Code.

- All electrical equipment, wiring and appliances shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe and approved manner. All new wiring shall be in accordance with the Electrical Code.
- Every habitable space in a dwelling unit shall contain at least 1 outlet.
- **Every laundry shall contain at least 1 grounded-type receptacle or a ground-fault circuit interrupter.**
- **Every bathroom shall contain at least 1 receptacle. Any new bathroom outlet shall be a ground-fault circuit interrupter.**
- Where a hazard is found to the occupants or the structure by reason of inadequate service, improper fusing, insufficient receptacle and lighting outlets, improper wiring or installation, deterioration or damage, or for similar reasons, the Inspector shall require the defects to be corrected **immediately** to eliminate the hazard.

FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- **All residential rental units shall be provided and maintained with an approved single or multi-station dual sensor smoke alarm in each sleeping room and immediately outside of sleeping areas and on each story including the basement.**
- **All sleeping rooms are required to have a safe and continuous and unobstructed path to the public way and if required, an operable window for egress.**
- **Carbon monoxide detectors are required immediately outside of sleeping rooms.** Dwelling units with no potential source of carbon monoxide are exempt.
- All means of egress doors and windows shall be readily operational from the side from which egress is to be made without need to for keys, special knowledge or effort.
- All fire resistance rating of walls, fire stops, shaft enclosures, floors and doors shall be maintained.

- Multi-family dwellings shall have a 2A10BC-rated fire extinguisher located within 75 feet of each dwelling unit's main entrance with a minimum of one (1) per floor. Extinguishers shall be checked and tagged by a qualified service person annually.

OCCUPANTS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Every occupant of a dwelling unit shall keep floors, walls, ceilings, plumbing fixtures and supplied facilities in a clean, safe and sanitary condition.
- Every occupant of a dwelling unit shall dispose of rubbish, garbage and any other organic waste by placing it in authorized disposal facilities or storage containers required by this Code.
- No temporary wiring or extension cords shall be used except extension cords that run directly from a portable electric fixture to convenient outlets and which **do not** lie beneath floor coverings or extend though doorways, transoms or similar apertures. The occupant shall not knowingly overload the circuitry of the dwelling unit.
- Every occupant shall be responsible for maintaining early warning fire protection and carbon monoxide systems by means of replacing batteries as needed. If these systems become inoperable by mechanical failure, the occupant is required to notify the owner/operator.

For additional information or questions, visit our website at www.washingtoniowa.net or call City Hall at (319) 653-6584 ext. 124