



## **Building Trades Board Meeting Agenda**

***Friday, February 10, 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: January 27, 2023
- III. 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
- IV. Adjourn

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

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

**January 27, 2023**

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Yeager, Topp, DePenning

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: Sicilia, Decker

STAFF AND ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Erin Chambers, Community Development Director  
Matt Muckler, City Administrator  
Melvin Duncan, Building Official  
Brian Dunkelberger, City Planner  
Jarrod Wellik, Fire Chief  
Randy Ervin, City Council  
Evelyn George, City Council  
Michael Hansen, Mayor

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The meeting was called to order by V. Chair Yeager. At 12:00 PM

**Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Previous meeting minutes, October 13, 2022, were reviewed and approved unanimously. **Motion** by Topp, **second** by DePenning, Voice Vote: 3-0, Approved.

**Rental Housing Code Review**

- 1.) Bedroom in Basement/Storage of Disassembled Bed (Newton Code Section 151.31 Exits). Staff reviewed the prepared information sheet on the matter, which included reading the code as adopted and reviewing case information. Yeager asked for public comment.

Fred Rhodes, 1099 S 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue E, Newton, stated he has not concerns with storage in a basement and indicated that his understanding of the case where this was cited was a storage matter.

Topp stated he sees no reason to change the code. DePenning agreed. **Motion** by Topp, **second** by DePenning to confirm 151.31 as is. Voice Vote: Approved, 3-0.

- 2.) Garage Storage (Newton Code Section 151.43 Substandard Rental Units). Staff reviewed the prepared information sheet on the matter, which included reading the code as adopted and providing case information. Yeager asked for public comment.

Julia Prendergast, 3173 Highway T-12 N, Newton, stated that she believes it is reasonable to allow tenants to store stuff in their garage. Prendergast stated that she is wanting to be realistic to her tenants.

Topp noted the process of appeal, noting that if a property owner thinks the judgement made on the code was incorrect, the board can review it by specific case.

**Motion** by Topp, **second** by DePenning to confirm 151.43 as is. Voice Vote: Approved, 3-0.

- 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). Staff

reviewed the information sheet from the agenda packet on the item, which included reading aloud the code section and case information. Yeager asked for public input.

Fred Rhodes stated that the community has older housing stock and that building codes change over time. There are 100 year old homes that don't meet modern codes and the rules are striking these homes from the rental housing stock. Landlords can't control what renters do in terms of allowable bedrooms. Rhodes asked for the board to consider grandfathering in this case.

Topp asked Rhodes to clarify that the rule is taking an existing home out of commission. Rhodes stated he believed so. Topp noted the allowances for Existing Buildings and code requirements.

Mel Duncan, Building Official, noted that the commission consider the situation when the home was built 100 years ago. Was it built as a rental?

Topp stated that the concern on an individual level should be brought to the board as an appeal.

**Motion** by Top, **second** by DePenning to confirm 151.43 and IPM, 2015 edition, 404.3. Voice Vote: 3-0, Approved.

- 4.) Fixtures and Hardware (Newton Code Section 151.32 Natural Light, Natural Ventilation, and Mechanical Ventilation; and Newton Code Section 151.41 Owner Responsibilities. Staff reviewed the prepared information sheet for the item, including reading the code as adopted and providing case history. Yeager asked for public input.

No comments.

**Motion** by Topp to confirm 151.32 and 151.41 as adopted, **second** DePenning. Voice Vote: Approved 3-0.

- 5.) Peeling Paint (150.006 Amendment to Property Maintenance Code, 2015 Edition, Section 304.2 Protective Treatment. Staff reviewed the information sheet on the item, which included reading the amended code as adopted by the City and also reading the original code as found in the Property Maintenance Code. Staff noted the local inclusion of chipped and peeling paint on more than 50% of all exterior surfaces as being the local amendment. Yeager asked for public comment.

