



Pre-Rental Inspection Guide

The Town of Elsmere

**Code Enforcement Office
11 Poplar Avenue
Elsmere, Delaware 19805**

**Tel (302) 998-2215
Fax (302) 998-9920**

What you should know about pre-rental inspections and property maintenance requirements.

This is a guide for property owners illustrating what the Town of Elsmere Code Enforcement Officers inspect during pre-rental inspections.

As stated in *Chapter 182 of the Town of Elsmere Code*, the pre-rental inspection costs are included in the rental license fee. However, a charge of \$50 will be assessed for re-inspection, if required, beyond the original inspection. This additional fee will have to be paid to the Town of Elsmere Code Enforcement Office prior to the re-inspection of the property. It is the property owner's responsibility to contact the Code Enforcement Office to schedule the re-inspection of the rental property. All inspection fees must be paid in full before the re-inspection is performed.

This guideline is furnished so that you will know in advance what the Code Enforcement Officers are inspecting when they are present at your property. By knowing these items in advance, you will ensure that everything relating to your property is compliant before you schedule your inspection; thereby minimizing the need for additional inspections, delays, or costs to you, while at the same time, maximizing your property's timely rental.

Should you require a copy of *Chapter 182 of the Town of Elsmere Code*, you may request a copy from the Code Enforcement Office and one will be provided.

Should you need any additional information or have any further questions, you may call the Town of Elsmere Code Enforcement Office at (302) 998-2215 Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. For requests outside of normal business hours, you may either leave your name and telephone number along with your questions on our answering system or submit your request online at www.elsmere.delaware.gov through the Request Tracker system. We will promptly return your call and provide you with the information you request.

RENTAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

While it is impossible to list every violation of the property maintenance code that may occur, this list contains violations that are commonly found during routine inspections. If you answer NO to any of these questions, it is more than likely that a code violation likely exists.

EXTERIOR GROUNDS

- | Yes | No | |
|------------|-----------|--|
| ___ | ___ | Is the yard free from rubbish or junk? |
| ___ | ___ | Is the yard free from noxious weeds? Is yard vegetation (grass) under 8 inches in height? |
| ___ | ___ | Is garbage properly stored? |
| ___ | ___ | Is the property free of rodents, pests, or areas that harbor them? |
| ___ | ___ | Is storm water draining properly? Is there proper grading/drainage so that there is no standing water on your property or drainage into neighboring properties? |
| ___ | ___ | Are sidewalks and paved areas maintained and in good condition without any defects? |
| ___ | ___ | Are all vehicles currently registered, operable for their intended use, and parked on a hard surface. (Abandoned vehicles or vehicles that pose a hazard are not allowed.) |
| ___ | ___ | Are any accessory structures (such as decks, garages, sheds, and fences) structurally sound and in safe condition? |

EXTERIOR OF THE STRUCTURE

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | ___ | Is the house number visible from the road? (4 inches high & 1/2 inch stroke?) |
| ___ | ___ | Is the house foundation free from holes, large cracks, and openings? |
| ___ | ___ | Is the house siding free from rot and decay? |
| ___ | ___ | Is the siding and paint in good condition and free from excessive flaking or peeling paint or graffiti on the walls? |
| ___ | ___ | Are the steps, decks, and landings safe to use? |
| ___ | ___ | Are there guardrails present for all open porches, decks, and landings higher than 30 inches above grade and not less than 36 inches in height? |

Yes **No**

- Are there handrails present for all steps with two (2) or more risers? (Not less than 34 inches or more than 48 inches high above the nosing of the treads.)
- Is the house roof weather tight?
- Are the rain gutters, downspouts, and laterals in good condition?

COMMON AREAS (MULTI-UNIT)

- Are all the walls and ceilings free from peeling paint, loose plaster, and/or holes, with no mold or mildew evident?
- Is the flooring complete, functioning as intended, and free of tripping hazards?
- Are there guardrails present for all landings higher than 30 inches above grade and not less than 36 inches in height?
- Are there handrails present for all steps with two (2) or more risers? (Not less than 34 inches or more than 48 inches high above the nosing of the treads.)

THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE

Windows

- Are all the windows free from cracked or broken panes?
- Do all windows have latching hardware?
- Is all window glazing in good condition?
- Do all operable windows have screens? (no rips, tears, or holes)
- Are all window frames, sashes, and sills in good condition and weatherproof?
- Are all windows operable and capable of being held in position by hardware?

Doors

- Are all exterior doors weather tight?
- Do all exterior doors have locks?

Yes **No**

___ ___ Are screen and storm doors in safe condition, with adequate hardware?

___ ___ Do all interior doors have adequate hardware?

Surface Coverings

___ ___ Are all the walls and ceilings free from peeling paint and / or loose plaster?

___ ___ Are all the interior surfaces maintained in a safe and sanitary condition?

___ ___ Are the floor coverings free of tripping hazards and capable of being cleaned?

Electrical System

___ ___ Is all the electrical equipment, wiring, and appliances installed properly and maintained in a safe and approved manner?

