



CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
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## **THREE OR MORE UNITS RESIDENTIAL PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

These are not all state and local requirements, but the most commonly found violations.

### **EXTERIOR**

**ADDRESS NUMBERS** - Must be clearly readable from the street, and alley if applicable, both day and night. Minimum of 4 inches posted.

**KEYBOX** – Knox security keybox mounted no more than seven feet above the front doorsill if the building is locked at any time. Contact the Knox Company at [knoxbox.com](http://knoxbox.com), or 1-800-552-5669 for an approved keybox or more information at [knoxbox.com](http://knoxbox.com). You will need your zip code to ensure you receive the proper box. You may purchase any box as long as it is the hinge type.

**ROOF** - Must be tight, without leaks and in good condition.

**EXTERIOR WALLS/PAINT** - Exterior surfaces other than decay-resistant wood must be painted with non-lead-based paint. (Scrape and paint where peeling.)

**STAIRS/PORCHES/DECKS** - Must be maintained in sound condition and good repair. Balustrades and guardrails no more than four inches (4") apart must be present on stairways/porches/decks more than thirty inches (30") above grade.

**HAND RAILS** - Handrails required on stairs with four or more risers and must be maintained in good condition.

**DOORS** - Must be in sound condition and good repair, capable of being easily opened from the inside without the use of a key.

**WINDOWS** - Must be in sound condition, have no broken glass, have hardware to hold in the "open" position, fit tight within the frame, and secure locking mechanism. (Locks required on every window up to and including second story or accessible by fire escape, stairs, etc.) Windows can be equipped with bars for security if they are not required "egress windows." Openable windows must be equipped with screens.

**ESCAPE WINDOWS** - One Window from each sleeping room must be easily openable from the inside. Some security grates and bars have mechanisms that open

easily from inside. These windows must have a net glazed area of five (5.0) square feet, minimum net clear openable height dimension of twenty-four inches (24"), minimum net clear openable width dimension of twenty inches (20"), and a sill-side height of no more than forty-eight inches (48") above the floor. Area wells must be at least nine square feet (9sq.ft.)

**PARKING GARAGES** – Certain parking garages must have an annual structural review submitted to Building Inspection and Design Division.

**EXTERIOR LIGHTING** – Garages and surface parking areas of multiple (three or more) unit buildings, are required to be adequately lit for security (one-foot candle at pavement).

**GARBAGE CONTAINERS** - Owners are required to furnish sufficient containers with lids and weekly garbage pick-up (also see Public Works Ordinance for Recycling requirements).

**VEHICLES** – All vehicles must be currently licensed (tabs), operable, and parked on an approved surface or remove from the property.

## **INTERIOR**

**POST CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY/OWNER INFORMATION** - Must be posted near the front door so it can be read from outside of building. Owner information and emergency contacts are pre-printed on Certificate of Occupancy for you.

**WALLS/CEILINGS/PAINT** - Must be maintained clean, and in a professional state of repair.

**FLOORS** – Must be maintained clean and in a professional state of repair.

**STAIRS/HAND RAILS** - Same specifications as exterior stairs.

**EXTERMINATION** - Owners are responsible to exterminate or control insects and rodents in all areas of the building and premises.

**OCCUPANCY SEPARATION** – Fire walls and doors are required between commercial/residential spaces as defined in the State Building code.

**EVACUATION PLANNING** - Owners must develop and furnish to the occupants an approved evacuation/emergency plan.

## **FIRE SYSTEMS/EQUIPMENT**

**FIRE ALARM SYSTEM** – Automatic detection fire alarm system required for apartment buildings of 16 or more units **or** three stories above grade (not including garden level).

**OTHER SYSTEM TESTS** – Sprinkler systems, standpipes, fire pumps, and other fire

protection systems must be tested in accordance with their respective standards by qualified personnel and documentation provided to Fire Inspectors during Certificate of Occupancy renewal.

**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS** – A 2A10BC fire extinguisher must be available in the hall within fifty feet (50') of any apartment door on the same level **or** a 1A10BC fire extinguisher in each apartment.

**FIRE EXTINGUISHER SERVICING** – Extinguishers must be inspected and tagged every year by qualified personnel and hydrostatically tested by a qualified company every six years.

**PETS** – All dogs over three (3) months of age must be licensed. For a complete list of animals that may need a permits or license, contact Animal Control at (651)266-1100.

## **EXITS**

**NUMBER OF EXITS** – A second exit must be provided from the second floor when the occupancy load exceeds ten (2,000 square feet) and from the third floor and above at all times.

**EXIT OBSTRUCTIONS** - All exits to the building must be unobstructed at all items. No storage is allowed in stairwells, corridors, in front of doors, or in front of doors, or emergency escape and rescue opening (Egress Windows).

