



Rental Registration & Safety Inspection Program City of Bellingham

Rental Property Safety Inspection Checklist

The intent of this checklist is to provide a reasonable level of predictability for owners, residents and inspection personnel. No checklist can encompass every possible scenario and not all apparent violations present a threat to the health or safety of tenants. Accordingly, inspectors are required to use a significant amount of professional judgement. The severity of the violation along with the willingness of the building owner to abate inspection findings will weigh heavily into the course of action taken by inspectors.

The safety inspection is designed to acknowledge the standards that were in place at the time of the property's construction, provided those standards do not threaten life-safety. It is not the intent of the program to bring Bellingham rental properties into compliance with current building code. The example below details a situation in which non-compliance with current code could be allowed.

EXAMPLE: All bedrooms in buildings four stories or less require emergency egress windows. The current building code would require a window of 5.7 sq. ft. net openable area and with opening dimensions no less than 20" wide and 24" tall. Egress windows on the first floor may be 5.0 sq. ft. under the current building code.

Buildings constructed under old codes or constructed before there was an adopted building code would need to meet whatever the egress window size was when the building was originally built. The international Property Maintenance Code typically requires that each habitable room have a window sized to be at least 8% of the room's floor area. This can be accomplished by multiple smaller windows but typically in bedrooms is a single window. The bedroom window is required to have an openable area of at least 45% the total window size or current code requirements, whichever is smaller.

The need to upgrade egress windows is anticipated to be extremely rare, usually isolated to locations where other rooms have been illegally converted to bedrooms.

A checked box denotes a deficiency or an aspect of the property which needs corrective attention.

Please print clearly when completing this form

Inspector:	Inspection Date (mm/dd/yyyy):
Rental Property Address:	Registration Number:
Rental Property Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Single Family <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-family <input type="checkbox"/> Condo <input type="checkbox"/> Detached Independent Unit	
Rental Property Contact Name & Phone Number:	

1. Exterior: Structure, Shelter, and Maintenance

Roof, chimney, foundation, stairs, and decks are reasonably free of decay (e.g. severe cracks, soft spots, loose pieces, deterioration, or other indications that repair is needed); maintained in a safe, sound, and sanitary condition; and capable of withstanding normal loads and forces. The building and its components, including windows, should be reasonably weather-proof and damp-free.

1.1) Address numbers are plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Address numbers are missing or concealed from view
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Unit numbers are not on or adjacent to primary entrance of each dwelling
1.2) Roof must be maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair based on visual inspection.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Roof has holes and/or structural member is broken or significantly decayed
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Roof is not weather-proof or has clear evidence of leaking
1.3) Chimney is maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair with no major damage based on visual inspection (does not pose imminent danger).	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Loose bricks at the top and/or masonry requires repointing at top
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Loose or missing bricks or masonry in middle or at chimney base
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Pulling away from structure, unstable, or otherwise at risk of falling
1.4) Foundation is weather-proof, maintained, and structurally sound.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Foundation is failing: leaning, crumbling, missing pieces, broken, or deflected
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Openings in foundation are larger than 1/4" (potential for insect infestation)

<p>1.5) Exterior walkways are free from hazardous conditions.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Cracks are larger than 3/8" in height differential
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Walkway is leaning more than 2% side slope
<p>1.6) Exterior stairs and decks are safe, structurally sound, and in good repair.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Structural members are leaning, significantly decayed, or detached
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Exterior decks or other platforms are broken, loose, decayed, or missing pieces
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Exterior stairs are broken, loose, decayed, or missing pieces
	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Guardrails/intermediate rails on any landing, deck, or platform that are 30 inches or more above grade or other surfaces are missing, loose, or broken
	<input type="checkbox"/> e. Handrails/intermediate rails on any flight with more than three risers (two or more risers that serve two or more dwelling units) are missing, loose, or broken
<p>1.7) Door and window components and assemblies are weatherproof, safe, secure, and maintained in good condition.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Weather stripping is missing or allowing air to enter
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Sills or frames have significantly decayed wood or separated joints
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Windows or doors have missing pieces or are cracked and allowing weather or water to get inside
<p>1.8) Exterior walls are reasonably weather-tight and watertight, structurally sound, rodent proof, and kept in a safe and sound condition</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Exterior walls allow water or weather penetration (e.g., seeping, leaking, coming in through a crack or hole)
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Exterior wall is failing: leaning, crumbling, missing pieces, broken, or deflected
<p>2. Interior: Structure, Shelter, and Maintenance</p> <p>Walls, floors, stairs, and other structural components are reasonably free of decay, maintained in a safe and sound condition, and capable of withstanding normal loads and forces. Natural and mechanical lighting and ventilation is adequate and maintained in good working order for each habitable room in the unit.</p>	
<p>2.1) Ventilation: all habitable rooms, bathrooms, and laundry rooms have</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Any habitable room, bathroom, or laundry room does not have an openable window or other approved ventilation

