

CITY OF DULUTH
Building Safety Division
RESIDENTIAL PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

For owners/managers of rental property of single, duplex or multiple. These are not all of the state and local requirements, but the most commonly found violations. Ordinance requires all units in a rental building be inspected to include owner units.

EXTERIOR

ADDRESS NUMBERS - Must be clearly readable from the street, or alley way if applicable, both day and night.

ROOF - Must be tight, without leaks and have no missing or severely deteriorated shingles.

EXTERIOR WALLS/PAINT - Exterior surfaces other than decay-resistant wood must be painted with non-lead-based paint.

STAIRS/PORCHES/DECKS - Must be maintained in sound condition and good repair. New or substantial replacement must comply with requirements as defined in the State Building Code. Handouts are available contact the Building Inspection office at 730-5300.

RAILS - Handrails are required on stairs having more than three risers and must be maintained in good condition. To be positioned between thirty-four inches (34") to thirty-eight inches (38") above the stair nosing and the ends must return to a wall or a post. Grippable surface shall have a cross section of a minimum one and one quarter inch (1 1/4") to two inches (2").

One & Two Family Exception: Grippable surface shall have a cross section maximum of not more than two and five-eighths inches (2 5/8").

GUARDS - Existing guards must be a minimum of thirty inches (30") in height, be legally installed in accordance with a previous building code and be maintained in good repair. New guards on porches, balconies or raised floor areas that are more than thirty inches (30") above the floor or grade below shall be not less than forty-two inches (42") in height. Open sides of stairs with a total rise of more than thirty inches (30") above the floor or grade shall have guards not less than thirty-four inches (34") in height measured vertically from the tread nosing. Required guards shall have intermediate rails or ornamental closures that do not allow a four inch (4") diameter sphere to pass through. The triangular openings formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail of a guard shall not permit a six inch (6") sphere to pass through.

One & Two Family Exception: New guards shall not be less than thirty-six inches (36") in height

DOORS - Must be in sound condition and good repair, equipped with deadbolt lockset and capable of being easily opened from the inside without the use of a key.

WINDOWS - Must be in sound condition, have no broken glass, have hardware to hold in the "open" position, fit tight within the frame, and a secure locking mechanism. (Locks required on every window within 12 feet of grade and including second story or accessible by fire escape, stairs, etc.) Windows can be equipped with bars for security if they are not required "egress windows". Windows must be equipped with full screens.

EGRESS WINDOWS - One window from each sleeping room must be easily openable from the inside. Security grates and bars must have mechanisms that open easily from inside. These windows must have a minimum net clear openable area of five point seven (5.7) square feet. Minimum net clear opening height shall be twenty-four inches

(24"). Minimum net clear opening width shall be twenty inches (20"), and a sill height of no more than forty-four inches (44") above the floor. Area wells must meet minimum sizes. This requirement is for new window installation.

One & Two Family Dwelling Exception: Grade floor window (having a sill height not more than forty-four inches [44"] above or below the finished grade adjacent to the window) may have a minimum net clear openable area of five (5) square feet (the 20" & 24" dimensions still apply).

GARBAGE CONTAINERS - Owners are required to furnish sufficient containers with lids and regular garbage pick-up.

**** **CONSTRUCTION NOTE** **** All exterior repairs or reconstruction must be made with exterior grade materials.

INTERIOR

POST RENTAL LICENSE/OWNER INFORMATION - License must be posted in a conspicuous place so that it can be seen and read by a person outside the building and within the common way or near the main entrance. Owner information and emergency contacts should accompany license.

WALLS/FLOORS/CEILINGS/PAINT - Must be maintained clean, painted and in a professional state of repair.

STAIRS/RAILS - Same specifications as exterior stairs except construction materials need not be of exterior grade.

EXTERMINATION - All structures shall be kept free from insect and rodent infestation.

Owner. The owner of any structure shall be responsible for extermination within the structure prior to renting or leasing the structure.

Single occupant. The occupant of a one-family dwelling or of a single-tenant nonresidential structure shall be responsible for extermination on the premises.

