



## **Building Trades Board Meeting Agenda**

***Friday, January 27, 2023 - 12:00 PM***

Newton City Hall - Council Chambers  
101 W 4th St S  
Newton, IA 50208

- I. Roll Call
- II. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting: October 13, 2022
- III. Rental Housing Code Review
  1. Bedroom in Basement/Storage of Disassembled Bed (Newton Code Section 151.31 Exits)
  2. Garage Storage (Newton Code Section 151.43 Substandard Rental Units)
  3. Bedroom Ceiling Height (Newton Code Section 151.27 Space and Security; and International Property Maintenance Code, 2015 edition, Section 404.3 Minimum Ceiling Heights)
  4. Fixtures and Hardware (Newton Code Section 151.32 Natural Light, Natural Ventilation and Mechanical Ventilation; and Newton Code Section 151.41 Owner Responsibilities)
  5. Peeling Paint (150.006 Amendment to Property Maintenance Code, 2015 Edition, Section 304.2 Protective Treatment)
  6. Maximum Distance Between Guards (International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, Section R312.1.3 Opening Limitations)
- IV. Rental Housing Inspection Program Policy Review
  1. Enforcement of Nuisance Code (Chapter 94) through Rental Inspection
  2. Reinspection Requirement
  3. Review of Rental Inspection Checklist
- V. Adjourn

**Chair:** Rebecca Decker; **Members:** Carroll Depenning, Antonia Sicilia, Jack Topp, Bill Yeager (Vice Chair)

**Minutes of Meeting  
Newton Building Trades Board  
City Hall Council Chamber  
101 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street South  
Newton, IA 50208**

**October 13, 2022**

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Yeager, Topp, Decker, DePenning

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: Sicilia

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Erin Chambers, Community Development Director  
Jason Van Ausdall, Iowa Inspections  
Harrison Van Ausdall, Iowa Inspections  
Cole Farver, Property Owner

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Decker. At 12:06 PM

**Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Previous meeting minutes, March 17, 2022, were reviewed and approved unanimously. **Motion** by Topp, **second** by Yeager, Voice Vote: 4-0, Approved.

**Rental Housing Inspection Appeal: 314 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street North**

Chambers stated that while both properties are owned by the same person and can be discussed simultaneously, that it is necessary to have separate motions- one for each property. Chambers also recommended to the Chair that the proceedings begin with the appellant stating his case followed by the City Staff report and any information from Iowa Inspections.

Cole Farver, Property Owner 314 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street North and 205 East 19<sup>th</sup> Street South, addressed the board and stated that the violations are mostly related to the siding plus the smoke alarm and the electrical to the garage. Farver stated he feels like his concerns aren't being heard by the inspector. Farver described his challenges to complete derecho damage.

Chambers reviewed the staff report which provided the board with the following guidance: the board is tasked with determining whether or not the adopted codes and administrative requirements were properly applied. The role is not to waive code requirements or waive inspection fees.

Chambers asked Farver to state what he is requesting of the board. Farver stated that in his appeal he is stating that noted infractions should not be included because of the circumstances (Derecho) and that he should not be required to have a second inspection and that submitted photos should suffice.

DePenning asked if the photos were acceptable to Iowa Inspections. Jason Van Ausdall responded "no". Chambers stated that there are instances where photos showing a remedy to a violation could be accepted, but that those instances are limited to no more than 1-2 violations for the property, maybe 3, and that those items are not serious life-safety matters. The property at 314 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street North has 9 noted violations. Chambers stated that from the City Staff perspective, 9 is too many to be handled through submitted photos for 314 and that the listed 19 is too many to be handled through submitted photos for 205.

The Board reviewed the noted violations for 314 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street North, and Farver indicated that he is nearly complete with remedying the list. He stated that there is siding related work to be completed. Discussion on whether or not 30 days would be enough time. Farver expressed frustration about taking time away from his project to attend the meeting.

Decker asked if there were any more questions and asked if the board was ready for a motion.

**Motion** by DePenning, **seconded** by Topp to uphold the findings of Iowa Inspections for the property at 314 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street North and to uphold the requirement for an in-person inspection of the property when the property owner has completed the work with a deadline of 30 days. Roll Call Vote: 4-0, Approved.

