



*Checking
Residential Rental Property
For Safety and Code Compliance*

*Lancaster Redevelopment Agency
Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization Department
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, Ca. 93534
661-723-6172*

General Information

Residential Rentals

An inspection will be completed by a City of Lancaster Code Enforcement Officer. The owner/agent must be present during all inspections. The inspector will do a visual inspection for compliance with the 1997 Uniform Building Code and the Lancaster Municipal Code in effect on the date of the inspection, with a follow-up inspection as needed after completion of any outstanding work or repairs. The inspection will cover a range of minimum safety standards including, but not limited to the following:

Exterior

- Foundation, roof, cladding and exterior structure appear to be in sound functional condition, free of air/water leaks.
- Crawl space cover and hatchways are adequately secured and maintained.



Exits Egress

- Exits used for emergency egress must be accessible and unobstructed.
- At least one emergency door or window on each floor below the fourth, shall be openable from the inside without key, tool, or special knowledge, and must provide a full clear opening.
- Exterior windows should be latchable.
- Visible daylight around a closed window or door should be properly sealed.
- Two means of egress exit from each inhabited floor above 1st story if rented separately from lower levels.
- Two means of egress are usable from basement living unit: one egress may be for emergency use only such as an egress window.
- Egress window(s) for emergency use must have a minimum unobstructed clear opening of 5.7 square feet and be no more than 44" above the floor.

Stairways and Guardrails

- Stairs must be safe for use, in good condition and have handrails if four or more steps or risers exist.
- There is a guardrail for porches, balconies, landings, floor and roof openings, ramps, and decks with a drop-off to the ground of over 30".
- Risers and treads have uniform height and width with rise of 8" maximum and minimum of 9" width.
- Guardrails minimum of 36" height.



Fire Protection

- Fireplace/wood stove and chimney are in working order.
- In dwelling units constructed after 1996, smoke detectors must be installed in each bedroom, in each area adjacent to a bedroom(s), and at least one on each floor. Detectors must be connected to building electrical supply, be interconnected, and have battery backup power. Smoke detectors are installed per manufacturer's instructions.
- Dwelling units in existence before 1997, smoke detectors located on each floor. Detectors may be battery operated and installed per manufacturer's instructions.
- Unlined fireplaces are a potential fire hazard and should be inspected by a qualified professional.
- No combustibles stored in furnace/boiler or water heater compartment.
- BBQ's, hibachis and other outdoor cooking on wood decks or in close proximity to wood siding can be a serious fire hazard. Candles and halogen lights are also a cause of fires.

Lighting/Ventilation

- Sleeping rooms have natural lighting directly from the outside (window/skylight).
- Sleeping rooms have ventilation (natural or mechanical) directly to the outside.
- Natural ventilation is minimum of 1 window or skylight, openable to and contiguous with the outside not less than 1 sq. in. of outside air for each sq. ft. of floor area.
- Every bathroom, shower room or water closet compartment has mechanical ventilation to the outside air or one window openable to the outside.

Heating Systems

- Unvented gas heating appliances are not permitted.

Windows, Floors, Walls, Ceilings, and Doors

- Windows are unbroken, screened, open easily and weathertight. One window in each sleeping room will be no more than 44" from the floor.
- Doors are weathertight and hinges/latches operable.

Plumbing Fixtures

- All plumbing fixtures including Lavatory Basins, Kitchen Sink, Toilets, Tubs, Water Heaters, & Showers will be in working condition with hot and cold running water.

Electrical Equipment

- Electrical service entrance has enough to serve load • components all in working order and adequate circuitry for use.
- There are no visible signs of frayed, exposed, burnt insulation and/or unprotected electrical wiring.
- Accessible fixtures and electrical outlets are properly installed, including covers.
- Mechanical equipment areas have light.
- Rooming unit is a room or group of rooms, for one roomer, used for sleeping. Cooking devices are not allowed.
- Grounded type receptacles must be grounded or GFCI protected. Ungrounded (2-wire) systems may have ungrounded receptacles type (2 wire) receptacles.
- No adapters are permitted.
- Every habitable room shall contain two receptacles or one receptacle and one switched light.