___ ___ Are all cover plates, switches, and junction boxes in place?

___ ___ Does every habitable space in the home have at least two separate outlets? Outlets should be equidistant or on separate walls. There should be no point along the floor line that is further than 6 ft. from a receptacle outlet.

___ ___ Is the dwelling served by a main service that is not less than 60 amperes, three wires?

___ ___ Is the electrical system free of hazards?

___ ___ Does the laundry area contain at least one grounded-type receptacle or GFCI outlet?

___ ___ Are all receptacles within 6 feet of a water source of the GFCI type?

___ ___ Is there a working light fixture present for all common areas such as public halls and interior stairways?

___ ___ Is there a working light fixture present or natural light available for every toilet room, kitchen, bathroom, and laundry room?

Heating System

Yes **No**

- Is the heating system capable of maintaining a room temperature of 65 degrees F. in all habitable rooms, bathrooms and toilet rooms, based on a winter outdoor design temperature of minus 3 degrees F.?
- Is all mechanical equipment, fireplaces, and solid fuel-burning appliances installed properly and maintained in a safe working condition?
- Is all mechanical exhaust venting maintained?
- Is all gas piping maintained and safety valves in place?
- Is all cooking equipment such as stoves, ovens, and microwaves that are permanent fixtures maintained in good condition and do not create a safety hazard?
- Is an anti-tip device installed on the stove?
- Is all fuel-burning heating equipment connected to an approved chimney or vent?
- Does the fuel-burning equipment have a reliable source of combustion air?
- Has fuel-burning equipment been inspected?

Plumbing System

- Does the dwelling contain a bathtub or shower, lavatory, water closet, and kitchen sink that is maintained in a safe working condition and free of leaks?
- Are all the plumbing fixtures maintained in a safe and functional condition and free of leaks?
- Are the plumbing fixtures connected to a public water system or an approved private water system?
- Is the water heating equipment properly installed and equipped with a temperature and pressure relief valve and relief valve discharge pipe?
- Are all the plumbing fixtures properly connected to an approved public or private sewer system, properly maintained, and not leaking?
- Are storm drains, sump pumps, and French drains in working order and not creating problems or endangerment?
- Do they empty onto the property and not on the street, sidewalk, or neighbor's property?

Yes **No**

___ ___ Do all the plumbing stacks, vents, waste and sewer lines function properly and are free of obstructions, leaks and defects?

Light, Ventilation, and Occupancy Limitations

___ ___ Does every habitable space (living room and bedrooms) have at least one operable window that faces directly to the outdoors?

___ ___ Does the bathroom and toilet room have either an operable window or a mechanical means of ventilation?

___ ___ Is the clothes dryer properly vented?

___ ___ Does every habitable room (living room and bedrooms) have a plan dimension of not less than seven (7) feet?

___ ___ Is the kitchen and other non-habitable spaces used for their intended purpose?

___ ___ Does the dwelling have sleeping areas with privacy and access from common areas?

___ ___ Does the dwelling meet the space needs of the occupants and does not appear to exceed maximum allowable occupancy?

Fire Safety

___ ___ Are carbon monoxide detectors installed on each level where there is a sleeping area and located in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping area?

___ ___ Are smoke detectors installed on each floor of the dwelling as required? (1 smoke detector within each bedroom and 1 just outside of the sleeping areas. Every bedroom and each floor of the dwelling must contain a smoke detector.)

___ ___ Do all of the smoke alarms function properly?

___ ___ Is there a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and in working condition?

___ ___ Does every sleeping room / bedroom have at least one operable window that meets emergency egress / rescue standards?

___ ___ Are hallways, exit doors, egress windows, and stairways unobstructed and clear of rubbish or stored materials?

Yes No

- ___ ___ Is there a 3 foot clearance around any heating appliance or other source of ignition within the home? (Not including cooking stoves)
- ___ ___ Are there easily activated locking / unlocking devices on doors and windows?

Basement

- ___ ___ Is the basement level dry (no standing water)?
- ___ ___ Is there no evidence of mold?
- ___ ___ Is there no sign of any leaks?

Other General Interior Requirements

- ___ ___ Is the residence free from insect and rodent infestation? (A clear pest inspection report **MUST** be submitted prior to the Town's inspection.)
- ___ ___ Is the dwelling free from an accumulation of rubbish, junk, or debris?
- ___ ___ Are there guardrails present for all interior landings higher than 30 inches above grade and not less than 36 inches in height?
- ___ ___ Are there handrails present for all interior steps with two (2) or more risers? (Not less than 34 inches or more than 48 inches high above the nosing of the treads.)

****MOST FREQUENTLY CITED DEFICIENCIES****

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Anti-tip device missing | • Smoke detectors missing or not operational |
| • Fire extinguisher not present or not operational in the kitchen | • GFCI receptacles not operating properly |
| • High grass / weeds | • Electrical switches and receptacles have broken or missing cover plates |
| • Carbon monoxide detectors missing or not operational | • Screens missing from windows |
| • Smoke detectors missing or not operational | • Accumulation of trash and / or debris |