**Rental Housing Inspection Appeal: 205 East 19<sup>th</sup> Street South**

Farver acknowledged that the property has some issues. Farver complained that at the time of the inspection, the inspector did not arrive at the property with all of the necessary tools to complete the inspection, namely the GFI tester. Farver complained that the inspection report included a violation for not having a GFI in the kitchen.

Jason and Harrison Van Ausdall addressed the concern and provided technical information on how inspectors can determine GFI compliance even without a tester. H. Van Ausdall confirmed that he did not have his GFI tester that day. H. Van Ausdall noted that there were 18 other violations at the property. Including the GFI item for the kitchen on the list of items insures that the property owner addresses the issue prior to the re-inspection. Because of the numerous violations, the property will need re-inspection.

Farver stated he wanted the City to know that the inspector arrived at the inspection unprepared. Chambers then asked Farver if his request was more of a complaint rather than an appeal of the application of the codes or a requirement of re-inspection. Farver agreed by stating this is a public complaint.

**Motion** by Topp to acknowledge receipt of Farver's complaint regarding the inspector not having a GFI tester at the inspection and noting that there is not an appeal request on the code or re-inspection requirements, **seconded** by Yeager, Roll Call Vote: 4-0, Approved.

**Motion** by Topp to adjourn the meeting, **seconded** by Yeager, 4-0, Approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:48 pm.

## Code Section: 151.31 Exits

(A) *Performance requirements.* Every rental dwelling and rooming unit shall have access to two independent, unobstructed means of egress remote from each other. Except for a dwelling or rooming unit of the first story or below grade, neither means of egress shall consist solely of a window approved for emergency escape or rescue. At least one mode shall be an exit which discharges directly to a corridor, stairway or public way. If both exits are to a common corridor, they shall permit emergency egress in two directions.

**Concern:** Cited for Basement Bedroom with no egress, Disassembled Bed in Basement

**Case(s) Information:** According to a review of all inspection reports, an illegal basement bedroom was a noted violation at 3 properties. Clear and obvious evidence of a bedroom is determined by the inspector, such as the example below (complaint to Council). An owner may choose to achieve compliance by constructing an egress window or requiring the illegal bedroom be removed.

**Example of cited bedroom:** Inspector cited illegal basement bedroom due to lack of egress requirement. Landlord concern that this does not constitute a bedroom because there is no "bed." (Mattress was removed from box-spring and placed elsewhere in the home). Photo below.



**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of City Code Section 151.31 Exits.

## Code Section: 151.43 Substandard Residential Units

(H) *Fire hazards.* Any building or portion thereof, device, apparatus, equipment, combustible waste or vegetation which, in the opinion of the Chief of Fire Department or his or her designee, is in such condition as to cause a fire or explosion or provide a ready fuel to augment the spread and intensity of fire or explosion arising from any cause shall be deemed a fire hazards.

(J) *Hazardous or unsanitary premises.* Hazardous or unsanitary premises shall include those premises on which an accumulation or weeds, vegetation, junk, dead organic matter, debris, garbage, offal, rat harborage, stagnant water, combustible materials and similar materials or conditions constitute fire health or safety hazards.

**Concern:** This concern relates to both fire and emergency safety and the requirement to maintain a space without too much “stuff.” The regulation addresses fire hazards to tenants and first responders caused by combustible material. Property owners/landlords think it is unreasonable to not allow garage storage.

**Case(s) Information:** According to a review of all inspection reports, an excessive fire load was a noted violation at 22 properties. A photo from one property is presented below for reference:



**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of City Code Section 151.43 (H) Fire hazards and 151.43 (J) Hazardous or unsanitary premises.

**Code Section: 151.27 Space and Security and Section 404.3 Minimum Ceiling Heights, International Property Maintenance Code, 2015 edition**

**§ 151.27 SPACE AND SECURITY.**

(B) *Structural requirements.*

(1) *Permissible occupancy; floor area per occupant for efficiency units.* Every efficiency unit shall contain at least 220 square feet of floor space for the first occupant and at least 100 additional square feet of floor space for every additional occupant. In determining the maximum permissible occupancy, the floor area of that part of a room where the ceiling height is less than five feet and shall not be considered when computing the total floor area of the room.

