



RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM



Questions regarding rental housing program and payment of housing program fees:
(563) 344-4013

Questions about inspection scheduling and inspection reports: (563) 344-4030

For information or questions on other city services contact:
(additional information may also be available at www.bettendorf.org)

City Hall (563) 344-4000
1609 State Street

Code Enforcement (563) 344-4064
(overgrown grass/weeds, excessive debris/trash, snow removal from sidewalks, etc.)

Police Department (563) 344-4015
1609 State Street

Streets/Sanitation/Recycling/Transit (563) 344-4088
4403 Devils Glen Road

GUIDE TO THE BETTENDORF HOUSING CODE

Iowa State Law requires the inspection of all rental housing on a regular basis. The City of Bettendorf Housing Inspection Program began in January 1986.

The **Housing Code** (Appendix A of the Municipal Code) was adopted as the primary code related to housing.

Section 1 Minimum Housing Code is applicable to all housing (rental and owner occupied)

Section 2 Minimum Rental Housing Standards provides requirements specific to rental housing.

The housing code enforcement process really begins with your commitment to provide adequate, safe, and sanitary living conditions. It takes the joint effort of owners, tenants, and the City to achieve a viable property maintenance program. It is important to the City, that as a property owner or tenant, you are familiar with health and safety conditions that not only affect an individual's living environment, but the quality of life in our city.

There are many ways the Housing Inspection Program positively impacts the community. By enforcing compliance on a periodic basis, it is less likely that properties will deteriorate to the point where the owner must invest substantial money to repair the property. Those units that are not maintained will be taken out of the market resulting in fairer competition. Owners will not be able to operate substandard rental property. Another benefit is the attraction of renters to Bettendorf. The inspection program adds a degree of desirability to rent in Bettendorf versus cities that do not have an inspection program. Those with a choice may have a degree of confidence and trust in the quality of the rental market here that would lead them to rent in Bettendorf.

This booklet is only a guideline. For complete information you should consult the Bettendorf Housing Code (Appendix A of the City of Bettendorf Municipal Code). The Housing Code is available on the web at www.bettendorf.org.

WHAT IS A RENTAL PROPERTY?

All property occupied by anyone (including family members) other than the legal owner of record, is considered rental property under the law and required to be inspected whether or not rent is collected.

LICENSING PROCEDURES

All structures containing rental dwellings or boarding rooms must be licensed with the City of Bettendorf. This license must be renewed every year and are good for the calendar year. Owners of rental housing will be notified of the expirations of their licenses) with a bill for annual fees. A valid rental license is required for each rental unit in the City of Bettendorf. Failure to obtain a valid license may result in the structure being ordered to be vacated and/or a municipal citation may be issued requiring an appearance in Scott County Court. A Certificate of Compliance may be issued on request, but is not required to be posted

WHO NEEDS TO BE PRESENT DURING THE INSPECTION?

An owner or designated agent must be present during the inspection. The tenant may be the agent for the owner. The owner has the ultimate responsibility to see that the problems/deficiencies noted during inspections are appropriately remedied.

Inspection dates and times can be rescheduled due to just cause. Twenty-four hour notice is required to reschedule an appointment and is at the discretion of the inspector. Owners/agents who do not show up for a scheduled inspection will be billed \$40.00 for the missed appointment. An additional inspection will need to be scheduled.

VIOLATIONS

Failure to comply with a notice for corrections may result in the owner being charged penalty fees and/or the dwelling unit or structure being required to be vacated and/or a municipal infraction citation being issued requiring an appearance in Scott County Court. Each day a structure is not in compliance with the code is a separate offense and may be separately charged. (see the Housing Code for more information)

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Any person claiming to be aggrieved by a notice issued as a result of an inspection may file a written appeal to the Housing Official. Upon receipt of any appeal filed pursuant to this section, the Official shall present it at the next regular or special meeting of the Building Board of Appeals. Contact the Housing Inspector for further information on the appeal process.

PERMITS

Permits are required for many projects including remodeling, roofing, fencing, new furnace, new water heater and new plumbing fixtures. For information about permits please call the Bettendorf Building Inspection Services Department at 344-4074.

INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following is a list of basic requirements for all rental housing units. It is recommended that you review this list and conduct your own inspection prior to the housing inspector's visit. This list contains common violations. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all possible violations.

