

Apartment Building Basic Fire and Life Safety Inspection

A guide for the apartment owner, manager and tenant as to what firefighters will be inspecting

For the Landlord . . .

Address

- All buildings must have approved, contrasting address numbers placed in a location that is visible from the street.

Storage/Trash

- Stairs, hallways and the basement should be clear of any trash or personal belongings, which includes bikes, appliances and furniture.
- Combustible and flammable liquids and gases are not allowed inside the building unless they are in listed lockers.
- There should be an area or dumpster outside of the apartment for accumulated trash.

Exits

- In most cases two well lit exits are required from each building. These exits should not be blocked by snow, personal belongings or in any other fashion.
- Any fire escapes should be in good condition and not blocked.
- Windows in bedrooms should be large enough for tenants to evacuate if necessary.

Electrical

- Extension cords are not allowed, except for temporary use (i.e. cleaning, construction, etc.)
- Electrical panels should be easily accessed, covered and fuses/circuits labeled and of the proper type.
- Electrical receptacle boxes should have cover plates.

Heating Equipment

- The apartment's heating equipment should be in good working order with no fuel leaks (this includes oil tanks), properly vented and in the case of an oil furnace/boiler have an emergency shut off switch.

Apartments

- Each apartment door should be labeled (i.e. Apartment 1, Apartment 2, etc.)
- Electric-powered smoke alarms should be inside each bedroom, in the room outside of the bedrooms and on each level of the apartment (if applicable.) Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.
- At least one carbon monoxide detector (electric powered with battery back up) should be in the apartment, located outside of the bedroom.

The information contained here is not intended to be a complete list of issues being inspected by the Fire Department. If you have any questions about an inspection feel free to contact the Fire Department Fire Inspectors at 992-4264 or Code Enforcement at 992-4230.

For the tenant . . .

Staying fire safe depends not only on the landlord, but also on your own actions. Remember these tips.

- Make sure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors work by testing them each month. Do not disable detectors. If you have a problem with a detector not working or with false alarms contact your landlord first to correct the problem. Batteries in detectors should be replaced every year. The smoke detector itself should be replaced every 10 years.
- When signing the lease find out if you or the landlord is responsible for replacing the batteries in detectors and keeping exits or fire escapes free of snow.
- Do not store gasoline or other flammable liquids and gases in the apartment.
- If you use an electric space heater keep it 3-feet away from combustibles, such as furniture, trash cans, etc. Turn these off when you go to sleep or leave the room.
- Do not leave any cooking unattended – especially if frying food on the stove top.
- Know two ways out. Everyone in the family should know where to meet once outside. Once safely outside, do not go back inside for people, pets or personal possessions. Practicing the plan with the family once a year is recommended.
- If you have any signs of a possible electrical problem (blown fuses, tripped circuits, burning plastic smell, sparks from an outlet, etc.) contact your landlord immediately.
- Do not leave lit candles unattended. If you leave the room, extinguish the candle.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, away from young children.
- Do not smoke in bed or while lying down.



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