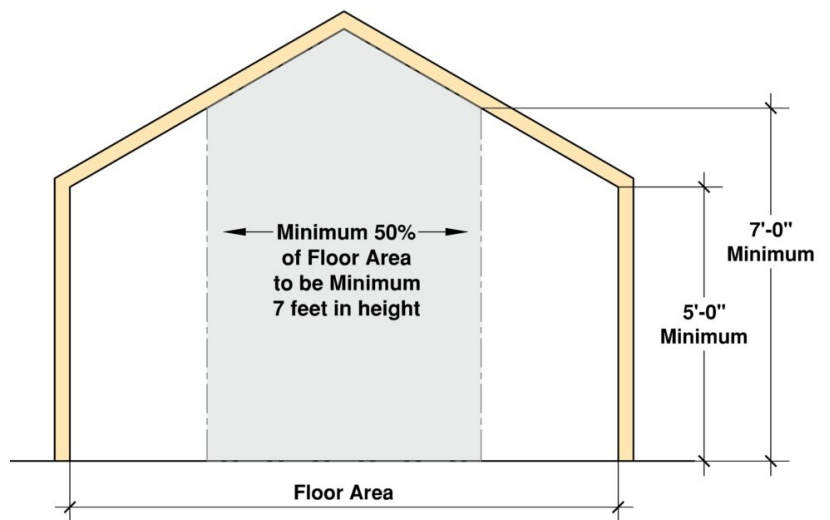
(4) *Ceiling heights.* The ceiling height in every habitable room shall be at least seven feet. Obstructions of space by such items as water and gas pipes, cabinetry and the like shall be permitted when such obstructions are located in such a fashion that they do not interfere with normal or emergency ingress or egress and are approved by the Inspector. In no event may an obstruction be located nearer than six feet, four inches to the floor.

The adopted 2015 International Property Maintenance Code also describes this requirement in more depth:

**404.3 Minimum ceiling heights.** *Habitable spaces, hallways, corridors, laundry areas, bathrooms, toilet rooms and habitable basement areas shall have a minimum clear ceiling height of 7 feet (2134 mm).*

**Exceptions:**

1. In one- and two-family dwellings, beams or girders spaced not less than 4 feet (1219 mm) on center and projecting a maximum of 6 inches (152 mm) below the required ceiling height.
2. *Basement* rooms in one- and two-family dwellings occupied exclusively for laundry, study or recreation purposes, having a minimum ceiling height of 6 feet 8 inches, 2033 mm) with a minimum clear height of 6 feet 4 inches (1932 mm) under beams, girders, ducts and similar obstructions.
3. Rooms occupied exclusively for sleeping, study or similar purposes and having a sloped ceiling over all or part of the room, with a minimum clear



ceiling height of 7 feet (2134 mm) over not less than one-third of the required minimum floor area. In calculating the floor area of such rooms, only those portions of the floor area with a minimum clear ceiling height of 5 feet (1524 mm) shall be included.

**Concern:** This concern relates ceiling height, particularly in upstairs bedrooms with sloped ceilings.

**Case(s) Information:** According to a review of all inspection reports, ceiling height was a noted violation at 2 properties. One property is a current rental and the bedroom upstairs was deemed illegal by the inspector with only 6 feet of clearance. The other was a property that a buyer was interested in converting into a rental, but did not do so after inspection.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of City Code Section 151.27 and International Property Maintenance Code, 2015 Edition, Code Section 404.3 Minimum ceiling heights.

**Code Section: 151.32 Natural Light, Natural Ventilation, and Mechanical Ventilation and 151.41 Owner Responsibilities**

**§ 151.32 NATURAL LIGHT, NATURAL VENTILATION AND MECHANICAL VENTILATION.**

(B) *Structural requirements.*

(2) *Doors.* Every door opening directly from a dwelling unit or rooming unit to the outdoor space shall fit reasonably tightly within its frame and shall be maintained in good order and a good state of repair.

