

# HOUSING INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist as a guide to pre-inspect rental units in advance of upcoming rental housing inspections to increase the likelihood of passing the inspection and saving time & inspection fees.

## FIRST LOOK – INTERIOR CHECK FOR ALL ROOMS

- Interior surfaces** including walls & ceilings are maintained in safe & sanitary condition, free from loose or damaged materials.
- Painted surfaces** are maintained free from peeling, chipping, flaking or otherwise deteriorated conditions.
- Floors & floor coverings** are maintained in safe and sanitary condition, free from loose or damaged materials.
- Electrical equipment** including outlets, fixtures, lighting, & appliances, etc. are properly wired and functioning as intended.
- Doors** are in good repair and function as intended.
- Windows** are in good repair, screens are present and intact, and windows function as intended. NOTE: Windows shall be easily operable and capable of being held in position by window hardware.



Tools for inspection: flashlight, voltage detector, screwdriver, outlet tester, tape measure

## KITCHEN

- Safe and sanitary conditions** are required throughout a dwelling however in kitchens it is critical that all surfaces (including appliances) are intact and easily cleanable.
  - Garbage/rubbish must be regularly disposed of by occupants.
- Plumbing** fixtures, pipes & drains are in good repair, functioning as intended, free from leaks, clogs, or other defects.
- Cabinets and/or space for the preparation of food** is adequate and in good repair.
  - Dwelling unit kitchens must have a minimum clear passageway of 36 inches.
  - Efficiency units must have a minimum clear passageway of 30 inches.
- Appliances** are present and in good repair including:
  - Refrigerator of adequate size, functions as intended, free from leaks, door seal in good repair, handles, and supplied accessories intact and in good repair.
  - Stove/range/oven of adequate size, functions as intended, controls, handles, and supplied accessories intact and in good repair.
  - Dishwasher, if supplied functions as intended, free from leaks or defects.
  - Garbage disposal, if supplied, functions as intended, free from leaks or defects.
- Electrical equipment** including appliances are properly installed and functioning as intended.

## BATHROOMS

- Safe and sanitary conditions** are required throughout a dwelling, however in bathrooms, it is critical that all surfaces are intact and easily cleanable.
  - Areas in and around toilets, tubs & showers may require frequent cleaning by occupants
- Plumbing** fixtures, pipes & drains are in good repair, functioning as intended, free from leaks, clogs or other defects.
  - Toilets must be securely installed, free from leaks and function as intended.
  - Gaps in moisture prone areas including tub/shower surrounds must have sealant (caulking) applied and maintained to prevent moisture damage.

- Ventilation** is provided by either an operable mechanical vent fan exhausting to the exterior or an operable window with screen.
- Electrical equipment** is properly installed and functioning. NOTE: New or replacement electrical equipment including outlets near water sources must be GFCI protected.
  - A primary bathroom must have at least one electrical outlet

## BEDROOMS

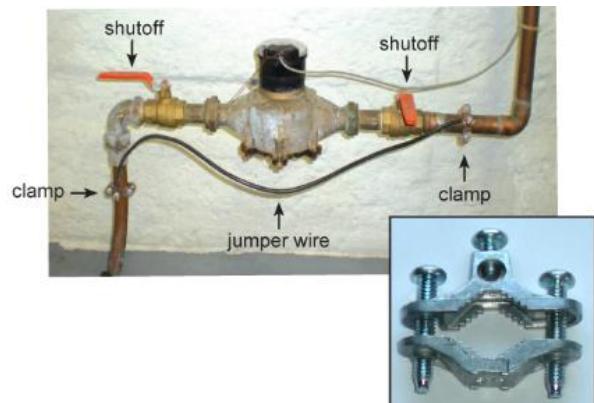
- Habitable space requirements** (NOTE: If any of the requirements listed below are not met and a variance has not been approved, then the room may not be used as a sleeping room)
  - Room has at least seventy (70) square feet.
  - Room measures at least seven (7) feet in all directions (length, width, and height).
  - Room has secondary exit in case of emergency (emergency escape & rescue opening or egress compliant window)
- Smoke alarms** are required in every room used for sleeping.

## STAIRWAYS

- Handrails** (graspable) are required on all stairways more than four (4) risers.
- Guardrails** (guards) are required on stairs, landings, balconies, ramps or other walking surface that is more than thirty (30) inches above the floor or grade below.
  - Existing guards must be a minimum height of 30" with no spacing that exceeds 6".
  - New or replacement guards and/or handrails must meet the current building code standards.
- Stair components** including treads, risers, stringers, posts, etc. must be maintained in a good and structurally sound condition.

## MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT & ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

- Mechanical equipment** including furnaces, boilers, water heaters, etc. must be properly installed and functioning as intended.
  - Common mechanical equipment violations include:
    - Water heaters & boilers lack pressure relief valve extension pipe. NOTE: Pipe must terminate within six (6) inches of the floor or into a drain.
    - Service cover panels must be properly installed on appliances or equipment.
    - Combustion appliance venting must be maintained to adequately and safely exhaust combustion gasses out of the structure.
    - Furnace filters are clean and intact if present
- Electrical service and equipment** is adequately sized, maintained in good repair, and capable of functioning as intended.
  - Electrical service panels (breakers) are covered, have no open breaker spaces or missing breakers.
  - Electrical service panels (fuses) are covered, have s-type fusing.
  - Water meter has electrical bonding jumper (see photo).



