

HOUSING INSPECTION NEWS

ISSUE 36, FALL/WINTER 2024

One call to City Hall!

Call

3-1-1

or 337-8000 for
all non-emergency
city services

241 W South Street
kalamazoo.city.org



WINTER

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Hello! I am Marvella Vincent and I'm the new Code Administration Manager for Housing/Code Compliance department with Community Planning & Economic Development. I have been with the City of Kalamazoo for 33 years serving in various departments. Over the years, I am sure that I have met many of you and have inspected some of your properties. I am excited and looking forward to this new journey.

Greetings!



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Welcome Back!



Kristopher DeBarmore has been promoted to our Code Compliance Inspector III. In 2018, Kris was hired as a Housing Inspector II with the city of Kalamazoo before taken on the role of the Building Trades Code Compliance Officer. He brings along a wide range of skills, knowledge, professionalism and he is an asset that we are pleased to welcome back to the Housing/Code Team. Kris will be working with the residential and commercial vacant blighted structures and owner occupied properties. He will cover the campus area, north/east side, and Burke neighborhood.

Lorren VanBrugge will be joining our team as the new Housing Inspector II on January 6, 2025. Lorren brings along several years of property maintenance and is familiar with our housing codes. After she completes her training, she will be assigned to south Edison, Southside, Milwood and the south Westnedge areas. She's excited to be joining us and we are glad to have her.



WELCOME

Is Your Rental Certificate More than 4 Months Overdue? Read This!



There has been a significant uptick in the practice of continuously rescheduling inspection appointments, not having repairs done at reinspections and/or not showing up for rental inspections. Continually rescheduling inspections for properties that should have already been certified is causing a significant strain on inspector calendars. Properties that have rental certificates more than four months past due will receive increased enforcement regardless of scheduled status and be further evaluated for a repair/vacate order and/or referral to the City Attorney's office.

If you have an inspection or reinspection scheduled, please keep appointment and please have the repairs done so a certificate can be issued.

If your unit is vacant and your certification has been expired more than four months and you are holding off on your inspection/re-certification due to the vacancy, you will be asked to remove the property from the rental registration program. When you are ready for inspections, you can re-register your property at that time. Thank you!



Please Keep Your Rental Registration Up To Date

If you have moved, gotten a new phone number or changed your email address, it's likely your rental registration is not up to date. If this is the case, you will not receive important info about your rental certificate. **Please** make sure your owner and agent contact information is current! Submit any updates by submitting a new Rental Registration Application within 10 days of a change. It's quick and easy!

www.kalamazoo-city.org/rentalregistration

*** Owner address changes must also be provided to the City Assessor at 269-337-8036 ***



Keep Curblawn Tidy

The curblawn is the area between the property line and the public street and often includes a sidewalk. Property owners are responsible for maintenance of this area.

Property owners are responsible to making sure their properties stay cleaned up of junk and debris, and may only place items in the curblawn (in an approved herby) for collection on trash day. Quarterly bulk trash is also available. Make sure your tenants know weekly trash day and quarterly bulk trash days as well as what may be placed out for bulk trash. If items are placed at curb outside of these permitted times, they are subject to immediate clean up by the city and the property owner will be billed for the clean up.

Help Keep Kalamazoo Clean!

Call **311** or **337-8000** to report trash on the curb lawn, trash on private property or herby curby trash containers out past trash pick up day.

Chapter 21 Nuisance Trash Violations

If your property is cited for a Ch. 21 nuisance trash or porch violation there has been some changes to our clean up processes, please see below:

- Inspector observes violation & cite property for trash— **\$77**
- Ten day notice will be mailed to owner and occupant
- Re-inspection completed in 10 days to make sure violations have been removed
- If items of violation are still present on property, a compliance order is generated which results in a court hearing before a magistrate — **\$225**
- If items of violation still remain after the hearing, the city will abate the violations and assess the clean up fees to the property owner of record.

It is imperative that you as an owner, educate your tenants on the do's and don'ts regarding trash, bulk trash pick-ups, etc. Learn more here:

<https://www.kalamazoo-city.org/Residents/Waste-Recycling>

Have Vacant Units?

Housing Resources, Inc. needs stable housing for families in the Kalamazoo area. Landlords who would like to place vacant units on HRI's Available Housing List can call (269) 382-0287 for more



City of Kalamazoo Fresh Start Rental Program (From application to certification)

This pilot program, which will be hosted by our Housing/Code staff, will be offered to small groups of owners/agents throughout the year. The program will be aimed to inform property owners everything that you need to know rental, from the application process all the way through obtaining your rental certification.

Additional information will be available soon, so be on the lookout.