**§ 151.41 OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES.**

(B) *Maintenance of structure.*

(3) *Doors/windows.* Every door and window, to include all hardware associated with every door and window, shall be maintained in good and functional condition and shall be capable of providing privacy.

**Concern:** This concern relates to the general maintenance and upkeep of a property. According to the City of Newton Rental Housing Inspection Program Administration Policy, this type of noted violation is considered “minor” and would not qualify as a major violation. A major violation is defined as:

*A violation of the rental housing code that if left as is would constitute an immediate threat to the life and/or safety of those living in the home (Examples could include: lack of or damaged water heater, boiler, or furnace flue; smoke detectors are missing, inoperable, or are improperly placed; storage of flammable liquids in a dwelling; electrical cords, wiring, or equipment that has begun to fail due to being overloaded or damaged).*

**Case(s) Information:** The only related noted violation identified was at one property which is as follows: “Door handle for the storm door in the front of the house needs to be secured, it is missing a screw.” This note was one of seven noted violations from that specific inspection.

Issues relating to a door handle specifically was a noted violation at 16 properties.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of City Code Section 151.32 and 151.41

**Code Section: 150.006 Amendment to Property Maintenance Code, 2015 Edition, Section 304.2 Protective Treatment**

**§ 150.006 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE.**

(4) Section 304.2 **Protective Treatment.** Amend third sentence as follows: “Peeling, flaking, and chipped paint, when it occurs on more than 50% of the exterior surfaces for the entire structure, shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted.”

**Concern:** The concern of property owners may have already be addressed by this local amendment to the property maintenance code. This issue has not appeared very often in inspection reports since sometime in 2020.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of City Code Section 150.006 which amends Section 304.2 Protective Treatment of the Property Maintenance Code.

Note: Here is what the un-amended version of Section 304.2 of the Property Maintenance Code looks like:

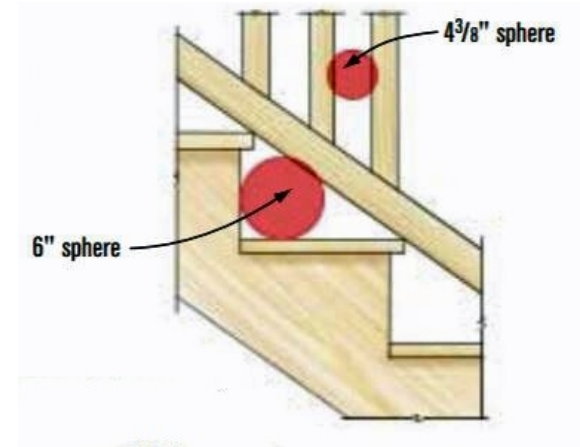
**304.2 Protective treatment.** Exterior surfaces, including but not limited to, doors, door and window frames, cornices, porches, trim, balconies, decks and fences, shall be maintained in good condition. Exterior wood surfaces, other than decay-resistant woods, shall be protected from the elements and decay by painting or other protective covering or treatment. Peeling, flaking and chipped paint shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted. Siding and masonry joints, as well as those between the building envelope and the perimeter of windows, doors and skylights, shall be maintained weather resistant and water tight. Metal surfaces subject to rust or corrosion shall be coated to inhibit such rust and corrosion, and surfaces with rust or corrosion shall be stabilized and coated to inhibit future rust and corrosion. Oxidation stains shall be removed from exterior surfaces. Surfaces designed for stabilization by oxidation are exempt from this requirement.

## Code Section: International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, Section R312.3 Opening Limitations

**R312.1.3 Opening limitations.** Required *guards* shall not have openings from the walking surface to the required *guard* height that allow passage of a sphere 4 inches (102 mm) in diameter.

### Exceptions:

1. The triangular openings at the open side of stair, formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail of a *guard*, shall not allow passage of a sphere 6 inches (153 mm) in diameter.
2. *Guards* on the open side of stairs shall not have openings that allow passage of a sphere 4  $\frac{3}{8}$  inches (111 mm) in diameter.