Multiple occupancy. The owner of a structure containing two or more dwelling units, a multiple occupancy, rooming house or a nonresidential structure shall be responsible for extermination in the public or shared areas of the structure and exterior property. If infestation is caused by failure of an occupant to prevent such infestation in the area occupied, the occupant shall be responsible for extermination.

Occupant. The occupant of any structure shall be responsible for the continued rodent and pest-free condition of the structure.

Exception: Where the infestations are caused by defects in the structure, the owner shall be responsible for extermination.

OCCUPANCY SEPARATION - Fire walls and doors are required between commercial/residential space or attached garage/residential space as defined in the State Building Code.

BASEMENT/UTILITIES/CONDEMNATION

COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE/FURNACE ROOM - No combustible storage is allowed in any room containing furnace, heating, mechanical, or electrical equipment.

FURNACE/HEATING PLANT - Must be capable of providing heat at 68° (degrees) Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms, bathrooms and toilet rooms during the period from October 15 to May 15. Required temperatures shall be measured three (3) feet above the floor near the center of the room and two (2) feet inward from the center of each exterior wall. Installation or alteration of heating equipment must be done by a qualified contractor or service company upon obtaining a heating permit from the Building Safety Department. A separate plumbing permit maybe required for gas piping.

PLUMBING/SEWER - Kitchen sinks, hand sinks, bathtub, showers, toilets or urinals must be supplied with running

water, adequate hot water where applicable, and must be connected to the sewer and water system in accordance with all provisions of the Minnesota State Plumbing Code.

WATER HEATER - Must be capable of supplying adequate hot water at a minimum temperature of 120° (degrees) Fahrenheit at every kitchen sink, tub, shower, and laundry facility. All repairs or alterations must be made under permit from the Building Inspection Department by a licensed contractor in accordance with the Plumbing Code.

GAS CONNECTIONS - Flexible connectors on stoves or dryers must be AGA approved double walled. Existing single walled connectors that are kinked, damaged, or corroded must be replaced. Illegal gas shut-off valves or valves with broken handles must be replaced with AGA approved valves.

ELECTRICAL - Service must be adequate to serve needs of occupants and maintained in accordance with the Electrical Code. Every habitable room, bathroom or toilet room must have at least two duplex outlets or one duplex outlet and one switched ceiling light fixture. Kitchens must have duplex outlets. Any new outlet installed above any kitchen counter top must be Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI). Every public hall, water closet, bathroom, laundry, or furnace room must contain at least one electric light fixture. Bathroom and laundry rooms must contain one light fixture and one duplex outlet. The laundry room outlet must be grounded and within six feet (6') of the laundry appliance. Any new outlet in the bathroom must be G.F.C.I. It is strongly recommended that existing outlets in bathrooms be converted to a G.F.C.I. It is strongly recommended that all metallic fixtures within five feet (5') horizontally or eight feet (8') vertically of grounded surfaces shall be grounded.

ALL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT - All required and supplied equipment and all building spaces and parts must be constructed and maintained to properly and safely perform their intended function.

FLAMMABLE LIQUID STORAGE - No gasoline or other flammable liquid can be stored in a residential building unless stored in a one-hour, fire-rated room or approved fire-rated cabinet. Flammable liquids can never be stored in a room with a source of ignition, such as a furnace, water heater, etc.

CONDEMNATION/UNFIT - A dwelling unit or entire building may be condemned when it is determined to be a hazard to the safety or welfare of the tenant(s).

UNITS - DWELLING

SMOKE DETECTORS - State statute requires an operable smoke detector be provided and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions in the following areas of the rental unit:

- In each sleeping room
- Outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms
- On each story of the dwelling, including basements and cellars, but not including crawlspaces & uninhabitable attics

Depending on installation and location, battery or electric smoke detectors are allowed, but electric are recommended. Battery replacement is owner's responsibility. Detector placement must not be within a four inch (4") triangle at the junction where the wall and ceiling meet and no further away than twelve (12") from the ceiling if placed on the wall. Best location is the ceiling.