CLEARING SIDEWALKS OF SNOW KEEP SIDEWALKS USABLE FOR EVERYONE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, according to the standards in 33-18 Removal of Snow or Ice, property owners are responsible for the removal of any accumulation or deposit of snow and ice from any adjacent, abutting, or adjoining public sidewalk.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE, clearing the public sidewalk of snow or ice which means that the full width of the sidewalk, from edge to edge, down to the bare pavement, must occur within 48 hours of its accumulation and thereafter must be maintained as clear of snow and ice.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE, failure to clear public sidewalks within 48 hours or to maintain them as clear of snow and ice thereafter will result in the City removing the accumulated snow and ice with the cost of the removal plus an administrative fee assessed against the property owner.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE, for additional information please see <https://www.kalamazoo-city.org/Residents/Snow-Removal> or call 311.

Property owners must communicate with their tenants about who will clear the sidewalks. Fees for noncompliance will be charged to the property owner.



Eviction Diversion Assistance Available to Tenants & Landlords

Eviction diversion is a collaborative program to help tenants pay overdue rent and stabilize their housing situation. Tenants must be no more than three months behind in rent. Landlords must want the tenant to stay and the tenant must be able to sustain rent payments after assistance. Tenants may call 211 to be screened for eligibility or visit: <https://kzoococ.org/resources/>.

RentAble Program Expanded

The RentAble program is no longer accepting new applications for the remainder of 2024. Please check back in 2025 for more details.

kzoococ.org/rentable-program





Revised Courtesy Notice Policy

The city makes considerable effort to provide plenty of advance notice that a rental certificate is going to expire. A courtesy letter is mailed 5 months in advance informing property owners to schedule their rental inspection, two months after the first courtesy letter, if you haven't scheduled your inspection, you will receive one additional courtesy letter prior to your certificate expiration. If you fail to schedule your inspection by certificate expiration, the next notice you will receive will be an Expired Cert letter and there will be a \$75 fee assessed with that notice. In order to receive timely notifications, it is incumbent on property owners/managers to keep addresses current so mail goes to the correct address.

Ready for Inspection?

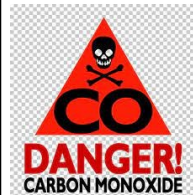
Be proactive and keep tabs on your rental property. Regularly check exterior property areas for needed repairs. At minimum, it's a great idea to check smoke detectors and fire extinguishers (most commonly cited items) before the rental inspector arrives to ensure they are in working order and not past the manufacturer's expiration. Finally, making sure hired contractors obtain proper permits for installation of water heaters, furnaces, and roofs mid-inspection cycle will save a lot of hassle down the road. An inspection checklist of common violations is sent with every courtesy expiration notice and is available at:



kalamazoo.org/Community/Rental-Housing

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detector Requirements for Existing Structures

WHEN REQUIRED: Carbon monoxide detectors are required in dwelling units and sleeping units if one or more of the following conditions exist:



- If there is a fuel burning appliance
- If there is a fuel burning fireplace
- If there is a fuel burning furnace
- If there is an attached garage

TYPE REQUIRED: In these situations, carbon monoxide detectors may be stand-alone (not interconnected) & may be battery operated or plug-in. Combined smoke/carbon monoxide detectors are also permitted.

PLACEMENT: Carbon monoxide detectors shall be placed:

- Outside each bedroom/sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms; **and**
- Inside a bedroom or sleeping room, including efficiency units, if there is a fuel burning appliance in the bedroom or in an attached bathroom.

Allowing Tenants to Raise Chickens or Rabbits?



The rules for chickens and rabbits have been updated. A coop, hutch or pen must be in the side or rear yard at least 10 feet from all property lines and a minimum of 15 feet from an adjacent residences. The enclosure must be maintained in a sanitary odor free condition. Keeping of roosters is not permitted: cock-a-doodle-don't.



Rental Registration Database

To access the rental database go to:
www.kalamazoo.org/rental and then
"Check If Rental Property is Registered"
from the listed links

The City of Kalamazoo

****FREE****

Lead-Based Paint

Hazard Reduction Program

The City of Kalamazoo, in partnership with Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., (KNHS), is removing and abating lead-based paint hazards in qualifying residential households at no cost to the property owner. Yes you read that correct,

FREE!

According to the CDC, approximately 24 million housing units have deteriorated leaded paint and elevated levels of lead-contaminated house dust. More than four million of these dwellings are homes with one or more young children. Properties built prior to 1978 that have peeling or cracking paint most likely have lead paint chips and/or lead dust as well. Areas of specific concern are often around windows, doors, cabinets, stairways, porches and floors.

Lead-based paint chips and dust can be detrimental to a child's health, resulting in behavior problems, learning disabilities and, in extreme cases, seizures or death. The toxicity of lead when absorbed in the body can also result in brain damage as well as damage to other vital systems such as the kidneys, nerves and blood.

Don't chance the health of children. If you rent to tenants with children (or a pregnant woman) in a property built prior to 1978, and those tenants can meet eligibility requirements (low to moderate income), your property may qualify for the program. Contact KNHS today.

Applications are being
accepted & processed by
KNHS located at:

1219 S. Park Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
269-385-2916

Did we mention
it's **FREE?**



Households that qualify for the Lead-Based Paint program will also receive a Healthy Homes assessment which includes a radon test.