**Concern:** This concern relates to fall hazards and physical safety.

**Case(s) Information:** The complaint is regarding a citation issued for too much space between balusters on an existing deck.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion confirming, amending, or striking the language of International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, Section 312.3 Opening Limitations.

**Policy Concern:** Enforcement of Nuisance Code (Chapter 94) through Rental Inspection

**Concern:** That properties are failing rental inspection for nuisance matters, triggering re-inspections.

**Past Case Information:** According to a review of all inspection reports, a tree-related issue was noted at 15 properties. Of those 15 noted issues, five were recommendations to the owner to remove a tree and/or a hanging/broken branch, six were issues relating to clean-up of fallen debris, branches, etc., and four were related to property damage caused by fallen or broken limbs.

**Staff Comment:** Nuisance Code is applicable to all properties in Newton and is primarily inspected and enforced through the Newton Police Department. In an effort to achieve an efficient organization, identifying nuisance violations at the time of the rental inspection just makes sense as opposed to sending a note to the Newton Police Department who will send out a Community Service Officer for another inspection, and proceeding from there. Adding time to the matter for all involved (including not only City staff but also the neighbors living near the nuisance).

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion providing a procedural policy recommendation on whether or not a Rental Inspection should include issues found in Chapter 94, City of Newton Nuisances.

**Other Note:** Complaints regarding the citation of dead trees continue to arise. Current Nuisance Code does not address dead trees in the same manner as trash/garbage, debris, etc. Property owners will only be cited for dead trees when the Newton City Council has passed a resolution identifying said tree as a threat to the community. Therefore, a dead tree will not be a cited nuisance. Applicable code section:

**§ 94.05 TREES AND SHRUBS.**

(H) *Trees subject to removal.* The Council, having determined by specific resolution, that the health of the trees within the city is threatened by a fatal disease, fungus or infestation, whatever is injurious to health, indecent, unreasonably offensive to the senses, and/or an obstruction to the free use of property so as essentially to interfere unreasonably with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property hereby declares the following shall be removed:

- (1) *Living or standing trees.* Any living or standing tree or part thereof infected with the disease, fungus or infestation;
- (2) *Dead trees.* Any dead tree or part thereof including logs, branches, stumps, firewood or other material which has not received effective treatment of the disease, fungus or infestation; and
- (3) *Cottonwood trees.* Cotton-bearing cottonwood trees and all other cotton-bearing poplar trees are subject to removal as a general nuisance.

**Policy Concern: Re-inspection Requirement Trigger**

**Concern:** That there is too much gray area on when a re-inspection is required or can be handled by sending pictures to the inspector.

**Past Case Information:** In an effort to work with the property owners, the inspection company has allowed properties with only a few minor matters to avoid the in-person re-inspection (with inspection fee) by sending a picture of the repair.

**Staff Comment:** Staff appreciates the effort of the inspection company to work with property owners to make the process easier. That said, it appears that removing as much of the “gray” area as possible would be helpful to all involved.

**Staff Recommendation:** Establishing in the program policy that if there are three or more noted violations, an in-person inspection is required and cannot be performed via electronic means. If there are two or fewer inspection violation items that do not pose an immediate threat to life safety and do not require in-person testing or observance, the inspector may accept proof of compliance by electronic means.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion providing a procedural policy recommendation on the re-inspection requirement.

Community Development Department  
403 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St. N., Ste. 501  
Newton, IA 50208  
641-792-6622  
[www.newtongov.org](http://www.newtongov.org)

## City of Newton Rental Inspection Checklist

All rental properties within the City of Newton must be regularly inspected according to the schedule in the Administrative Policy. The checklist below is a simplified summary of items that will be inspected during the inspection process. This document should be understood as general guidance to the Rental Housing Inspection Program and should not be construed as a legally binding code. More information and references can be reviewed within the Newton Municipal Code Chapter 151: Minimum Rental Housing Code and/or additional information can be provided by the Community Development Department.

