

# **City of Alpena**

## **Rental Inspection Criteria (updated July 2013)**

Residential rental property inspections are conducted on a three year cycle to ensure a minimum health, safety and welfare standard for rented residential structures and the associated property. Rental property owners are expected to maintain their units to the minimum standards between inspections for the safety of the tenants. Inspections outside of the normal three year cycle will be performed at either the occupant's or owner's request. The inspection criteria are based on the current edition of the "International Property Maintenance Code" (IMPC) and the "Housing Quality Standards" (HQS) guidelines.

To Get A Head Start... use this checklist prior to your scheduled inspection to help avoid a lengthy and potentially more expensive inspection process.

### **RENTAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

#### **Exterior Property Areas**

- The building address must be visible from the road with contrasting numbers at least three inches tall. Are detached accessory structures in good repair?
- All stairs, porches, landings and decks must be in good condition and structurally sound. Hand and guard railings must be securely attached and of the appropriate height.
- Are exterior walks and driveway surfaces in good condition and free from tripping hazards.
- The exterior walls, foundations, chimneys and roofs must be weather tight and free from missing boards, bricks, blocks or shingles. Rotted wood on door frames, window frames, soffit and fascia should be replaced or repaired.

- The yard must be free of junk and trash, old vehicles in disrepairs, tires and fences must be in good condition.
- Exterior electrical outlets must be Ground Fault protected outlets.

### **Interior of home or unit**

#### **1. Windows:**

- Severely cracked or broken panes of glass must be repaired.
- Windows must operate as intended and be capable of holding themselves open without items being placed in them to hold them up.
- Windows less than six feet from the ground, looking into porches/landings or have a roof immediately below them must have locking mechanisms on the inside.
- Operable windows must have screens that are not ripped or full of holes to keep insects out.
- Frames, sashes, and sills must be in good condition.

#### **2. Doors:**

- All exterior doors must be lockable.
- All exterior doors must seal against weather infiltration.
- Doors must open and close properly with minimal effort.
- Bathroom doors must latch from the inside for privacy.
- Screens and storm doors must be in good repair.
- Fire doors, if applicable, must be self-closing and latching.
- Exterior door locks may not be the “skeleton key” type locks.

#### **3. Walls, Floors, and Ceilings**

- All surfaces must be free from holes larger than a golf ball, peeling plaster and badly peeling paint. These items must be repaired.
- Floor coverings like carpet and linoleum, but be cleanable, especially in kitchen areas where food is prepared or bathrooms where mildew can form.

- Floors should be free of tripping hazards, like rips and tars.
- Countertops must be in good condition and cleanable (easy to maintain).
- All interior stairways must be in good condition and with no loose boards. Hand and guard railings must be present and secure.

#### **4. Electrical System:**

- All the cover plates for electric outlets, light switches, junction boxes, fuse and breaker panels must be on and not broken.
- All areas near water sources in kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms and exterior areas must be ground fault protected.
- All grounded electric outlets must be properly grounded. Many outlets have been replaced over the years with the grounding type receptacles (3 prong), however the grounds are sometimes not connected as the older two wire systems provided no ground wire.
- Breakers and fuses must be properly sized for the wires they are connected to in the fuse box or breaker panel. Screw in fuses on old 60 AMP services must be 15 AMP Type "S" fuses.
- Light fixtures and ceiling fans must be properly attached. They cannot be hanging from the wires.
- Exposed electrical wiring must be protected from damage and properly secured.

#### **5. Plumbing Systems:**

- All water and waste pipes free from leaks.
- Toilets are not running constantly.
- Faucets are not leaking or dripping.
- Units must have hot water.
- All drain lines must have a gas trap.
- Water heaters must have properly installed temperature and pressure relief valves with the overflow tube extended to within 4" of the floor or into a proper drain pan. Overflow tubes must be hard pipes such as copper, galvanized or approved cpvc plastic pipe.

## 6. Heating Systems:

- There must be a permanently installed heat source such as a furnace, boiler or electric baseboard heat that is connected into the building's electrical wiring.
- All rooms must be able to be heated to 65 degrees when checked 3' in from the outside wall.
- Portable heaters may be used, but **do not qualify** as the principle heat source in a unit.

## 7. General Health and Safety:

- Sleeping in the basement is prohibited unless there are proper emergency egress windows or doors in place.
- Clothes washing machines and dryers require proper plumbing and venting. Dryers must be vented to the outside and washers must be drained into a sink or the building's sanitary sewer line.
- Smoke alarms in or near each sleeping room and at least one on each floor including the basement. Smoke alarms may be interconnected to the building electrical system or they may be single-station alarms with batteries. Batteries must be capable of powering the alarm for five years. Ask your retailer for these specific batteries.
- Guard and handrails on all exterior stairways.

These guidelines give a good basis for what we are looking for during the course of a rental unit inspection. It would be impossible to cover every possible issue we may encounter while inspecting.

If you have any questions about this checklist, or your upcoming rental inspection, please contact either Don Gilmet or Mike Kieliszewski at 989-354-1760 during normal business hours at City Hall.