**CORRIDOR RATING** - Exit corridors that serve more than ten people (2,000 square feet of living space) are required to be one-hour, fire-rated. All doors entering that corridor must be twenty-minute, fire-rated with a UL or FM approved self-closing device.

**FIRE DOOR OBSTRUCTIONS** - Fire doors must not be blocked open or obstructed with storage. Self-closures must be in operable condition.

**STAIR ENCLOSURE/CHUTES** – Stairs that are serve more than two levels (not including garden level), must be enclosed with a one-hour fire-rated enclosure. (Two-hour if four or more stories.) Doors entering these stairwells must be one-hour rated (1 ¾ hour for two-hour separations).

**STAIRWAY IDENTIFICATION** – Stairways serving four or more stories must be identified with signs on each floor level that clearly indicate the floor level and whether there is roof access. (See SI -1 handout.)

**EXIT ILLUMINATION** - All common halls and inside stairways must be lit with a minimum illumination of one foot-candle per square foot. Exterior exits and entryways are required to be illuminated a minimum of one foot candle at grade level.

**EXIT SIGNS** - Illuminated exit signs are required when there is more than one exit from a story unless built under a previous Building Code in accordance with that Code.

**EMERGENCY LIGHTING** – Required in common hallways when occupancy load is more than 100 (20,000 square feet). Emergency lighting must be maintained at all times and tested monthly.

## **BASEMENT/UTILITIES/CONDEMNATION**

**FIRE SEPARATION/ APARTMENT BASEMENT** – One-hour fire-rated walls, ceiling and door (with UL or FM approved self-closer) are required on any furnace room containing heating facilities that serve more than one unit.

**COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE/ FURNACE ROOM** - No combustible storage is allowed in any room containing furnace, heating, mechanical, or electrical equipment.

**INCINERATORS** - Not allowed unless PCA approved and capable of burning over 1,000 pounds per hour.

**FURNACE/HEATING PLANT** - Must be capable of providing heat at 68 degrees five feet above the floor in any area of the dwelling. Installation, repair, or alteration of heating equipment must be done by a licensed contractor under permit from the Building Inspection and Design Division. Upon renewal of the Certificate of Occupancy, a form will be provided the owner/manager which must be filled out by a licensed contractor verifying that the heating system or space heater has been serviced and is free of carbon monoxide spillage.

**PLUMBING/SEWER** - Kitchen sinks, hand sinks, bathtub, showers, toilets or urinals must be supplied with running water, adequate hot water where applicable, and must be connected to the sewer and water system in accordance with all provisions of the Plumbing Code.

**WATER HEATER** - Must be capable of supplying adequate hot water at a minimum temperature of 120 degrees and a maximum of 130 degrees at every kitchen sink, tub, shower, and laundry facility. All repairs or alterations must be made under permit from the Building Inspection and Design Division by a licensed contractor in accordance with the Plumbing Code.

**GAS CONNECTIONS** - Flexible connectors on stoves AGA approved. Single walled connectors that are kinked, damaged, or corroded must be replaced dryer venting must be UL approved. Exhaust ducts for dryers must be constructed for smooth metal, size 4 inches in diameter, UL listed and stalled under permit.

**ELECTRICAL** - Service must be adequate to serve needs of occupants and maintained in accordance with the Electrical Code. Modifications, alterations and service upgrades may prompt additional requirements. All fixtures must have globe covers.

**ALL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT** - All required and supplied equipment and all building spaces and parts must be constructed and maintained to properly and safely perform their intended function. (An air conditioner is not required; but if provided, must work and installed in a professional manner.)

**WOODSTOVES** - Are not allowed in residential garages or areas where flammable liquids or vapors are present.

**GASOLINE/ PROPANE STORAGE** - No gasoline or other flammable liquid can be stored in a residential building unless stored in a **one-hour, fire-rated room** or approved fire-rated cabinet. Flammable liquids can never be stored in a room with a source of ignition, such as a furnace, water heater, etc. Propane cannot be stored in the building. (No lawn mowers, snow blowers, mopeds, motorcycle, or portable cooking equipment.)

**CONDEMNATION/UNFIT** - A dwelling unit or entire building may be condemned when it is determined to be a hazard to the safety or welfare of the tenant(s).

## **UNITS - DWELLING**

**SMOKE DETECTORS/ CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM** - State statute requires an operable smoke detector provided and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions outside **each** sleeping area of the rental unit. Battery or electric smoke detectors are allowed, but electric are recommended. Electric smoke detectors installed must have battery backup. Carbon monoxide alarm located within ten feet (10ft.) of each sleeping area. See MN State Fire Marshall Web Site for exceptions.

**APARTMENT DOOR CLOSURES** – Apartment doors entering stairwells must be one-hour, fire-rated with a UL or FM approved self-closures. Apartment doors entering corridors that serve ten or more occupants (2,000 square feet living space) must have operable UL or FM approved self-closures and doors must be 20-minute fire rated.