DEADBOLT LOCKS/DOORS - Apartment doors must be equipped with one-inch (1") approved single-cylinder deadbolt locks. Doors must be substantially secure from illegal entry, and if replaced, must be replaced with solid core, wood, 1 3/4" panel or a metal door with frames. Hinges must be placed on the inside of the door or tamper proof hinges installed.

PATIO-GLIDER DOORS AND WINDOWS - A removable track filler or key-operated vertical or horizontal bolt lock on patio and glider windows is required. A wood filler strip or removable screw in upper track of windows should be installed to prevent them from being lifted out of track.

FLOORS/WALLS/PAINT/CABINETS/WOODWORK - Must be in sound condition and good repair. All paint must be non-lead-based. Any peeling or flaking paint must be removed and repainted.

WINDOW LOCKS - All windows must be equipped with secure locks when they are within 12 feet (12') of grade.

SPACE HEATERS - Subject to all requirements of servicing/cleaning (see Furnace/Heating Plant) and must be serviced by a qualified contractor or service company. All regulations of the Mechanical Code must be applied. Unvented fuel-burning appliances are not allowed.

BATHROOM LIGHT/VENTILATION - Every bathroom must have a window openable to the outside, or an approved mechanical ventilation system.

TOILET/HAND SINK/TUB/SHOWER - Each dwelling unit must contain a bathroom with toilet, hand sink, and tub or shower installed and maintained in accordance with the State Plumbing Code.

ROOF DRAINS - The downspouts or rain water stacks which were or are now connected to the City sewer shall be disconnected and run outside as per requirements from City Sewer Division. For further information please contact the City Waste Water Compliance Officer at 723-3551.

BATHROOM FLOOR - Must be impervious to water. Carpeting not allowed. Cracks or missing tiles must be repaired/replaced.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS - See Electrical.

EXTENSION CORDS - Not allowed for permanent wiring. Those extension cords with circuit breakers are also not legal. The overload on the wiring in the wall produces heat and can be a fire hazard.

OCCUPANT LOAD - Dwelling units must contain the following:

Total unit gross floor area

1 occupant - 150 square feet
2 or more occupants - 100 square feet per person

Gross sleeping room/floor area

1 occupant - 70 sq ft
2 or more occupants/50 sq ft per person

Definition of Family:

Zoning Code: Sec. 50-1.28.

Family. One or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption, including foster children, and in addition to and including five other unrelated persons occupying a dwelling and living as a single housekeeping unit. (Ord. No. 9284, 12-11-1995, § Chapter 50 Duluth City Code). (Note: Maximum occupancy 6 unrelated.)

TENANT SANITATION/RESPONSIBILITIES - Occupants are required to maintain their unit in a clean and sanitary condition and dispose of refuse in the containers provided by the owner. They are also required to keep supplied fixtures clean and sanitary and use reasonable care in their use and operation. If they furnish any fixtures of their own, they must be installed and maintained in accordance with the Building Code.

ROOMING UNITS/ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Cannot contain cooking or eating facilities. (i.e. stoves, hot plates).
2. A bathroom containing a hand sink, toilet, and tub or shower must be available within the structure directly accessible without going outside and on the same floor or a floor adjacent to the room unit. One bathroom must be available for each eight persons (or fraction thereof).
3. Each sleeping room must contain at least 70 square feet of floor area, or 50 square feet per person for two or more people.
4. Owners are responsible for weekly changes of supplied linens and towels.
5. Owners are responsible for sanitary maintenance of walls, floors, ceilings, and for maintenance of all supplied equipment in common area and shared bathrooms.

MULTIPLE DWELLING REQUIREMENTS

FIRE SYSTEMS/EQUIPMENT

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM - Automatic detection fire alarm system required for apartment buildings of 15 or more units or three stories above grade.

FIRE ALARM TESTING - Fire alarm tests must be done yearly by a qualified contractor. Documentation must be furnished to Fire Prevention upon Certificate of Occupancy renewal.