WHERE TO BEGIN



Area Around The Rental Unit

Is the yard clean and well-maintained?

Do you have abandoned refrigerators/iceboxes with doors attached?

Are your weeds and grass cut so they are shorter than 12 inches?

Are your sidewalks/driveways kept free of obstructions?

Are your sheds, garages, fences and walls maintained?

Be sure vehicles are parked on a driveway surface, are operable, and currently tagged (except those stored within enclosed structures).

Trash Containers need to be leak proof, should be set at curbside on the scheduled trash day before 7:00 a.m. and **removed** as soon as possible after the trash is collected. The area must be cleaned of loose trash/spillage.



Outside The Rental Unit



Address is easily readable from the street.

Walls are weathertight and intact.

Windows are unbroken, screened, open easily and weathertight.

Doors are weathertight and hinges/latches operable.

Paint is weather resistant and not peeling.

Steps are in safe condition and handrails installed when more than 2 steps.

Porches/Decks have guard railings if deck is over 30" high; roof, deck, supports and railings are in structurally sound condition.

Foundation is structurally sound and free of defects such as cracking, buckling or bulging. Drainage should be directed away from the foundation.

Roof should be structurally sound; no sagging, does not have excessive layers of shingles, curled or missing shingles, no limbs hanging over roof, no rotted boards at eaves.

Chimney is secure, check for cracks/movement.

Gutters and Downspouts are functional and intact. Discharge shall properly terminate away from the structure.

Inside of Rental Unit

Is it clean, safe and well-maintained?

Is it free of rodent and insect infestation?

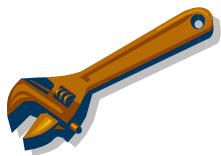
Are walls/ceilings clean, no loose or peeling paint or plaster and structurally sound. Be aware of lead-based paint. Tile joints in bathroom should be well sealed.

Floors are structurally sound, clean, and in good condition.

Doors to exterior are easily opened from inside, not blocked.

Windows will not be damaged or have broken glass, and will open freely. One window in each sleeping room will be no more than 44" from the floor.

Electrical System will have adequate service provided, 2 outlets per room; wiring, equipment and appliances properly installed and safely maintained.

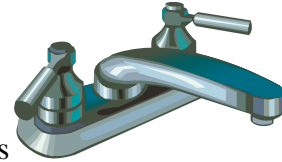


Know the location of:

- The main water shut-off valve
- The main electrical disconnect
- The circuit breaker or fuse panel
- The main gas valve/heating system disconnect

Kitchen Area

There will be a kitchen sink in every dwelling unit with hot and cold running water and no dripping faucets or leaks in drains or pipes.



There will be no cross connection of waste pipe and water supply lines

There will be no direct connection between private water supply and public water supply.

All countertop receptacle outlets shall be ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protected. Additional receptacle outlets for a refrigerator or garbage disposal shall be provided.

DANGER!

DON'T DO IT!

On a cold night, there's a real temptation to turn on the burners of a gas stove.

You and others within the structure can be over-come with carbon monoxide fumes.



Be aware of rodent and insect attractors such as:

- dirty dishes
- dirty stove/refrigerator
- uncovered food
- garbage in open containers
- cracked floor covering
- grease covered walls and ceilings

Bathroom(s)

Will have moisture resistant and sanitary floors and walls.

Will have a window with a minimum 1 ½ square feet opening or mechanical ventilation.

Will have at least one GFCI protected electrical outlet adjacent to each lavatory and one light fixture.

Will have assured privacy

Will have plumbing fixtures in working condition:

Will have a bathtub or shower with hot and cold running water.

Will have a lavatory with hot and cold running water.