Did you know that when you rent your property out to a tenant, you are legally required to give occupants the EPA-approved lead paint brochure. Find out more here:
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/enforcement/disclosure



How to Reach Us...

Community Planning & Economic Development
Code Administration
245 N. Rose, Suite 100, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

One Call to City Hall!

Have a question? If you are located within city limits simply call 311. If you are outside city limits call 269-337-8000. You can also reach code enforcement staff directly by email.

General help: code@kalamazoocity.org

For all email addresses use: @kalamazoocity.org


<u>INSPECTOR</u>	<u>AREA SERVED</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Rental Registration Information & Forms	www.kalamazoocity.org/rental	
Register a Rental Property Online	www.kalamazoocity.org/rentalregistration	
Schedule Rental Inspection ..call 311 or 269-337-8000.....	or email: rentalinspection@	
Marvella Vincent, Code Administration Manager	vincentm@	
Kevin Staten.....	Housing Inspector (Vine south of Lovell St.).....	statenk@
Chris Ruohonen	Lead Housing Inspector (CBD & covering various neighborhoods as needed) ..	ruohonenc@
Lorren VanBrugge.....	Housing Inspector (south Edison, Southside, Milwood, S. Westnedge)	vanbruggel@
Alan VanderBeek.....	Housing Inspector (Campus, Winchell, Oakwood, Westnedge Hill).....	vanderbeeka@
Charlotte Deur	Housing Inspector (east Northside, Eastside, north Edison).....	deurc@
Kevin Philion.....	Housing Inspector (west Northside, Stuart, Fairmont & west Main Hill)	philionk@
Karleen Steppenwolf.....	Rental Registration Coordinator (registration/billing)	steppenwolfk@
Heather Bowers.....	Rental Inspection Scheduling.....	rentalinspection@
Jason Adams.....	Code Compliance I Inspector (south of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main)	adamsj@
Laquana Coleman.....	Code Compliance I Inspector (north of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main)	colemanl@
Carmela Hostiguin Haba	Code Compliance III Inspector (south of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main)	habac@
Kris Debarmore	Code Compliance III Inspector (north of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main)	debarmorek@
Vacant	Seasonal Tall Grass Inspector.....	@
Roger Iveson.....	Building Official.....	ivesonr@
Shelby Donaldson.....	Building & Trades Permit Tech (permit questions)	donaldsons@
Casey Boekhoven	Community Development Secretary (permit questions)	boekhovenc@
Pete Eldridge.....	Zoning Administrator	eldridgep@
Paul Smith	Building Trades Code Compliance Officer.....	smithp@
Luis Pena.....	Historic Preservation Coordinator.....	penal@
REPORT A CONCERN OR ASK A QUESTION		from inside city 311; from outside city 269-337-8000
STREETLIGHTS, CONSUMER'S ENERGY		800-477-5050
PUBLIC SAFETY NON-EMERGENCY		488-8911
PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY		911


Avoid Nuisance Enforcement & Fees


Enforcement of City Ordinances may subject property owners to violation notices and subsequent cost recovery fees. Please be sure to share this information with tenants.


- ♦ **Curblawn Nuisances:** Discarded items, brush and other unsightly materials that are placed in the curblawn outside of bulk trash collection are considered a public nuisance and subject to immediate corrective action without notice. Clean-up costs are billed to the property owner of record.
- ♦ **Trash on Private Property:** Keep all litter, trash, junk and debris picked up. Property owners in violation are subject to nuisance violation notices (with a fee) and also additional clean up fees if not corrected.
- ♦ **Garbage Container Storage:** Garbage and recycling containers must be stored on private property in back of the front façade of the dwelling. Containers stored in violation of the ordinance are subject to immediate relocation which is billed to the property owner. Also, know your weekly trash pick up day and quarterly bulk trash pick up day, and only place items out for collection the day prior to scheduled pick up.
- ♦ **Junk Autos:** Any car not in operating condition, or not properly licensed, is considered a junk auto. Junk autos located in the public right-of-way will be tagged by Public Safety. Junk autos on private property will be issued a 10-day violation notice, and if not removed a civil infraction ticket will be issued that may result in a compliance order and/or towing.

Hot Code Topics

 **Cold/Flu Season:** Please make sure that your tenants are well prior to your scheduled inspection. If you need to reschedule inspection due to an illness, make sure that you do so three days prior to avoid cancellation fee.

 **Permits:** When you have work done by a contractor between inspection cycles, make sure they are obtaining permits and getting inspections.

 **Space Heaters:** are a significant fire hazard. They should only be used for emergency heating, and may not be used as a permanent source of heat. If needed, make sure space heater is for indoor use and plugged directly into the wall (no extension cord or adaptor), and are not near any flammable materials.

 **Fee Increase:** Some of our fees will increase for 2025. Be sure to thoroughly review your invoices as you receive them.