- **Garbage and Rubbish**

Are all yard areas free of rubbish and debris? The City of Bettendorf will pick up garbage and rubbish in City containers from structures containing 4 or fewer dwelling units. Call 344-4088 for further information. Owners of structures containing more than 4 units must hire a licensed hauler.

- **Public and Private Sidewalks**

Are the sidewalks and yard steps maintained in good repair-no excessive cracking, no changes in elevation of one inch or more, no excessive deterioration of the surface?

- **Roof**

Has the roof covering deteriorated? Does the roof leak? Are the sheathing, structural members, and overhangs in good repair?

- **Chimney**

Are there loose bricks? Is all mortar in place and tight? Is the chimney free of obstruction?

- Gutters and Downspouts

Is there a complete gutter and downspout system in good repair?

- Exterior Walls

Are the exterior wall members and siding in sound condition and able to prevent the elements (rain, snow, wind, etc.) from penetrating? Does the exterior of the building need painting due to peeling paint exposing wood to the elements?

- Windows

Are the windows free from breaks or cracks in the glass? Are they reasonably weather tight? Do the windows operate properly to provide ventilation and emergency egress?

- Screens

Are screens provided on all openable windows? Are all screens free from holes and tears and are the frames free from deterioration? Are screens tight-fitting, large enough to cover the entire window opening, installed on all windows and doors designed for ventilation?

- Doors (Exterior)

Are all the doors operable and reasonably weather tight? Is the door glass free from breaks or cracks? Are hinges, knobs, locks, and closures working properly? Do storm/screen doors have proper closers? Are screens and glass intact with impact resistive glass? All exterior doors must have a deadbolt lock with a thumb throw latch.

- Doors (interior)

Are interior doors leading into a common hallway 20-minute fire resistive solid core doors and are they self-closing? Are all interior doors free of damage, close properly and have locks (locks are required on bathroom doors)?

- Foundation

Is the foundation structurally sound? Are there any holes, cracks, crumbling of loose brick, stones, or block? Is all mortar in place and tight in joints? Does the exterior finish grade slope away from the building for proper drainage? Are there any areas allowing weather penetration into the foundation or dwelling?

- Accessory Structures

Are garages and storage sheds maintained in good condition, including paint and electrical wiring?

- Exterior Painting

Are any exterior surfaces in need of scraping and painting due to peeling paint exposing surface area to the elements?

- Stairways, Porches, and Steps

Are the stairways, porches, and steps properly constructed and maintained in a safe and sound condition? Are the steps and stairways having more than three risers provided with proper handrails? Do all stairways, porches, decks, and accessible roof areas over 30" from the ground have properly constructed guardrails?

- Interior Painting

Are walls, ceiling, windows, doors, and trim in need of plaster repair, scraping, or painting? Is there evidence of water damage?

- Rodents, Insects, Pests

Is there evidence of rodents, roaches, fleas, termites, or other insects or vermin?

- Sanitation

Is the unit free of excessive debris, clutter, and animal feces? Is the unit being maintained in a sanitary condition (floors clean, unit free of insect or rodent infestation, free of garbage or debris)?

- Adequate Lighting

Do all habitable rooms contain at least two electrical outlets or one electrical outlet and one permanently installed light fixture with wall switch? Do the public hallways, stairways, and cellar/basement area contain adequate electrical lighting? Are all habitable rooms provided with natural light by means of exterior glazed opening with an area not less than one-tenth of the floor area of such rooms with a minimum of ten square feet?

- Space and Occupancy

Does every dwelling unit have at least one room which has a minimum floor area of 120 square feet with one wall at least 7 feet in length? Do all other habitable rooms, except kitchen and bathroom, have a minimum floor area of 70 square feet?

[Where more than two people occupy a room used for sleeping purposes, the required floor area shall be increased at the rate of 50 square feet for each occupant over two.] Are all ceilings a minimum of 7'6" in height?

- Plaster

Is all interior wall and ceiling plaster intact, including above suspended ceilings?

- Bathrooms

Do all bathrooms have an operating window or mechanical ventilation, proper plumbing without drips or leaks, sealed tub and shower enclosures, toilets in good working order, sinks that are in good condition without chips or cracks, and one duplex electrical outlet?

- Floors

Are the floors structurally sound? Are all floor and stair coverings free from tears and deterioration? Are they able to be maintained in a sanitary condition? Are they being maintained in a sanitary condition?