Jeff Davis, address not given, asked about the applicability of the code wondering if it applies the same to all properties in Newton. Community Development Director Chambers responded yes. Davis asked if it has been applied to more than rentals. Chambers responded yes and stated seven cases in the past year of privately owned property.

**Motion** by Topp to confirm 150.006 as adopted, **seconded** by DePenning. Voice Vote: 3-0.

- 6.) Maximum Distance between Guards (International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, Section R312.1.3 Opening Limitations). Staff reviewed the information sheet on the item, including reading the code as adopted. Concern in the past has been regarding balusters on an existing deck. Yeager asked for public comment.

Fred Rhodes stated that he is aware of a situation where this was a violation, but is not the owner. The situation is on an older building and instead of the 4 inch sphere it was something like 4 ¼ inch sphere. Really close. Rhodes stated that sometimes it is really hard and you get really close to the requirement but not quite there.

Julia Prendergast asked about judgement issues wondering if the inspector has latitude in cases where it is close. Chambers responded that when a specific standard, say a measurement, is articulated by the code, there is no leeway given to the inspector. On the other hand, codes may not specify exactly what constitutes a violation, for example, too much stuff as a fire hazard. Those are judgements that the inspector is asked to make, and if a property owner disagrees there is an appeal process.

**Motion** by Topp, **seconded** by Carroll to confirm IRC, 2015 edition, R312.1.3 as adopted. Voice Vote: Approved, 3-0.

### Rental Housing Inspection Program Policy Review

- 1.) Enforcement of Nuisance Code (Chapter 94) through Rental Inspection Staff reviewed the information sheet on the topic. The concern is that rental properties are failing for nuisance matters, triggering paid re-inspections. Nuisance code applies to all properties in Newton and is primarily enforced by Newton PD. Building Trades Board is being asked to provide procedural policy recommendation on whether or not rental inspection should include Nuisance Code items (Chapter 94). Review of current dead tree rules, which are only enforced after resolution of City Council to do so.

Fred Rhodes stated that when this new program began, the landlords were given a list and now the list keeps changing. He stated it is a burden and nothing else should be added.

Brian Dunkelberger, City Planner, stated that in 2019 when program was adopted the checklist was never meant to be all encompassing. Dunkelberger gave additional history on the program.

Jeff Davis stated that he believes there has been miscommunication between the city and landlords with regards with the list. With regards to nuisance enforcement, landlords are concerned about not being treated the same. If nuisances are included, it would be like rental properties are being double patrolled. Appeals can take more time out of our day.

Cory Blood, 9550 Hickman Road, Des Moines. Noted that nuisance violations go beyond trees. He thinks nuisances should not be included as part of the rental inspection process.

Jonathan Durant, 519 South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, Newton stated that he has dealt with a lot of inspectors. He believes the big concern is the amount of control given to inspector and ability to come back and charge for re-inspection. Durant stated there is no reason to give somebody else control when another department is handling it.

**Motion** by Topp to postpone this item to the next Building Trades Board Meeting, **seconded** by DePenning. Voice Vote: Approved, 3-0.

- 2.) Re-inspection Requirement

Staff stated that the policy concern here is that there is too much gray area on when an in person re-inspection is required or can be handled by electronic means. In-person re-inspections have a re-inspection fee to the property owner associated with it. The Building Trades Board is being asked for policy guidance on clearly defining when a re-inspection by electronic means is okay and when an in-person re-inspection is necessitated.

Fred Rhodes stated the re-inspection thing is a challenge. That having the inspector come back for 2 minor things causes landlords to pay an additional \$75.

Dan Kunkel, 405 Walnut, Baxter stated that he believes that the re-inspection fee is an incentive to the inspector to fail properties. Before when Fire Department handled the program, there weren't re-inspection fees. Kunkel stated he believes the inspector is given too much power. Kunkel stated he is concerned about the money.

Cory Blood stated he is also concerned about re-inspections and the incentive to the inspector for the re-inspection fee.

