

HOUSING INSPECTION NEWS

 **CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE POLICY**

As a reminder, 40 and 52 month certificates will only be issued to properties that meet applicable criteria AND complete the recertification cycle PRIOR to the expiration date of the valid certificate. **No exceptions will be made.** Certificates may be renewed as many as 120 days in advance, so mark your calendars, call **EARLY** for inspections, and leave plenty of time for any required re-inspections. **THANK YOU!**



Inspectors Assigned New Areas

After losing two housing inspectors in the summer of 2016, the rental registration and certification program is back to full staff. Two new inspectors were hired in September 2016 and completed comprehensive training through December. Property owners will most likely see a new face during the next round of inspections, as inspectors were also reassigned to new inspector areas. As of January 1, 2017, the assignments are as follows:



- ◆ Christian Deuel: Vine, Central Business, S. Westnedge, Milwood
- ◆ Jim Graham: Burke Acres, Northside (west), Stuart, Fairmont, West Main Hill
- ◆ Mike Nelson: Edison (south), Southside
- ◆ Yvonne Wright: Campus, Winchell, Oakwood, Westnedge Hill
- ◆ Ken Koetje: Northside (east), Eastside, Edison (north)

 **Schedule Inspections via Email**

Now two ways to schedule an appointment:

rentalinspection@kalamazoo.org
or call (269) 337-8026

IT'S WORTH REPEATING—CITY OFFERS CERTIFICATE GUARANTEE *Know How it Works!*

In June 2016, the city began offering Certificate Guarantees. The guarantee provides the ability to earn an extended (40 or 52 month) certificate **IF** inspections are scheduled in a timely manner according to the set deadlines. Property owners must do the following to qualify for the guarantee:

- Call for first certificate renewal inspection between 120 days and 90 days before certificate expiration. Keep and show up for the inspection! If the city must reschedule for any reason, the guarantee will kick in.
- If a re-inspection is necessary after the first inspection, call for the reinspection immediately after the first inspection, but not later than 10 days from the date on the Correction Notice. If the city cannot schedule the reinspection prior to expiration, the guarantee will kick in and the property will still qualify for an extended certificate. If the city must reschedule for any reason after it's made, the guarantee will kick in.
- Must pass the reinspection. If a third inspection is required the guarantee is VOID, although it still may be possible to meet the deadline for an extended certificate depending on the inspector's calendar.
- The property must meet all other criteria necessary for an extended length certificate. For the official rules, and all qualifying criteria for extended certificates, visit:

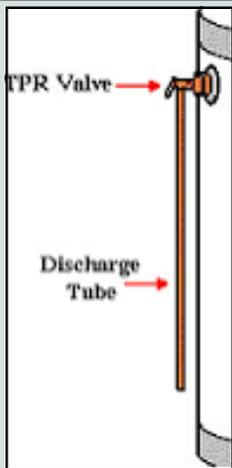
www.kalamazoo.org/rental-housing-inspections

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Look Up! Check Your Vent Fans

Bathroom vent fans have a tendency to accumulate lint. To keep the fan working most efficiently, it must be cleaned periodically. Cleaning will prevent strain and overheating of the motor, which in combination with the lint build-up, is a significant fire hazard. Wipe the cover, and if possible open the cover and vacuum any accumulation of lint. While you're at it, check your dryer vent!



Temperature Pressure Relief Valve

Temperature pressure-relief (TPR) valves are safety devices installed on water heating appliances, such as boilers and water heaters. TPRs are designed to automatically release water in the event that pressure or temperature in the water tank exceeds a safe level. TPR valves should not leak or drip. The discharge tube should be rated for the use, not be capped, not be threaded at the bottom and the should not end more than four inches from the floor.

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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.



Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan Fair Housing Conference
April 26, 2017 8 a.m. @ WMU Fetzer Center

If you own, lease or manage residential property, it is in your best interest to know, understand and abide by the fair housing law. Attend this **FREE** conference to learn more! Call the Fair Housing Center at (269) 276-9100 for more information.

PERMITS REQUIRED

Permits are required for the replacement of furnaces and water heaters. Rental property owners must have installations performed by licensed professionals. If you have any questions, call the Permit Tech at **337-8026**.



