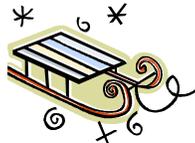


HOUSING CODE & RENTAL PROGRAM INFO AVAILABLE ON-LINE



www.kalamazoo.org/rental-housing-inspections



CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE POLICY

As a reminder, 40 month certificates will only be issued to properties which meet certain criteria AND complete the recertification cycle PRIOR to the expiration date of the valid certificate. **No exceptions will be made.** You may renew certificates up to 90 days in advance, so mark your calendars, call EARLY for inspections, and leave plenty of time for a reinspection to occur should one be necessary.

THANK YOU!

Smoke Detectors Save Lives: Benefits of Hardwired & Interconnected Smoke Detectors



Each time a housing inspector performs a rental housing inspection, one of the most important items he or she is looking for is properly located and functioning smoke detectors. Smoke detectors are required on each floor (including the basement), in every room used for sleeping purposes, and in every common hallway outside of sleeping areas. Properties with over five units, new construction and some dwellings with rehab work, will require the installation of hardwired and interconnected smoke detectors. Hardwired means the smoke detector is powered by the dwelling's electrical source (with a battery backup); and interconnected means if one detector goes off, every detector within that unit will also go off. For example, if the fire starts in the basement, it will alert the entire dwelling. This means if a resident is asleep on the second floor, and the fire starts on the first floor, there will be a better chance of escape without injury or death, not to mention containing the fire to a smaller area. Retrofitting existing buildings with the hardwired and interconnected option has become much more affordable with wireless technology. One detector can be hardwired where electricity is readily available with minimal disturbance to finished areas, and the interconnected detectors can be powered with a battery, but interconnected wirelessly. Property owners are encouraged to look into this option when adding additional smoke detectors to properties or when it is time to replace existing battery operated smoke detectors (per the manufacturer's recommendation).

Inside this issue:

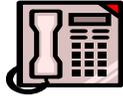
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The Early Bird Gets the Worm

Rental property owners and managers are reminded to call **EARLY** for your recertification inspections. There are four housing inspectors performing the majority of all rental inspections, and their calendars can get booked 8 to 10 weeks in advance. Calling early will ensure you can schedule your inspection prior to the current certificate expiring, get a discounted fee for the inspection and potentially be eligible for a 40 month Certificate of Compliance. Call 337-8026 to schedule.



Help us Keep Kalamazoo Clean!



- ◆ Call **337-8221** to report curb lawn, herby curby trash container and private property trash violations.
- ◆ Call **337-8847** to report tall grass and weed violations.

Eviction Diversion Assistance Available to Tenants & Landlords

A collaborative program in Kalamazoo County can help pay back rent to stabilize an existing tenant through eviction diversion. Tenants must be no more than three months behind in rent, landlords must want the tenant to stay and the tenant must be able sustain rent payments after assistance. Tenants may call 211 to be screened for eligibility in the Eviction Diversion Program.



Residential Parking

Please be aware that parking in most residential zones in the city must be on private property and on an improved surface. Parking in yards and on grass is prohibited. Additionally, parking overnight (between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.) on most city streets is prohibited. Cars that park too close to fire hydrants, block driveways or impede normal street traffic flow may receive a parking ticket. The Public Safety Department has hired several part time parking enforcement officers, and there is a possibility that code administration staff will be able to issue parking tickets in the near future. Please inform your tenants of these parking regulations.

EVICTIONS

Evictions are sometimes a necessary evil in the rental housing business. Whether an eviction becomes necessary due to non-payment of rent; illegal activity; failure of a tenant to cooperate in keeping the unit safe, sanitary and city certified; or in order to simply obtain right of possession, it is never a pleasant experience.

If it becomes necessary to remove the tenant, please let the city know. By letting us know when you will be placing tenant items out for the required time period, it will allow the inspectors to provide time for you to clean up the items before a violation notice is written or the city collects the materials from the curb and bills the clean up to you. You can leave a message on the Trash Hotline at 337-8221.

