Property Maintenance
Routine Inspection Process

Housing Code Compliance
Property Maintenance

Evanston Department of
Health and Human Services

FOR AN APPOINTMENT CALL:
3-1-1 (within Evanston)
847-448-4311 (Phone)

Website: www.cityofevanston.org

Rental Inspections

The City of Evanston conducts inspections of all rental property for the health, safety, and welfare of tenants. Inspections are conducted according to the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code as amended and adopted by Section 5-1-1 of the City of Evanston Code. The entire property is inspected which includes the following:

- Exterior: stairs, decks, walls, roofs, windows and cleanliness of the property.
- Interior: every unit, room, hall, stairwell, basement, and attic.
- Fire safety systems: smoke detectors.
- Light, ventilation and occupancy limitations.
- Plumbing facilities and fixtures.
- Mechanical and electrical systems.

Common Code Violations

Prior to the inspection, please address these common issues to minimize violations:

Smoke Alarms - Alarms must be operational and are required at the following locations:
- outside of each separate sleeping area within 15 feet of bedrooms
- in each room used for sleeping purposes
- in each story within a dwelling unit, including basements
- at the top landing of each stairway
- on the ceiling of basement in the vicinity of the bottom step

Carbon Monoxide Detectors - Every “dwelling unit” must be equipped with at least one operable carbon monoxide alarm within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes. Exemption: Units that do not rely on combustion of fossil fuel for heat or hot water.

Sanitation - The interior of each unit, common areas and exterior of the property shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. The entire property shall be free from any accumulation of rubbish or garbage. Exterior refuse shall be kept in approved leak-proof containers with tight-fitting covers with all refuse stored inside the containers.

Emergency Phone Contact - The owner shall provide 24-hour emergency contact information within the main entryway at least five feet above the floor of every rental residential structure, except for two unit buildings where the owner resides in one unit.

Insect Screens - All screens shall be tight-fitting and in good condition without holes or tears. Screens are required on all windows and doors where no other insect repellent means are employed. (Required from April – October.)

Surfaces - Peeling, flaking, chipped or abraded paint shall be repaired, removed and surfaces repainted. All interior and exterior surfaces shall be maintained in good, clean, and sanitary condition.

Door Locks - All means of egress doors shall be readily openable from the side from which egress is to be made without the need for keys, special knowledge or effort. Doors to individual units shall be equipped with a thumb-turn or a double cylinder key-retaining deadbolt lock.

Windows - All windows and window areas shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. All windows shall be easily openable and capable of being held in position by window hardware. Openable windows shall be equipped with window locking devices.

Plumbing - All plumbing fixtures shall be properly installed and maintained in working order, and shall be kept free from obstruction, leaks and defects.

Forced-air Systems - Forced-air heating and/or cooling systems shall not serve more than one dwelling unit.

Heat Supply - Between September 15th and June 1st temperatures must be maintained in all habitable rooms and bathrooms at a minimum of 68° at all times (24 hours per day).
**Electrical System** - Dwelling units shall be served by a three-wire 120/240 volt, single-phase electrical service having a rating of not less than 60 amperes. Each dwelling unit shall be served by not less than four (4) branch circuits with a minimum of two (2) twenty-amp circuits.

**Receptacles** - Each habitable room in a dwelling shall have at least two separate and remote receptacles. Any damaged, painted-over and/or defective receptacles shall be replaced. Every bathroom shall contain at least one receptacle outlet with ground fault circuit interrupter protection (GFCI).

**Panel Identification** - All electrical panels shall be legibly marked to designate the address, space, tier or unit that such panel is servicing.

**Meter Identification** - All gas and electric meters shall be labeled to designate the address, space, tier or unit that such meter is servicing.

**Property Identification** - Buildings are required to have an address number at both the street and alley frontage (when a property abuts an alley). Numbers should be at least 4 inches high and contrast with the background. In a building with three or more units, each unit shall have a unit number displayed outside the unit.

**Weeds and Grass** - All premises shall have grass or other forms of approved ground cover, and be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of eight (8) inches.

**Graffiti** - All interior and exterior surfaces must be kept clean and free of graffiti. Graffiti removal for exterior surfaces is provided at no charge by the City. Call for more information.

**Motor Vehicles** - No vehicles shall be parked upon any unimproved surface including any vegetation, grass, soil, rock, or stone other than concrete, asphalt, pavers or similar surface. No inoperable, unlicensed, and/or unregistered vehicles, boats or trailers shall be kept on any premises.

**Accessory Structures** - All detached garages, sheds, fences, gates, and walls shall be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.

**Re-inspection Procedures:**

After the initial inspection, if any code violations are noted, a Notice of Violation will be mailed to the owner/agent to correct the violations. If at the time of the re-inspection, half of the violations are corrected, an extension may be granted for up to 60 additional days. If progress of correcting the violations is not sufficient, legal action may follow. Smoke detector and nuisance violations will require immediate correction.

**Permits**

Permits must be obtained for the following work:

- Repair or replacement of decks, porches and stairs.
- Any structural repairs on the main building or accessory structures.
- Repair, replacement or addition of fences.
- Addition of electrical circuits, and panels.
- Replacement or addition of furnaces, air conditioning units, or boilers.
- Sewer or water service repair, and plumbing fixture installations. Permit is not required for plumbing fixture replacement.
- Interior demolition or remodeling.

With questions regarding the permit process, contact the permit desk at 847-448-4311.

**Resources call 3-1-1 or 847-448-4311**

- **Streets and Sanitation** – For special pickups
- **Building Permit Questions** – Community Development, Building and Inspection Services
- **Graffiti Removal** – Graffiti removal for exterior surfaces is provided at no charge by the City.
- **Housing Rehabilitation** – For owner occupied one and two unit buildings, zero percent interest loans for home improvements and repairs. For multi-family properties, interest rate is approximately one-half that of market rates.
- **Handyman Program** – Commission on Aging – Minor home repairs or yard cleanup to qualifying homeowners age 62 and over.
- **Exterior Paint Program** (April-October) – Free - City of Evanston, Housing Rehabilitation
- **Garage Demolition** – City of Evanston, Housing Rehabilitation
- **Health Information** – Evanston Department of Health and Human Services
- **Tree Information** – Public Works

*Indicates income eligible program

**Community Resources**

Open Communities .......................... 847-501-5760
614 Lincoln Ave in Winnetka
For questions about security deposits, lease disputes, and Landlord/Tenant Ordinance questions.

Legal Assistance .............................. 847-475-3703
Legal assistance to low-income residents.