## LAUNDRY AREA

- Electrical** receptacle must be properly grounded or GFCI protected.
- Clothes dryers** must be exhausted to the exterior in accordance with manufacturer's specifications
  - Flexible metallic venting is allowed in lengths not to exceed eight (8) feet.
  - Plastic venting material is not approved for use with clothes dryers.
- Laundry hookups** including gas and drain pipes shall be capped off if not in use.

## BASEMENT

- Foundation** is structurally sound, free from cracks and/or gaps.
- Interior basement** areas are reasonably clean, dry and free of pest infestations.
  - Personal belongings are stored in an orderly and sanitary manner. Space is free of obsolete appliances, junk, and rubbish.
- Electrical equipment** is properly installed and maintained and functions as intended.
  - Electrical junctions and junction boxes have appropriate cover plates installed

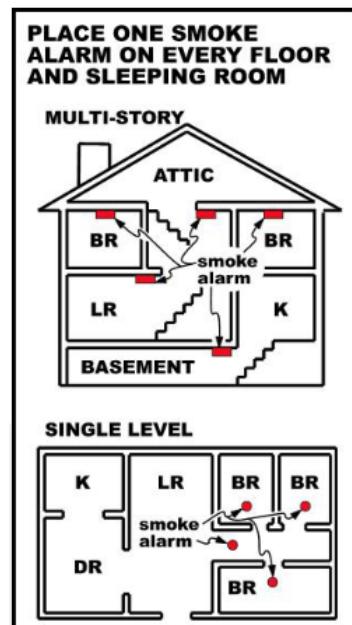
## EXTERIOR

- Exterior surfaces** are maintained in good repair, weather tight, free from loose, damaged or missing materials.
  - Brick and/or stone mortar joints are intact
- Painted surfaces** are maintained free from peeling, chipping, flaking or otherwise deteriorated conditions.
- Walking surfaces** including sidewalks, driveways etc. are free from cracks, spalling or other defects where gaps or elevation changes exceed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch.
- Electrical** service wires and all electrical equipment on the exterior is maintained in good repair.
- Chimneys, vents and flues** are maintained in a good condition and have weather caps or vent hoods with dampers where required.
- Roofs**, including gutters/downspouts are maintained in good repair, free from obstructions, leaks or defects including loose or missing materials.
- Grading and drainage** is maintained to prevent soil erosion and/or accumulation of stagnant water.
- Accessory structures** including garages, sheds, etc. are maintained in good repair.
- Exterior property areas** are maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary condition.
  - Garbage and rubbish must be properly stored in approved covered containers until disposal.
  - Exterior areas must be free from accumulations of garbage/rubbish.
  - Grasses and/or weeds must be maintained (mowed) below 8" height.



## GENERAL

- Carbon Monoxide alarms** are required in all dwellings that contain fuel burning equipment or an attached garage.
  - Fuel burning equipment or appliances include fire places, furnaces, boilers, water heaters, etc.
- Smoke alarms** must be installed in accordance with manufacturers instruction in the required locations including:
  - In the immediate vicinity, outside of each bedroom (Note: within 15')
  - Inside each bedroom or room used for sleeping purposes.
  - On each story of a dwelling unit, including basements.
- Fire extinguishers**, if present, must be fully charged (Note: look for gauge to be in the green).
- Safe and sanitary conditions** must be maintained in all interior and exterior areas of a structure or premises.
  - Property owners must ensure that all areas are in clean and sanitary condition prior to occupancy.
  - Occupants must maintain the areas that they occupy and control in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Rubbish & garbage** must be regularly disposed. Accumulations of rubbish or garbage on a property are prohibited.



- Pest elimination** is required to be performed promptly when pest infestations are discovered.
  - Structures shall be kept free from insect and rodent infestation.
- Required utilities** must be on and serviceable for inspection. Examples of utilities that may be required are:
  - Water
  - Electric
  - Gas – required if gas appliances are present

## MULTI-FAMILY COMMONS OR REQUIREMENTS

- Common areas** of the property are maintained in clean, safe and sanitary condition.

- Fire protection systems** if present are intact, functioning as intended and display third party inspection tags if required. Fire protection systems include:

- Monitored or non-monitored fire alarm systems
- Sprinkler systems or localized sprinkler equipment
- Common area fire extinguishers

- Fire extinguishers** are installed as required in buildings with 3 or more units

- 2A-10BC 5lb or larger fire extinguishers may be installed in interior common hallways within 75' of travel for any unit and on the same level as each unit entry door.
- 1A-10BC fire extinguishers may be installed in each unit in lieu of the larger shared common area fire extinguishers.

- Fire separation** and/or fire rated assemblies are maintained in good repair and function as intended in accordance with the code in effect at the time of construction or renovation. Examples of fire separation or assemblies include:

- Fire rated doors and door assemblies
- Fire caulking or sealant at penetrations in fire walls
- Fire rated wall or ceiling materials including sheetrock and/or plaster



**If you have questions regarding your inspection, please contact the Inspector listed on your Notice of Inspection.**



**City of Dubuque**  
 Housing & Community Development Department  
 350 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 312  
 Dubuque, IA 52001  
 563-589-4231  
[www.cityofdubuque.org/housing](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/housing)