Will have a toilet that will not run constantly.

There will be no cross-connection of waste pipe and water supply lines.



There will be no dripping faucets or leaks in drains or pipes.

Be Aware of Electrical Appliances Near Plumbing Fixtures.

Rental Maintenance Schedule

<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep garage doors closed. *Remove outdoor temporary lighting. *Remove any Christmas trees. *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors. 	<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep garage doors closed. *Clean closets, attics, area around fuel burning appliances for safety... *Trip circuit breakers and test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors. 	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors.
<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Flush the sump pump drain line. *Clean gutters and downspouts. *Trim tree limbs/shrubs away from roof. *Test batteries in smoke detectors and test smoke detectors. *Test GFCI outlets 	<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Change swamp cooler pad or air conditioning filters *Check for damaged, loose or missing siding, shingles, guttering and downspouts. *Trim shrubs away from siding. *Close and open main water shut-off valve. *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors. 	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep windows covered during the day to keep indoor temperature down. *Trim shrubs around heat pump/air conditioner. *Check windows and sliding doors for easy operation and lubricate tracks. *Repair damage to exterior siding and paint. *Maintain exterior paint on garage, shed, fence, & wood trim. *Test GFCI outlets and test smoke detectors.
<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep windows covered during the heat of the day to regulate *Conserve energy, use your oven sparingly; do laundry in the evening. *Trim shrubs around heat pump/air conditioner. *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors. 	<p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Check gutters and downspouts for blockage. *Check furnace and water heater for proper operation. Gas fueled appliances should have a clean, blue flame. If not, have a qualified contractor clean. *Trim shrubs around heat pump/air conditioner. *Trip circuit breakers and GFCI outlets. *Inspect and service garage door. *Test smoke detectors. 	<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Check your home for weather-stripping, attic insulation and broken windows. *Look for ads in the Lawrence Journal-World for the City's Weatherization Program, or call _____. *Clean out garage and sheds and remove anything that might freeze in unheated areas. Remove all potential fire hazards. *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors.
<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Check furnace and fireplace flues, have chimneys cleaned to ensure that they are not blocked by bird nests or debris. *Clean out roof and gable vents, check condition of vent screening. *Test batteries in smoke detectors and test smoke detectors. *Make and practice a fire escape plan. *Test GFCI outlets. 	<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Clean floor register grills. *Keep windows covered at night, open during daytime to allow the sun's heat in. *Check water pipes for freezing, take steps to ensure they won't. *Lubricate automatic garage door mechanism and inspect for wear. *Test GFCI outlets and test smoke detectors. 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Check furnace and water heater for proper operation. Gas fueled appliances should have a clean, blue flame. If not, have a qualified contractor clean. *Check all chimneys for proper drafting. *Check water pipes for freezing, leaks, etc. *Test GFCI outlets. *Test smoke detectors.