**DEADBOLT LOCKS/DOORS** - Apartment doors must be equipped with one-inch (1") approved single-cylinder deadbolt locks. Doors must be substantially secure from illegal entry, and if replaced, must be replaced with solid core, solid wood 3/4" panel or a metal door with metal frames. Hinges must be placed on the inside of the door.

**PATIOGLIDER DOORS AND WINDOWS** - A removable track filler or key-operated vertical or horizontal bolt lock on patio and glider windows is required. A wood filler strip or removable screw in upper track of windows should be installed to prevent them from being lifted out of track.

**CABINETS/WOODWORK** - Must be in sound condition and good repair.

**WINDOW LOCKS** - All windows must be equipped with secure locks.

**SPACE HEATERS** - Subject to all requirements of servicing/cleaning (see Furnace/Heating Plant) and must be serviced by a licensed contractor and proof furnished during Certificate of Occupancy renewal. All regulations of the Mechanical Code must be applied.

**BATHROOM LIGHT/VENTILATION** - Every bathroom must have a window openable to the outside, a minimum size of eight percent (8%) of the total floor area of the room, or an approved mechanical ventilation system.

**TOILET/HAND SINK/TUB/SHOWER** - Each dwelling unit must contain a bathroom with toilet, hand sink, and tub or shower installed and maintained in accordance with the Plumbing Code.

**BATHROOM FLOOR** - Must be impervious to water. Carpeting not allowed. Cracks or missing tiles must be repaired/ replaced.

**ELECTRICAL OUTLETS** – Must be in good condition, not painted, and maintained per the electrical code.

**EXTENSION CORDS/ ADAPTERS** - Not allowed for permanent wiring. Extension cords with circuit breakers are also not legal. The overload on the wiring in the wall produces heat and can be a fire hazard. Power strips are acceptable.

**OCCUPANT LOAD** - Dwelling units must contain the following:

**Total unit gross floor area**

1 occupant - 150 square feet  
100 square feet for each additional occupant.

**Gross sleeping room/floor area**

1 occupant - 70 square feet  
2 or more occupants - 50 square feet per person

**TENANT SANITATION/RESPONSIBILITIES** - Occupants are required to maintain their unit in a clean and sanitary condition and dispose of refuse in the containers provided by the owner. They are also required to keep supplied fixtures clean and sanitary and use reasonable care in their use and operation. If they furnish any fixtures of their own, they must be installed and maintained in accordance with the Building Code.

**ROOMING UNITS/ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Cannot contain cooking or eating facilities. (i.e., stoves, hot plates, refrigerators, microwaves.)
2. A bathroom containing a hand sink, toilet, and tub or shower must be available within the structure directly accessible without going outside and on the same floor or a floor adjacent to the rooming unit. One bathroom must be available for each five persons (or fraction thereof).
3. Each sleeping room must contain at least 70 square feet of floor area, or 60 square feet per person for two or more people.
4. Owners are responsible for weekly changes of supplied linens and towels.

5. Every rooming unit must be supplied with shades, drapes, or other materials affording privacy.

6. Units must be kept in sanitary condition.

## **HI-RISE REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the residential requirements above, hi-rise buildings (75' or higher):

**FIRE ALARM SYSTEM** – Must be installed in accordance with the Building Code standards for hi-rise including voice communication, public address system, central control station, and HVAC smoke detection.

**VOICE COMMUNICATION** – Activation of any detection or other initiating device must sound an alert signal in designated areas followed by voice instructions giving appropriate direction and instructions to occupants.

**FIRE EXIT DRILLS** – Must be conducted on a regular basis. Contact Fire Inspection staff for assistance.

**SYSTEM TESTS** – All sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, standpipes, smoke and heat ventilators, smoke removal systems, and other fire protective or extinguishing systems must be tested and maintained in accordance with nationally recognized standards (quarterly for hi-rise).

**MANUAL SHUT-DOWN OF AIR HANDLING** – Each air distribution system must be equipped with a manually operated device that will stop the operation of supply, return, and/or exhaust fans in an emergency.

**STAIRWELL UNLOCKING** – Stairwell doors into exit stairways/enclosures must be unlocked from the stairway side on at least every fifth floor. These doors must be identified from the stairwell side. There are exceptions for door locking mechanisms deactivated by the fire alarm system.

**DUCT DETECTORS** – Smoke detectors must be installed in the main return and exhaust plenum of each air conditioning system and located in a serviceable area downstream of the last duct inlet, and at each connection to a vertical duct or riser servicing two or more stories from a return air duct or plenum of an air conditioning system.

Minnesota State Statute 299F.362 requires smoke detectors and Minnesota State Statute 299F.50 requires carbon monoxide detectors. Saint Paul Ordinance 39.02(c) requires that an affidavit stating that "all detectors are inspected and serviced when needed and are operational be filed before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued or renewed."