



Rental Property Checklist

Housing Inspections are responsible for promoting the health, safety, and livability of the housing stock in the City of St. James, MN. Regular inspections of rental properties are conducted to ensure they are safe and well-maintained.

This checklist can be used by property owners to prepare for the inspection. Not all items on the checklist will apply to every property. If you have questions about any of the items on the list, please call 507-375-3241.

Fire Protection

GENERAL

- Storage of paint, paper, boxes, rags or other combustible/flammable material not allowed within 10 feet of gas-fired appliances (furnaces, water heaters, etc.)
- Path of egress shall not be blocked by debris, storage, trash, snow, ice or other obstruction
- Third floor units require a second means of egress
- All stairways require continuous, graspable handrails
- Buildings with three or more units require fire extinguishers
- If multiple units of a three unit or greater building lead into a common area, doors leading from the units shall have fire rated doors with closers

SMOKE DETECTORS- NO EXCEPTIONS

- All smoke detectors shall be installed to code and to manufacturer's requirements with working batteries and functional connections; **non-working smoke detectors at time of inspection are an automatic failure**
- Locate at least one smoke detector on each level, including basement and habitable attics
- Locate a smoke detector in each sleeping room
- Locate a smoke detector in the hallway outside of each sleeping area

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS – NO EXCEPTIONS

- All carbon monoxide detectors shall be installed to code and to manufacturer's requirements with working batteries and functional connections; **non working at time of inspection are an automatic failure**
- Locate carbon monoxide detectors on all habitable buildings and units
- Locate carbon monoxide within 10 feet of all sleeping areas, in sleeping rooms that have fuel fired appliances, and in houses that have attached garages

Exterior

EXTERIOR WALLS

- Soffit and fascia in good repair
- House numbers visible from public right of way
- Siding is weathertight and intact

PAINT

- Wood surface weather-protected
- No peeling, chipping, flaking or otherwise deteriorated paint

FOUNDATION

- Structurally sound
- Free from holes or gaps
- Proper grading

ROOF

- Free of leaks
- Structurally sound
- No loose or missing shingles
- Roof overhang free from deterioration
- No trees rubbing against the roof

EXISTING GUTTERS & DOWNSPOUTS

- Free of debris
- Properly attached and drains away from structure

PORCH/DECKS

- Structurally sound and in good repair
- Guardrails required if over 30 inches above grade

STAIRS/STEPS

- Securely attached and free of deterioration
- Graspable handrails required on stairs/steps with four or more steps/risers
- Snow shoveled at all building exit doors
- Continuous guardrails required on open sides of stairways 30 inches or more above grade

Premises and Accessory Structures

GARAGES/SHEDS

- In good repair and structurally sound
- Not open to trespass
- Exterior surfaces weather-protected and intact

FENCES

- Well-maintained
- Wood surfaces weather-protected

YARD

- Grass and weeds cut
- Volunteer trees & weeds must be removed
- Proper grading and ground cover
- No litter, car parts, yard waste, construction waste, or other miscellaneous debris
- Firewood neatly stacked and properly stored
- Compost is properly contained

VEHICLES/PARKING

- Parking only on approved parking surfaces in approved locations
- No abandoned, unlicensed, or inoperable vehicles
- Car repair prohibited (except minor repairs to occupant-owned vehicles)

Interior

WALLS & CEILINGS

- In good repair
- No loose wallpaper
- Free from holes
- No flaking, chipping, or peeling paint
- Free from water damage

FLOORS

- In good repair
- No holes
- Structurally sound
- No trip hazards (i.e. torn carpet)

HALLWAY/STAIRS

- Clear pathway
- Handrails/guardrails securely attached
- Continuous guardrails required on open sides of landings/stairways 30 inches or more above grade
- Graspable handrails
- Floor covering should be intact and secured to stairs

SLEEPING ROOMS

- Proper egress window or door open to the outside required

- Floor space shall be no less than 70 square feet with a seven foot minimum width
- Proper light and ventilation
- Window treatments required

WINDOWS

- No broken/cracked glass
- Easily openable and remains open without the use of a prop
- Openable windows must have screens in good repair
- Storm windows required except on double pane glass or better
- Weathertight
- Window frame and sashes must be free of cracked, chipped, peeling, chalking, or flaking paint and caulk

DOORS

- Fits frame and closes and latches securely
- Proper working hardware
- Weathertight and rodent proof
- Storm/screen doors are maintained in good condition with functioning closers
- Doors with pad lock hasps for locking shall be an automatic failure**

KITCHEN

- Cabinets and counters must be in good repair
- Hot (120 degrees) and cold running water with adequate pressure
- No loose or dripping faucets
- Appliances are plugged directly into outlets without the use of extension cords or adapters
- Appliances must be in working condition
- Drains must function properly, free of obstructions
- Electric stoves must be operational including all burners; otherwise it will be an automatic failure**
- Gas stoves are required to have all burners and pilot lights operable, otherwise this also is an automatic failure**

BATHROOM

- Sink and tub/shower properly installed and maintained in good repair with caulking intact
- Toilet properly installed with all components intact and properly secured, maintained and functioning
- Bathroom cabinets must be in good repair
- No loose or leaking faucets
- Mechanical venting must work if present
- Hot and cold running water with adequate pressure required to each fixture

Electrical, Mechanical & Plumbing

ELECTRICAL

- Adequate service and outlets
- Properly installed service panel
- Fixtures must be intact and properly functioning
- Extension cords cannot be used in lieu of permanent wiring
- Cover plates required on all outlets, switches, and junction boxes
- All wiring must be properly installed and maintained
- Ground fault interrupters (GFIs) if in the kitchen or bathroom must be operable

MECHANICAL

- Heating facility must be properly installed and maintained
- Maintain interior temperature of 68 degrees from October to May
- Temporary heating devices shall not be used as primary source of heat
- Fuel burning facility must be connected to an approved chimney, flue, or vent

PLUMBING

- All plumbing must be installed and maintained to code
- Gas flex connectors must be Underwriters Laboratory (UL) listed and approved
- Hot and cold running water with adequate pressure required to each fixture
- Waste lines must be properly installed and vented, "S" traps not allowed, no flexible waste lines
- No leaking faucets or pipes
- Unused gas & plumbing lines must be capped
- All pipes must be free from defects and obstruction, and properly secured

Occupancy

- Cellars/crawlspace shall not be used as habitable space
- Basements and attics must meet all permit construction requirements for light, ventilation, egress, etc. prior to being used as habitable space
- Rental license must be current with fees paid and up to date contact information
- Electrical, plumbing, and mechanical work in rental property requires a licensed contractor
- Any structural alterations or changes in building configuration require a permit

General Information

The above checklist is based on the St. James Code of Ordinances.

The above list of violations is not necessarily all-inclusive, but does indicate the most common in St. James. While scheduled inspections of the City of St. James are an opportunity for you to assure yourself that things are well with your property, they should not be relied upon to be the only check made on your rental unit.

Please Note: There will be no charge for the re-inspection when correction notices are issued. However, if at the re-inspection the issue is not fixed and the inspector has to come back again, then an additional fee will be imposed.

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