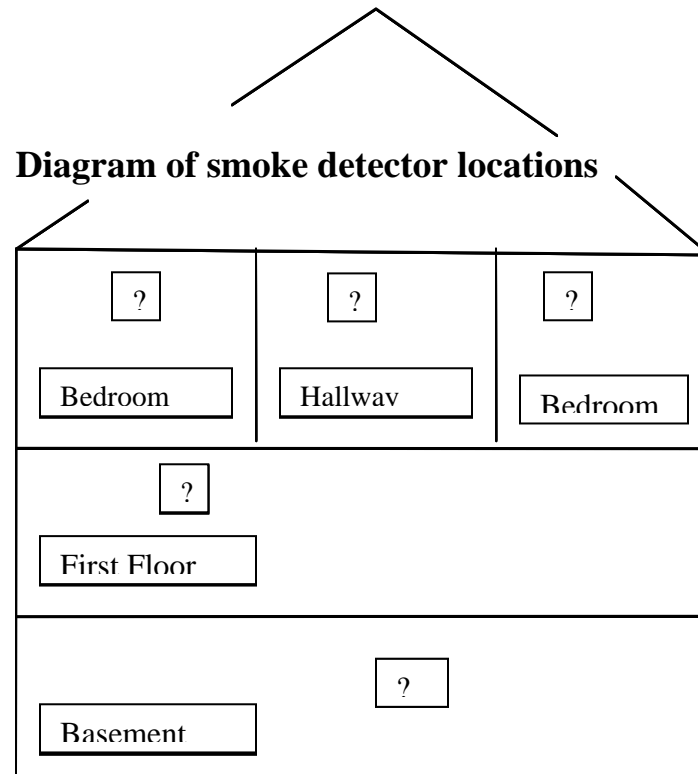
Smoke Detectors

Smoke Detectors

A smoke detector shall be located centrally in the hallway serving bedrooms.

A smoke detector shall be located on all levels within a dwelling unit.

Batteries should be checked frequently.



? = Smoke Detector

Minimum Occupancy Space Area For Each Dwelling Unit

Floor Area:

Every dwelling unit shall have at least one room with not less than 120 square feet of floor area.

Other habitable rooms, except kitchens, shall have an area of not less than 70 square feet.

When more than two persons occupy a room used for sleeping purposes, the required floor area shall be increased at the rate of 50 square feet for each occupant in excess of two.

EXCEPTION: Efficiency living unit within an apartment house:

Unit shall have a living room, not less than 220 square feet of superficial floor area. An additional 100 square feet of superficial floor area shall be provided for each occupant of such unit in excess of two.

The unit shall provide a separate clothes closet.

The unit shall provide a kitchen, cooking appliance and refrigeration facilities, each having a clear working space of 30" minimum in front.



Each unit shall have a separate bathroom containing a water closet, lavatory and bathtub or shower.

Room Width Requirements

Habitable rooms, except kitchens, minimum 7 feet in any dimension.

Water closet shall be located in a clear space not less than 30 inches in width and a clear space in front of the water closet of not less than 24 inches.

Ceiling Height Requirements

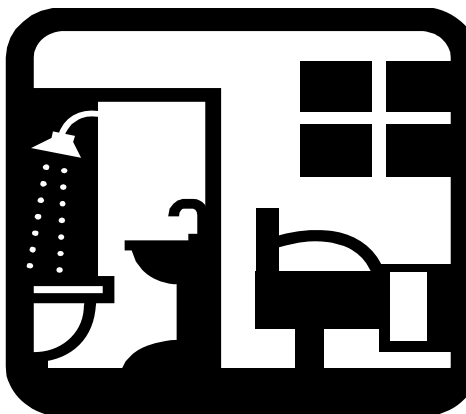
Habitable space 7 feet, 6 inches

EXCEPTIONS:

Kitchens, halls, bathrooms and toilet compartments may have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet measured to the lowest projection from the ceiling.

Exposed beam ceiling less than 48 inches on center, ceiling height measured to the bottom of those members.

Sloping ceiling, prescribed ceiling height for the room is only required for ½ of the area/room.



Cold Weather Precautions For Water Pipes

- * Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses
- * Insulate pipes or faucets in unheated areas
- * Seal off cracks to keep cold air out
- * Do not remove the water meter pit lid
- * Know where the inside main shut-off for your water service is
- * Leave cabinet doors open under sinks. This allows warm air to reach the water pipes, reducing the risk of frozen pipes.
- * Leave the heat on. When leaving for an extended period of time, leave the heat on in your home so the inside pipes won't freeze and break.

What If It's Too Late?

You wake up to find pipes are frozen

Call Your Plumber!

For your own protection, before making extensive repairs or alterations you should:

Be sure that they meet the requirements for building and zoning.
Obtain building permit if required.

Secure advice and estimates from reliable professionals.

Secure legal advice before contracts are signed or loans arranged.