Joyce Prendergast, 5672 South 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, stated she was dinged on three things: totes in the basement with toys in the way of a breaker box, a grill on the deck, and a broken cover plate. She stated a re-inspection was required. Prendergast stated that there should be limitations when it is minor things.

**Motion** by Yeager to postpone this item to the next Building Trades Board Meeting, **seconded** by DePenning. Voice Vote: Approved 3-0.

Topp asked for some case studies to be provided to the board.

- 3.) Review of Rental Inspection Checklist. Staff stated that the checklist provided in the packet has been enhanced to provide more information. Those enhancements are shown in red-print. The highlighted text are items that are the most common problems during inspections. The list is not all encompassing, but rather a tool to assist property owners. All of the adopted codes are required, which is impossible to include on a small checklist.

Cory Blood stated that he wants a clear reference of the codes being violated, which the checklist doesn't provide.

Joyce Prendergast (from the audience) asked if this list was posted publicly before the meeting. Staff responded and stated the full agenda packet was on the City's website. The list has not been posted to the "rental" section as it is a draft.

Fred Rhodes asked that the group postpone this item so they can have a chance to look at it.

Jeff Davis stated that there has been a miscommunication. Landlords previously thought that the checklist was the only items they needed to follow.

Julia Prendergast stated that the list keeps growing and it is hard to know what we need to know. She believes the City has adopted more than what the State has.

Joyce Prendergast stated that the list is open to interpretation. She stated that the appeals process takes time that they don't have. She stated that it is hard to make a living as a landlord.

Carl Smith, Kellogg, questioned the common sense for inspecting the homes.

**Motion** by Yeager to postpone this item to the next Building Trades Board Meeting, **seconded** by Topp. Voice Vote: Approved, 3-0.

Yeager thanked citizens for attending the meeting and participating.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:31 pm.



## Memorandum

To: Building Trades Board

Date: February 3, 2023

Re: Enforcement of Nuisance Code (Chapter 94) through Rental Inspection

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

**Chapter 94 of City Code & 2015 International Property Maintenance Code:** It is recognized that there is overlap between the 2015 International Property Maintenance code and Chapter 94 of City Code (Nuisances).

For the purposes of this matter, it may be helpful to consider nuisance issues which occur in the yard vs. nuisance issues which are part of the building (such as garbage on an unenclosed porch)

**Staff Recommendation:** Following the citizen input, staff agrees that nuisance code matters for items that are not part of the building or buildings on the property should be handled by the Community Services Officers. Such items could include tall grass/weeds, junk vehicles, snow on sidewalks, property not seeded/sodded, etc.

Staff recommends that nuisance issues that are also included in the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code should only be noted as part of the rental inspection when those issues are within a building envelope on the property (including in or upon un-enclosed deck or porch, garage, etc.).

**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.



## Memorandum

To: Building Trades Board  
Date: February 3, 2023  
Re: In-Person Re-inspection Requirement

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**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.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff acknowledges that there are some simple violations which can be handled via electronic means while there are other violations which cannot. Staff recommends an amendment to the "Inspections" section of the Administrative Policy which provides clearer guidance on when an inspection by electronic means can be accepted and when it cannot. There is also one blank included in the excerpt below, regarding the maximum allowable number of issues to be handled by e-inspection. Building Trades Board should make a recommendation on what should be inserted in that space, as well as any adjustments to the proposed new language.

**Administrative Policy Excerpt, with Proposed Changes/Additions in RED:**

### **INSPECTIONS**

The property owner will pay for the inspection at the time it is conducted. If the inspection is conducted by a contracted entity, the owner/owner's representative shall pay the inspector directly for the inspection at the time of inspection. Inspection fees will be established in accordance with the adopted fee schedule and, if relevant, the approved contract with the contracted entity.