**\*HIGHLIGHTED TEXT** = MOST FREQUENT NOTED VIOLATIONS

**\*RED TEXT** = NEW LANGUAGE ADDED

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE

- Property owner applies for minimum rental housing occupancy permit for each dwelling unit before tenants can be allowed.
- Ownership (and, if applicable, management) contact information clearly identified on the application.
- Rental Housing Permit applied for and renewed each year.
- Registration and permit fees paid and addressed to "City of Newton."
- Inspection conducted once every three years for properties (landlord submits payment directly to inspector).
- Contact information posted visibly on site.
- Chimneys appear to be structurally safe and undamaged.
- Foundation appears to be in adequate and in good repair
- Property does not have broken, rotten, split, or buckled walls.
- Stairways, porches, decks, and balconies have flooring, supports, and handrails in acceptable condition (i.e., structurally sound - firmly fastened and properly anchored, capable of supporting all nominal loads and resisting load effects; a 4-inch sphere should not be able to pass between guards on open side, etc.).
- Site appears to have adequate grading and drainage.
- Known cisterns, wells, or other hazards are fenced, covered, or filled.
- Property is not overgrown with weeds or brush. Yard is properly mowed.

### EXTERIOR AREAS/STRUCTURE

- Property has address number(s) clearly visible from the street.
- Roof and walls not deteriorated and don't have paint peeling in excess of 50% of the exterior surfaces for the entire structure.
- Accessory building(s) and fence(s) are in acceptable condition (i.e., structurally sound and in good repair, capable of withstanding imposing wind and snow loads; no visible leaning or broken/missing pickets).
- Doors are operable and locks are functional. Sleeping areas should have doors latchable or lockable from within for privacy and safety. Latches or locks should be of the type to permit swift emergency exit in accordance with the International Fire Code.
- Windows and skylights are operable and undamaged. No torn screens or broken windowpanes.
- Property does not have an accumulation of garbage, junk, rubbish, or debris (e.g., paper, plastics, metals, boxes, dead organic matter, etc.).
- Property is not providing habitation for rodents, wild animals, or other vermin.
- Property doesn't have illegal vehicles on site.
- Property does not have unsafe storage and/or an excessive accumulation of combustible materials or conditions that constitute fire, health, or safety hazards. Required clearances to combustible materials shall be maintained.
- If the property has guttering, it is in a safe and acceptable condition (e.g., free from obstructions, no leaks, discharged in a manner that does not create a public nuisance, etc.).

## INTERIOR AREAS/STRUCTURE

- Walls, ceilings, and floors are structurally sound and in acceptable condition. No splitting, sagging, leaning, or buckling due to defective material or deterioration.
- The building is maintained in a safe and sanitary manner (e.g., surfaces are kept reasonably clean and free from dirt or greasy film; insects, rodents, or other pests on the premises are not evident; rubbish, garbage, and any other organic waste is properly disposed of or stored in appropriate facilities or containers).
- The dwelling unit shall contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve foods in a sanitary manner (e.g., adequate counter and appliances, facilities for temporary storage of food wastes and garbage are maintained in sanitary condition, no missing or broken cabinet doors, etc.).
- All stairs are in acceptable condition. All stairs must have handrails and balusters or similar feature(s) that prevents a fall hazard from the open-side (e.g., guards required if more than 30 inches above floor/grade; a 4-inch sphere should not be able to pass between guards on open side, etc.).
- Handrails are firmly fastened and in acceptable condition for all stairs (i.e., firmly fastened and properly anchored, capable of supporting all nominal loads and resisting load effects).
- All habitable rooms are provided with adequate electrical service for proper illumination. Natural light is provided in all habitable rooms.
- Every door and window, to include all hardware associated with every door and window, shall be maintained in good and functional condition and shall be capable of providing privacy.
- There is adequate ventilation and no signs of leakage or mold inside.
- The carpet is not excessively ripped or torn creating a possible trip hazard.
- There is no evidence of mice or rodents.

## PLUMBING

- Rental unit has use of functioning kitchen sink, toilet, and bathtub or shower.
- All applicable fixtures have hot and cold water and are connected to sanitary sewer system with proper clearance for usage and cleaning.
- Every plumbing fixture and water and waste pipe shall be maintained in good and sanitary working condition.