- Electrical

Is the electrical system properly fused and maintained in good operating condition? Is the electrical system properly grounded? Has the electrical system been properly installed? Does each habitable room contain at least two electrical outlets or one electrical outlet and one permanently installed light fixture with wall switch? Is there an excessive use or abuse of extension cords? Do all outlets, switches, junction boxes, fuse boxes, and service panels have covers? Is the wiring to and within all accessory buildings properly installed?

Are GFCI's provided and functioning correctly in kitchens and bathrooms for all outlets within 6 feet of sinks, tubs and other wet areas?

Note: Before 1980, GFCI's were not required. Prior to 1970, three wire electrical systems were not required. In a residential structure that was constructed prior to these dates, it will be necessary to install GFCI outlets which conform to the current electrical code when it becomes necessary to replace an outlet in the areas noted above. For two wire electrical systems, this will require the addition of a ground wire for the outlet/circuit.

- Mechanical

Do all gas-fired appliances have a gas shut-off valve located in the same room and within three feet of the appliance? Are all gas-fired appliances in good operating condition and properly vented? Is the heating apparatus capable of maintaining a constant temperature of at least 70 degrees during daytime hours?

Do water heaters and boilers have a proper operating pressure relief valve? Is there a pressure relief valve drip leg extending to within 6" of the floor? Is there a gas line drip leg for each appliance?

- Plumbing

Does the building have adequate water pressure? Do all waste lines drain properly? Is the entire plumbing system free of leaks? Does each dwelling unit have a private three-fixture bathroom (sink, toilet, bathtub/shower)? Are all fixtures properly trapped and vented? Are proper materials being used for potable water and waste lines?

[CPVC material is not allowed to be used for supply lines.]

- Egress

Do all dwelling units/guest rooms below the third story have their own private/protected egress? Do all dwelling units/guest rooms above the second story have two means of egress remote from each other? Do all sleeping rooms below the first level have a proper means of egress?

- Fire Extinguishers

Are structures containing three or more units provided with approved type 2A serviceable fire extinguishers in common corridors on each floor level and the basement? Are the extinguishers no more than 75' apart on the same floor? Have they been checked and tagged by a fire equipment service company within the last 12 months?

- Fire Alarm Systems and Exit Signs

Is the fire alarm system (in buildings containing 16 or more units) installed and maintained in a proper working condition in accordance with all state and local codes? Is it annually inspected by an approved alarm system company? Is the equipment tagged showing the date of inspection?

Exit signs are required in common areas of apartments when two or more exits are required. If required, are they in place? Are they illuminated properly?

- Smoke Detectors and CO detectors

Do all dwelling units/guest rooms have approved, operable smoke detectors for each floor level including the basement? Do common corridors have operable smoke detectors in approved locations? All bedrooms and sleeping areas are required to have a smoke detector in each unit. A CO detector is required in the furnace room or in the vicinity of the gas fire appliance.

- Combustibles

Are all areas in structures containing gas-fired appliances free from combustibles and flammable liquids?

(10-8B-3) RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION FEE SCALE

Fees are due annually on January 1. License fees for new or newly sold rental properties may be prorated quarterly. If a rental property is sold the new owner shall register the property within thirty (30) days of sale. Once the application is received, a license will be issued. Landlords must hold a current license and certificate of compliance to rent residential property in the city of Bettendorf per Section 10-8B-2 of this article. A current application is due before the inspection date. All units are on a four (4) year inspection cycle. Life, health and safety related violations will be on a shorter inspection or reinspection time frame. Payment of the license fee shall pay for the City's administrative cost of license issuance, as well as one inspection per four (4) year cycle. Any out of cycle inspections, whether at tenant or landlord request shall follow the fee schedule set out below:

Annual License Fee

1 unit \$35.00

for each additional unit under one roof \$10.00

Miscellaneous Charges

No Show Fee \$40.00 per scheduled unit

Late Cancellation Fee \$40.00 per scheduled unit

Filing of Appeal \$50.00

Inspection fees:

Once per four year cycle \$0 (provided in license fee)

Out of cycle or reinspection fee \$50 per inspection

If inspection is at the request of tenant, and the complaint is not founded, the inspection fee of \$50 may be charged to the tenant.

Inspection pursuant tenant notification of security deposit -- \$50, with the fee waived if no violations of code found

Any of the above inspection fees may be waived by the rental inspector when the problem discovered is not a life safety issue and is rectified by the responsible party within thirty days. (2008 Code app. A § 15-12)