Update to Housing Code and Inspection Rules

During 2013, City of Kalamazoo Code Administration division evaluated the potential of adopting the provisions of the International Property Maintenance Code, by reference, as the primary maintenance standards of the City of Kalamazoo Housing Code (Chapter 17). There will be a draft ordinance forthcoming accompanied by a public comment period and a stakeholders meeting, prior to preparing a recommendation for City Commission. Watch for an email or the website if you are interested in reviewing and/or commenting on the draft.

HOUSING BOARD OF APPEALS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

The Housing Board of Appeals (HBA) is seeking new members to join the Board. The role of the Board is to hear and decide variances of the City of Kalamazoo Housing Code. The Board meets every other month on the fourth Thursday of the month at 2pm at City Hall. You must reside in the City of Kalamazoo and have knowledge of housing property management, construction or maintenance. Please call 337-8792 for an application if you are interested.

PERMITS REQUIRED

Permits are required for the replacement of any furnace or water heater. Rental property owners must have these installations performed by licensed professionals. If you have any questions, call the Building Official at **337-8026**.



HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS LATELY?

Please keep your owner and agent contact information current! Submit all address related changes using a Rental Registration Application within 10 days of a change. Call 337-8026 to request a form, or find the form on-line at www.kalamazoo.org/housing.

Rental Inspection Fee Schedule:

www.kalamazoocity.org/rental-housing-inspections

Fees are expected to increase approximately 5% for 2014.



Fair Housing Center Update: Local Fair Housing Case Settled

Property owners and rental agents are cautioned to heed fair housing laws in their rental practices. It is not uncommon for inspectors to hear things like "we don't rent to persons with children" or "we only rent to senior citizens". The Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan, a nonprofit agency, is dedicated to end discrimination in housing through the laws established by the Fair Housing Act. The Fair Housing Act gives everyone the right to live where they choose regardless of familial status, race, color, national origin, disability, sex and religion. Kalamazoo law also prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Fair Housing Center recently settled a three year long case where a couple argued that they were evicted because the owner would prefer to rent to seniors 55 and over, and would not move them to a two unit apartment because they were afraid the couples granddaughter would move in with them. After the Fair Housing Center conducted an investigation, a lawsuit was filed against the apartment complex alleging that the owner enforced an illegal occupancy policy that prevented families with two children from living in a two bedroom apartment. The lawsuit also alleged that the owner and manager made statements in their advertising expressing a preference for senior aged tenants.

After three years of litigation, the apartment complex entered a settlement agreement which requires annual fair housing training for all employees, on-site monitoring by the Fair Housing Center, and implementation of a nondiscrimination policy. In addition, the owner agreed to pay monetary damages of \$47,500 and were ordered to pay just over \$240,000 in attorney fees.

The Fair Housing Center recently settled a similar case with a \$38,000 settlement involving a Berrien County housing provider.

For more information on Fair Housing laws, please contact the Fair Housing Center at 269-276-9100. All landlords are urged to attend fair housing classes. The 2014 Fair Housing Conference, entitled **Removing Barriers to Create Inclusive and Accessible Communities**, will be held in April 2014 at the Radisson. The exact date will be announced soon. More information is available at:

www.fhcswm.org

For information on the Lead Paint EPA Renovation, Repair & Painting Rule visit

michigan.gov/leadsafe



RENTAL REGISTRATION DATABASE

The city's property search database includes a search engine for registered rental properties. The rental database will allow the viewer to search, by address or street, all the registered rental properties in Kalamazoo, see the number of units, whether the property is certified and the name of the rental agent. To access this information go to:

<https://is.bsasoftware.com/bsa.is/default.aspx>

The Pesky Bed Bug

Both the City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo County receive calls from tenants and landlords regarding bed bugs. Bed bugs are making a come back due, in part, to the banning of chemical pesticides that were effective in eradicating them, and also a human population that travels a lot more. Bed bugs are small and reddish brown, with a flattened oval shape and no wings. They feed on blood and generally set up "home" within about 15 feet of a bed or sleeping area. Unlike other pests, such as cockroaches, the presence of bed bugs is not an indication of poor housekeeping. They do not fly or jump, but can "hitch a ride" in luggage, on furniture, on clothing, or on other objects brought into the home. This means tracing how they infested a dwelling is anyone's guess. They are not known to transmit disease, but the bite can cause itching and sores in some people. Some pest control companies or the MSU Extension office can help identify the bug. Neither the city nor county inspect or identify bed bug infestations, and there is no official State policy on bed bugs or guidance on who is responsible for eradicating an infestation. For now it is up to tenants and landlords to work together to solve the problem. Pamphlets with additional information on bed bugs, including helpful ways of getting rid of them, are available from Kalamazoo County Environmental Health at 337-5210 or <http://www.kalcounty.com/eh>





How to Reach Us...