- Bathrooms provide adequate privacy and ventilation for users.

## ELECTRICAL/MECHANICAL

- Electrical service is properly maintained and is sufficient to support the electrical usage.
- Adequate clearance for service is provided on the control side of all HVAC and utility appliances.
- Each unit has heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms and bathrooms. Cooking appliances and portable heating units shall not be used to provide heating to meet requirement.
- All electrical equipment, wiring, lighting, and appliances are properly installed and maintained in a safe and approved manner. No unsafe, exposed wiring is in the living area.
- No temporary wiring or extension cords shall be used to connect portable electric fixtures to convenience outlets.
- Electrical panels are accessible, clearly marked, and circuits are properly labeled.
- All necessary electrical equipment is properly installed (e.g., knockouts, clamps, connectors, wiring, conductors, fittings, apparatus, devices, appliances, fixtures, signs or parts thereof).
- Fuel-fired equipment has appropriate and functioning flues and shutoff valves.
- Every habitable room and every bathroom contains at least one (1) properly installed electrical outlet.
- Every laundry room contains at least one (1) grounded-type receptacle or a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Air exhausted by a mechanical ventilation system from a bathroom or toilet room shall discharge to the outdoors and shall not be recirculated.
- Clothes dryers shall be exhausted/vented in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall be independent of all other systems.
- There are cover plates on all outlets, switches, and junction boxes.
- GFCI outlets installed for all outlets within six (6) feet of a water source.
- Water heaters have a properly installed pressure relief valve (PRV) with the discharge pipe reaching to within six inches of the floor.

## FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- Place one smoke alarm in each sleeping room. Place one smoke alarm immediately outside of sleep areas (e.g., hallway). Place at least one smoke alarm on each floor, including the basement.
- Each unit has an appropriately-sized, ABC-rated fire extinguisher.
  - For single-family properties, one properly maintained fire extinguisher, with a minimum size of 1-A 5-BC, must be present within the home.
  - For multi-family properties, there must be a minimum 2-A 10-BC extinguisher – checked and tagged by a qualified service person annually – located within 75 feet of each unit's main entrance with a minimum of one (1) per floor or within each unit.
- Place one carbon monoxide detector immediately outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms (e.g., hallway). There must be at least one carbon monoxide detector on each floor, including the basement (Only applies to properties with a potential carbon monoxide source).
- Fire alarm and suppression systems properly installed and operational where required.
- Two clear and passable egress routes exist for each floor above the first floor. Exit signs are in working condition.
- Except for a sleeping room on the first story or below grade, neither means of egress shall consist solely of a window approved for emergency escape or rescue.
- All sleeping rooms have safe and appropriate access to a functioning window for egress. Sleeping rooms are prohibited in basements without an appropriate secondary egress route such as an approved egress window and well.
- All egress doors and windows are operable from the inside without the need for keys, special knowledge, or effort.
- All fire resistance rating of walls, fire stops, floors, and doors, etc. are properly maintained.

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**As a rental property owner or manager reviewing this checklist, you may be curious about what items are most commonly noted as violations during rental inspections. The list below is meant to summarize the violations that have been identified the most frequently in Newton rental units. Similar to the inspection checklist above, this is not meant to be an all-encompassing list, but it should help you ensure your property passes the first inspection.**

- **Fire Safety** --- inadequate number of or improper placement of smoke and CO detectors, missing fire extinguisher, blocked egress routes, etc.
- **Electrical-related issues** --- outlet(s) within 6 feet of water source not GFI, missing electrical panel knockouts or labels, missing outlet/switch covers or junction boxes, exposed wiring, etc.
- **Fall hazards** --- anything 30 inches above the floor/grade shall have guards; handrail needed if 4+ risers; a 4-inch sphere should not be able to pass between guards on open side, etc.
- **Major appliance issue** --- missing/improper installation/malfunction of water heater, water heater discharge pipe, dryer exhaust/vent, furnace, bathroom ventilation, etc.
- **Windows** --- Broken, cracked, inoperable, or blocked (egress) window