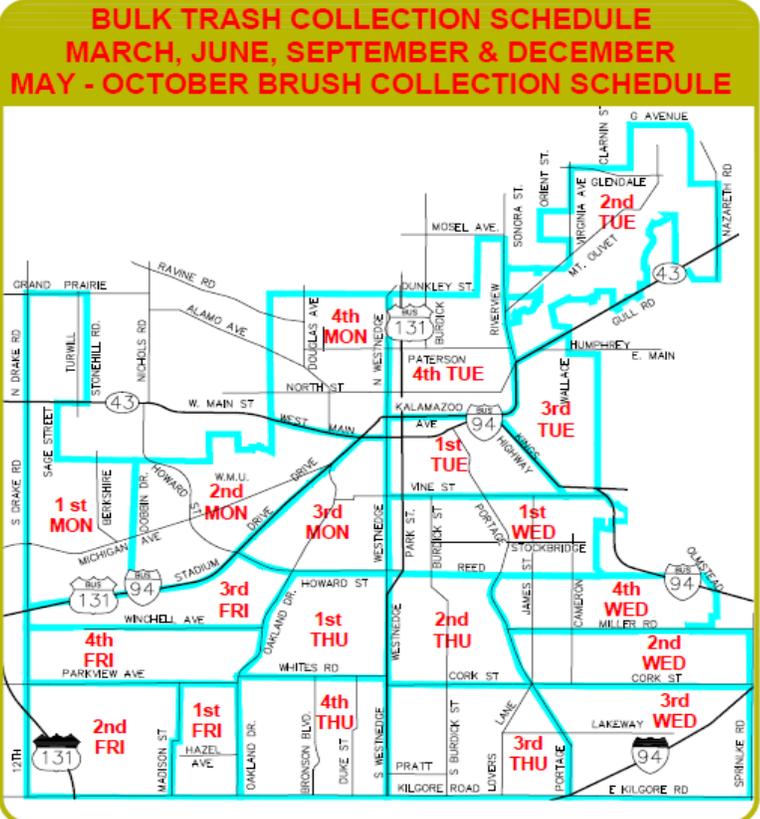
HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS LATELY?

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. Submit online form at: www.kalamazoo.org/rental-housing-inspections/rapplication

IMPORTANT CHANGE

Bulk Trash Program Now Quarterly

In September 2016, the City converted to quarterly bulk trash pick-up. Only the frequency changed, acceptable items and quantities remain the same. Bulk trash pick up will now occur in March, June, September and December. Call 337-8215 with questions or visit www.kalamazoo.org and search for "bulk trash".



Don't Paint Outlets and Switches!



Electrical receptacles and switches are not meant to be painted. Over time plugging things in and out can transfer paint chips into the receptacle and cause a fire or malfunction. If inspectors see painted switches and receptacles, replacement will be necessary.



Rental Inspection Fee Schedule:

www.kalamazoo.org/rental-housing-inspections



New Fees for Tall Grass Violations

In 2017, City Commission approved a new fee schedule for tall grass and weed violations. The fee will increase with each subsequent violation, in order to discourage repeat offenders and from property owners using the city as a lawn mowing service. The tiered fines are as follows (if the city mows, additional fees apply):

- * 1st Notice: \$127 * 2nd Notice: \$177
- * 3rd Notice: \$227 * 4th Notice: \$277



Notice to Tenants: What Does the Law Say?

Neither Michigan law, nor city ordinance, provide specific regulations or requirements for a notice to tenants when a landlord needs to enter a rental unit. Michigan law cites a "reasonable notice" and city ordinance states that it is the landlords responsibility to provide notice and the tenants responsibility to cooperate with the landlord in the city inspection and certification process. The following recommendations are provided after reviewing multiple sources on the topic as it relates to Michigan tenant-landlord law. The recommendations are made on basis of common sense and good manners.

- **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:** Landlords may enter without notice if there is an emergency or threat to person/property.
- **ENTRY WITHOUT CONSENT:** Landlord may enter a rental unit without consent, provided reasonable notice of time and reason is given tenant, or landlord reasonably believes tenant has abandoned premises. "Reasonable time" is not defined, although multiple sources recommend a minimum of 24 hours, more if feasible.
- **HOURS:** Again, hours are not dictated, but recommended normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., M-F, unless tenant agrees otherwise or situation is an emergency.