OTHER SYSTEM TESTS - Sprinkler systems, standpipes, fire pumps, and other fire protection systems must be tested in accordance with their respective standards by qualified personnel and documentation provided to Fire Inspectors during Certificate of Occupancy renewal.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS - A 2A10BC fire extinguisher must be available in the hall within fifty feet (50") of any apartment door on the same level or a 1A10BC fire extinguisher in each apartment. Laundry rooms and/or furnace/boiler rooms require 2A10BC fire extinguisher.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER SERVICING - Extinguishers must be inspected and tagged every year by qualified personnel and hydrostatically tested by a qualified company every six years.

FIRE SEPARATION/APARTMENT BASEMENT - One-hour fire-resistive walls, ceiling and 20 minutes fire-door (with UL or FM approved self-closer) are required on any furnace room containing heating facilities that service more than one unit.

EXITS

NUMBER OF EXITS - A second exit must be provided from the second floor when the occupancy load exceeds ten (2,000 square feet) and from the third floor and above at all times. If the door to the third floor unit is at the second level, the requirements for the second floor apply.

EXIT OBSTRUCTIONS - All exits to the building must be unobstructed at all items. No storage is allowed in stairwells, corridors, or in front of doors.

CORRIDOR RATING - Exit corridors that serve more than ten people (2,000 square feet of living space) are required to be one-hour, fire-rated. All doors entering that corridor must be twenty-minute, fire-rated with a UL or FM approved self-closing device.

FIRE DOOR OBSTRUCTIONS - Fire doors must not be blocked open or obstructed with storage. Self-closures must be in operable condition.

STAIR ENCLOSURES/CHUTES - Stairs that serve more than two levels (not including garden level), must be enclosed with a one-hour fire-rated enclosure. (Two-hour if four or more stories.) Doors entering these stairwells must be one-hour rated (1 1/2 hour for two-hour separations).

STAIRWAY IDENTIFICATION - Stairways serving four or more stories must be identified with signs on each floor level that clearly indicate the floor level and whether there is roof access.

APARTMENT DOOR CLOSURES - Apartment doors entering stairwells must be one-hour, fire-rated with a UL or FM approved self-closures. Apartment doors entering corridors that serve ten or more occupants (1,000 square feet living space) must have operable UL or FM approved self-closures and doors must be 20-minute fire-rated.

EXIT ILLUMINATION - All common halls and inside stairways must be lit with a minimum illumination of one floor-candle per square foot. Exterior exits and entryways are required to be illuminated a minimum of one foot candle at grade level.

EXIT SIGNS - Illuminated exit signs are required when there is more than one exit from a story unless built under a previous Building Code in accordance with that Code.

EMERGENCY LIGHTING - Required in common hallways when occupancy load is more than 100 (20,000 square feet). Emergency lighting must be maintained at all times and tested monthly.

HI-RISE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the residential requirements above, hi-rise buildings (75' or higher) (Below inspections are made by

Fire Department staff):

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM - Must be installed in accordance with the Building Code standards for hi-rise including voice communication, public address system, central control station, and HVAC smoke detection.

VOICE COMMUNICATION - Activation of any detection or other initiating device must sound an alert signal in designated areas followed by voice instructions giving appropriate direction and instructions to occupants.

SYSTEM TESTS - All sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, standpipes, smoke and heat ventilators, smoke removal systems, and other fire protective or extinguishing systems must be tested and maintained in accordance with nationally recognized standards (quarterly for hi-rise).

MANUAL SHUT-DOWN OR AIR HANDLING - Each air distribution system must be equipped with a manually operated device that will stop the operation of supply, return, and/or exhaust fans in an emergency.

STAIRWELL UNLOCKING - Stairwell doors into exit stairways/enclosures must be unlocked from the stairway side on at least every fifth floor. These doors must be identified from the stairwell side. There are exceptions for door locking mechanisms deactivated by the fire alarm system.

DUCT DETECTORS - Smoke detectors must be installed in the main return and exhaust plenum of each air conditioning system and located in a serviceable area downstream of the last duct inlet, and at each connection to a vertical duct or riser serving two or more stories from a return air duct or plenum of an air conditioning system.

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