Community Planning & Development
Code Administration
415 Stockbridge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Inspectors are happy to answer questions. The best time to reach an inspector is before 9 a.m. or after 4 p.m. Every effort is made to return all calls within 24 hours.

Please call the inspection scheduling line to schedule an inspection.

<u>INSPECTOR</u>	<u>AREA SERVED</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
All Inspection Scheduling (please do not call inspector directly)		337-8026
Debra Miller, Housing Inspection Supervisor		337-8026
Tina Perry	Housing Inspector (Vine, Central Business, S. Westnedge)	337-8507
Yvonne Wright	Housing Inspector (Burke Acres, Eastside, Northside, Stuart, Fairmont)	337-8506
Mike Deitz	Housing Inspector (Edison, Milwood)	337-8515
Becky Gnatuk	Housing Inspector (Campus, Winchell, Oakwood, Westnedge Hill)	337-8567
Karleen Steppenwolf	Rental Registration Coordinator	337-8589
Pete Eldridge, Code Compliance Supervisor		337-8806
Nancy Hess	Code Compliance II Inspector	337-8553
Mike Nelson	Code Compliance II Inspector	337-8447
Rachael Luscomb	Code Compliance I Inspector	337-8212
Jim Graham	Code Compliance I Inspector	337-8154
Bobby Durkee	Zoning Inspector	337-8172
Robert McNutt	Building Official	337-8026
Vacant	Seasonal Weed Inspector (May thru October)	337-8366
Sharon Ferraro	Historic Preservation Coordinator	337-8804
Deanna Benthin	Building Permit Tech (all building & trade permit questions)	337-8173
Marvella Vincent	Dangerous Building Board Coordinator	337-8165
WEED HOTLINE (24 HOUR)		337-8847
TRASH/TRASH RECEPTACLE HOTLINE (24 HOUR)		337-8221
GENERAL CODE ENFORCEMENT HOTLINE (24 HOUR)		337-8221
VACANT/ABANDONED/DANGEROUS PROPERTIES		337-8026
SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING QUESTIONS		337-8215
WATER SUPPLY/QUALITY		337-8576
WATER/SEWER EMERGENCY		337-8149
WATER/SEWER EMERGENCY AFTER HOURS		337-8148
SIDEWALK CONCERNS		337-8731
CITY TREES (TREES IN RIGHT-OF-WAY)		337-8731
POTHOLES		337-8731
STREET CONSTRUCTION		337-8601
TRAFFIC SIGNALS/SIGNS		337-8601
TREASURY (TAX/PROPERTY VALUATIONS/BILL PAYMENT)		337-8036
ASSESSING (CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS)		337-8011
PARKS & RECREATION		337-8191
CITY CLERK		337-8792
JUNK CARS (Public Safety Dispatch)		337-8994
PUBLIC SAFETY NON-EMERGENCY		337-8120
PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY ...		911

Avoid Costly Fees & Enforcement Action

The City of Kalamazoo Code Administration division handles trash nuisance violations. Avoid costly fees and nuisance enforcement by removing unsightly trash, litter and garbage and properly storing trash receptacles on your property. Please note that increased 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: Furniture, trash, brush or any 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, which have a \$70 cost recovery fee.
- ◆ Garbage Container Storage: Garbage and recycling containers must be stored on private property no closer to the street than the front façade of the dwelling. Keep garbage containers sealed at all times. Containers stored in violation of the ordinance are subject to immediate relocation which is billed to the property owner.
- ◆ Know your trash pick up day and only place trash containers recycle bins out the day prior to scheduled pick up.
- ◆ Know your bulk trash pick up day and only place items out for collection the day prior to scheduled pick up.