The reasons a landlord may need to enter the property are varied but include an emergency; necessary or agreed upon repairs, alterations, or redecorations; required city certification or other agency inspections (HUD, Section 8, or others); showing property to potential tenants, buyers, workmen, mortgagees, etc.; as well as periodic checks for needed maintenance.

Please ensure you provide reasonable notice to tenants prior to scheduled city inspections.



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

michigan.gov/leadsafe



RENTAL REGISTRATION DATABASE

To access the rental database look for "Lookup Property Information" at:
www.kalamazoo.org

and then "**Rental Property Search**" from the menu.

Japanese Knotweed:

The Quiet Invader

Japanese knotweed is sometimes called "Michigan Bamboo", but actually is an alien species causing a lot of damage worldwide. House foundations, sewer lines, and roads are all in danger when it is growing nearby. It is best to leave the plant alone, but do not ignore it! Seek professional help from The Kalamazoo Nature Center (invasives@naturecenter.org). If it must be cut for some reason, clippings should be treated like hazardous waste. Do not compost it and do not let clippings remain on the ground. Put all parts in a strong plastic bag and send it to the landfill. Cutting, digging, or spraying with certain herbicides will make the problem worse. More information can be found on the City's website, www.michigan.gov/dnr and the Facebook page titled:



"Fighting the 'Bamboo' in Kalamazoo"

Help us Keep Kalamazoo Clean!



- ◆ Call **337-8221** to report trash on the curb lawn, trash on private property or herby curby trash containers out past trash pick up day.
- ◆ Call **337-8847** to report tall grass and weed violations (annually May through October).



Graffiti Removal Assistance Available

Property owners who have been the victim of graffiti now have an avenue for help. The core neighborhood associations have supplies available to remove graffiti, including solvents for brick and masonry surfaces and wipes for glass, metal or other hard surfaces. These supplies are not suitable for painted surfaces. (If it is a painted surface, usually the best course of abatement is to paint over the graffiti.) Residents wishing to participate and utilize the free graffiti removal supplies must sign a waiver and provide before and after photographs. Contact your neighborhood organization for more information.



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. The department is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **Please call the inspection scheduling line or email rentalinspections@kalamazoo.org 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
Christian Deuel	Housing Inspector (Vine, Central Business, S. Westnedge, Milwood)	337-8507
Jim Graham	Housing Inspector (Burke Acres, west part Northside, Stuart, Fairmont)	337-8165
Mike Nelson	Housing Inspector (south Edison, Southside)	337-8447
Yvonne Wright	Housing Inspector (Campus, Winchell, Oakwood, Westnedge Hill)	337-8506
Ken Koetje	Housing Inspector (east Northside, Eastside, north Edison)	337-8515
Karleen Steppenwolf	Rental Registration Coordinator	337-8589
Bob McNutt	Building Official & Code Administration Manager	337-8026
Vacant	Code Compliance I Inspector	
Rachael Luscomb	Code Compliance II Inspector	337-8212
Marvella Vincent	Code Compliance II Inspector	337-8154
Carmela Hostigun	Code Compliance I Inspector	337-8553
Pete Eldridge	Zoning Administrator	337-8806
Bobby Durkee	Zoning Inspector	337-8172
Hannah Hudson	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
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 of 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

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.
- ◆ **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.



Occupancy Standards

There is a great deal of misinformation about occupancy standards in rental units. Occupancy requirements are set by city codes, and measured in square feet (sf). No official standards cite "heartbeats per room", and no codes dictate who can share rooms. In Kalamazoo, occupancy of a dwelling unit necessitates at least 150 sf of habitable living space for one or two persons, 200 sf for 3-5 occupants, and 250 sf for 6 or more occupants. **In addition,** bedrooms or sleeping spaces are required. A bedroom for one person must be at least 70 sf, for two persons 100 sf, and then 50 sf for each additional person. Habitable space does not include bathrooms, hallways, closets, or rooms without proper light and ventilation (among other requirements).