



Department of Housing

Preparing for your Rental Inspection

This information is provided and designed to assist landlords with understanding the basic regulations adopted for rental properties in order to prepare for successful rental inspections and property maintenance. It DOES NOT address all code-related items. For more detailed information, please refer to the City of Altoona Ordinance Chapter 162 and the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code. A copy of the Housing Department Inspector's Checklist may be obtained at the Housing Department Office.

It shall be the duty of the property owner or his or her acting agent to inform all tenants of any upcoming rental inspections. **The owner or his/her acting agent must be present for all inspections.** For additional information or questions, please call us at 515-957-5128, or visit our website at www.altoona-iowa.com. Navigate to Departments > Community Development > Housing.

EXTERIOR

- Address needs to be posted on wall of building facing street. One and two family dwellings shall have numbers at least 3" in height. Multi-family dwellings shall have numbers at least 6" in height.
- Make sure all trash, junk and rubbish is picked up and disposed of properly, bins are not overflowing.
- Make sure all walkways are safe, there are no abrupt changes in elevation, and all exit doors are unobstructed.
- Make sure that there is no rotting wood, missing siding, or chipping paint.
- Verify that all steps and stairways are structurally sound and in good condition, and that rise/run is even.
- Verify that all handrails and guardrails are in place and structurally sound for stairs, balconies, decks and porches.
- All exterior entrances/exits are illuminated.
- Verify that all windows are in good, sound condition – no broken glass in windows.
- All screens in place for openable windows. (Screens are required April 1 – October 31)
- All existing outside electrical receptacles shall be GFCI protected.
- Parking lot surface and driveways are sufficient, not dilapidated or deteriorated.
- Weeds and grass maintained to be no higher than 6" in height.
- All accessory structures/buildings are required to be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.
- All areas of the property drain correctly with no ponding areas.

GARAGES

- All electrical outlets must be GFCI protected.
- All Romex in unfinished walls must be protected (in conduit or with hardboard, plywood, sheetrock, or similar).

FIRE SAFETY

- Smoke alarms (detectors) shall be installed in each bedroom, on each floor level, and immediately outside of each bedroom. **Unless otherwise permitted**, the smoke detector shall have primary power with battery backup power and be interconnected.
- Single- and multiple-station smoke alarms shall be tested and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Smoke alarms that do not function shall be replaced. Smoke alarms installed in one and two family dwellings shall be replaced not more than 10 years from the date of manufacture marked on the unit, or shall be replaced if the date of manufacture cannot be determined.
- Any single-station smoke alarm installed on or after April 1, 2010, including a replacement of an existing alarm, shall be a dual sensor smoke alarm in conformance with Iowa Code Chapter 1092. Dual-sensor may be the photoelectric/ionization type or the smoke/carbon monoxide type.

- Carbon monoxide alarms shall be installed in conformance with Iowa Code Chapter 158 in dwelling units immediately outside bedrooms when fuel burning appliances and/or attached garage are present. Alarms that become inoperable or begin producing end-of-life signals shall be replaced.
- All exposed electrical wires need to be concealed/protected.
- CSST shall be electrically continuous and bonded to the electrical service grounding electrode system or, where provided, the lightning protection grounding electrode system.
- All penetrations into fire-rated walls/floors/ceilings need to be properly sealed with appropriate material(s).
- Verify all mechanical equipment maintains proper clearances to combustibles (1" for B-vent & 6" for single wall)

BEDROOMS AND OTHER HABITABLE ROOMS

- Each bedroom shall be at least 70 square feet in area.
- A minimum of two electrical receptacle outlets are required.
- All existing electrical receptacles may be of the two-wire type.
- A lighting outlet shall be provided.
- Egress window shall be provided for every bedroom, including one in the basement. The egress window must meet certain width and height requirements. No sleeping is allowed in the basement without the room(s) meeting the requirements for a bedroom.
- A smoke detector shall be provided in each bedroom. (See Fire Safety section above for further information)
- All exit doors shall be operational from the inside without the need of a key or special knowledge.

KITCHEN

- Kitchen sink must be provided.
- All electrical outlets above the kitchen counter top must be GFCI protected.
- Hot water must be provided to the sink.
- A three feet walkway/path needs to be provided between countertops and other appliances/ countertops.
- Proper equipment and space needs to be provided for food storage and preparation.
- One lighting fixture must be provided.

BATHROOMS

- All electrical receptacles are to be GFCI protected.
- One electrical outlet and one lighting receptacle must be provided.
- One bathtub or shower, water closet/toilet, and lavatory must be provided.
- Hot water must be provided to bathtubs, lavatories and showers.
- Ceiling height must be at least 7' and not less than 6'8" above the plumbing fixtures.
- Plumbing must be leak-free and in good working condition.
- Exhaust fan or openable window needs to be provided for ventilation.
- Privacy shall be provided with a door and interior locking device.

LAUNDRY

- Clothes washer receptacle must have a ground wire or be GFCI protected.
- One lighting receptacle must be provided.
- Hot water must be provided to clothes washer.
- Clothes dryer exhaust system shall be independent of all other systems and shall vent outside

INTERIOR CORRIDORS / HALLWAYS / STAIRWAYS AND VESTIBULES

- Make sure all trash and rubbish is picked up and disposed of properly.
- All doors are functional and doors that are required to be fire rated are in place and are self-closing with smoke gaskets.
- Verify there are no holes in walls of stairways and corridors.
- All doors between stairways and corridors are self-closing, have smoke seals, and are fire rated.
- All exit doors shall be operational from the inside without the need of a key or special knowledge.
- All steps need to be structurally sound; handrail and guardrail need to be in place and both structurally sound.
- All stairways are provided proper illumination.
- Egress width is being maintained through corridor and stairway system.

DWELLING UNIT GENERAL ITEMS

- Permanent heat is to be provided and maintained at least to 68 degrees.
- Shall be equipped with a deadbolt lock that is openable from the inside without special knowledge, keys, or effort and shall have a minimum lock throw of 1”.
- All electrical circuit breakers are to be identified/labeled.
- All mechanical equipment is maintained in proper condition and performing as intended.
- All cracked or peeling paint needs to be scraped and repainted.
- All walls, doors and windows that have holes and/or are broken shall be repaired.
- Extension cords cannot be used as permanent wiring method.

ADDITIONAL MULTI-FAMILY REQUIRMENTS:

EXTERIOR

- Recycling is provided for all multi-family dwellings.

FIRE SAFTEY

- Fire extinguishers need to be provided and spaced no farther than 75’ apart, visible and unobstructed, up-to-date on inspections, and charged (If located in glass case a breaking devise must be present).
- Fire alarm is required to be tested yearly with documentation. Verify no missing horn/strobes or pull stations.
- Fire sprinkler system is required to be tested yearly with documentation. Verify sprinkler heads are not painted over.
- Ensure extra sprinkler heads and wrench are on site.
- Exit signs need to be in place, functional, and secure.
- Emergency lighting needs to be in place, functional, and secure.

ELEVATORS

- The most current certificate of inspection shall be displayed in the elevator or be available for public inspection in the office, or posted in a publically conspicuous approved location.