The inspector shall conduct the inspection in-person and shall visually inspect all exterior and interior spaces of the rental property. The inspector shall inspect all sides of the exterior structure and the grounds of the property. The inspector shall inspect every room in the rental property. The inspection shall be focused on building regulations identified in the Newton Code of Ordinances, as summarized in the Rental Housing Inspection Checklist (Appendix B). A rental property is considered to have "passed" the inspection once the inspector completes an inspection, finds no violations, and submits their approval to issue the Rental Permit. The completed and signed Rental Permit will remain on file in the Community Development Department. A digital copy of the completed form may be provided to the property owner or owner's

representative, if requested.

It is the inspector's responsibility to determine if a particular violation constitutes a major violation. If a major violation – summarized, but not limited to, the list below – is found, a mandatory re-inspection is required within forty-eight (48) hours. If a major violation is identified, the inspector may deem the rental property or rental unit uninhabitable until corrections are made and a re-inspection has been completed.

### **MAJOR VIOLATIONS REQUIRING A MANDATORY 48-HOUR REINSPECTION:**

1. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors (if applicable) that are missing, inoperable, or are improperly placed.
2. Storage of flammable liquids in a dwelling.
3. Fuel fired equipment with missing or inoperable flues.
4. Electrical cords or wiring that shows signs of failure.
5. Inoperable heating system during winter months, generally considered between November and March.
6. Other life safety issues or items as determined by the designated inspector.

If the above items are not corrected prior to re-inspection, the property shall be considered non-compliant with this Rental Housing Inspection Program and may be subject to penalties described in the Failure to Comply section. In accordance with the Newton Code of Ordinances, immediate vacation of the property may be required.

### **MINOR VIOLATIONS REQUIRING SIXTY (60) DAY REINSPECTION:**

All other violations shall be corrected within sixty (60) calendar days of the original inspection. If the violations are not corrected prior to re-inspection, the property shall be considered non-compliant with this Rental Housing Inspection Program and may be subject to penalties described in the Failure to Comply section. This may include the revocation of the rental permit and the immediate vacation of the rental property and/or rental unit(s).

(a). **Re-Inspections by Electronic Means.** In instances where a rental property has been found to have   or fewer minor violations with no major violations and each of those violations can meet the following criteria, a re-inspection by electronic means, without charge of a re-inspection fee, may be accepted by the inspector.

(b). **Criteria for Re-Inspection by Electronic Means.** Issues that are either defined as Major Violations, require in-person testing or operation by the inspector, or are related to structural deficiencies are not eligible for re-inspection by electronic means.

Only issues that are related to the condition or appearance of an element and those that can be easily conveyed to the inspector by electronic means are eligible. These issues include:

1. Matters of element condition such as visible house numbers, cover plates, light domes, remediated peeling paint, missing hardware, and the like.
2. Measurable repairs requiring only a ruler or measuring tape and where the measurement tool and the repaired element can be clearly viewed such as distance between guards, stair riser, smoke detector placement distance to ceiling, distance of window to floor for proper egress (step), and the like.
3. Repairs that required a building or trades permit from the City of Newton and were inspected by the City of Newton Building Official.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion recommending an amendment to the Rental

Inspection Program Administrative Policy governing the re-inspection requirement, which includes a maximum number of violations to be allowed to be re-inspected by electronic means and criteria for eligible violations to be allowed to be re-inspected by electronic means.



## Memorandum

To: Building Trades Board  
Date: February 3, 2023  
Re: Review of Rental Inspection Checklist

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**Concern:** That properties have been cited for code violations which are not expressed on the Rental Inspection Checklist. *Note: Properties are not being cited for violations which do not appear in the adopted codes for the City of Newton.*

**Staff Recommendation:** Attached is a revised Rental Inspection Checklist, which serves as a helpful tool to property owners regarding the most common issues noted in rental properties.

All adopted codes are required of property owners, as has always been the case. Staff recommends updating the list to provide more assistance to landlords with the understanding that the list cannot possibly be all encompassing of all of the adopted codes.

See attached revised checklist for review, comment, or recommended amendment.

**Building Trades Board Action Request:** Motion recommending amendments to the Rental Inspection Checklist.

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