openable windows, or passive or mechanical ventilation in good working order and vented to the exterior.	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Kitchen fan, if used in place of openable windows, is not operable or pulling air
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Bathroom and laundry room fan, if used in place of openable windows or operable passive ventilation, is not operable, pulling air, or vented to exterior

2.2) Structural components such as walls and floors are maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair. Wall, floor, and ceiling coverings must be dry and free of moisture.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Wall, floor, or ceiling coverings are broken such that framing members are visually exposed
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Walls, floors, or ceilings are soft, spongy, or wet to the touch
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Interior load-bearing walls are not maintained in a safe and sound condition
	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Floors are not maintained in a safe and sound condition

2.3) Interior stairs and landings must be maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Joists or posts are leaning, decayed, or detached
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Landings or other platforms are broken, loose, decayed, or missing pieces
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Interior stairs are loose, broken, decayed, or missing pieces
	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Floors are not maintained in a safe and sound condition
	<input type="checkbox"/> e. Handrails/intermediate rails on any flight with more than three risers (two or more risers that serve two or more dwelling units) are missing, loose, or broken

2.4) Fire-resistance-rated assemblies (including opening protective) must be intact, properly maintained, and in operable condition.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Fire-resistance-rated assemblies (including opening protective) are not intact, properly maintained, or in operable condition.
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3. Emergency Escape Windows and Doors
 Every sleeping room built or permitted after July 1st, 1974 must have an emergency escape window or door with at least 5.7 square feet openable area with a minimum dimension of at least 24 inches high and at least 20 inches wide. Sleeping rooms in older buildings must have one window or door of openable area at least 3.5 square feet. Emergency escape windows must open to the exterior and must not exceed a maximum sill height of 44 inches from the floor (*buildings built or permitted prior to 1964 are not subject to the sill height requirement*).

<input type="checkbox"/> 3.1) Emergency escape window or door is missing, blocked, or inaccessible.
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3.2) Emergency escape windows do not meet size or sill height requirements.

4. Room Size and Condition

All rooms used as living or sleeping rooms must meet minimum requirements for square footage and must not have dirt floors.

4.1) Dwelling unit does not have at least one habitable room that is 120 square feet, with all other habitable rooms at least 70 square feet (kitchens and bathrooms are not considered habitable rooms. Studio units (efficiency dwelling units) require 200 square feet minimum in a single room.)

4.2) Any habitable room except the kitchen measures less than seven (7) feet in any floor dimension.

4.3) Any sleeping room measures smaller than 70 square feet in size.

4.4) Dirt floor is present in any room used as a living area.

5. Heating System

Every bathroom and habitable room must have a functioning, properly ventilated, and permanently-installed heat source. If heat is not permanently installed in every habitable room and bathroom, then the heating system must be capable of maintaining a temperature of at least 68°F measured 3 feet above the floor in each room when the outside temperature is 29°F or higher.

5.1) Heat source in the unit is permanent, working, and in good repair.

a. Required permanently-installed heating equipment/device is defective or missing in any habitable room or bathroom

5.2) Temperature can be maintained at a minimum of 68°F (measured 3ft above the floor and 3ft from exterior walls) when exterior temperature is 29°F or higher.

a. Permanently-installed heater is not capable of maintaining required temperature in any habitable room or bathroom

5.3) Fuel-burning appliances, where allowed, must be of an approved type, properly installed, and maintained in good working order.

- a. Unvented portable fuel-burning heater is present in a sleeping room or bathroom
- b. Any gas, wood, or fuel-burning heat source lacks proper ventilation

6. Electrical Standards

All electrical equipment and wiring must be approved and maintained in safe and sound condition and in good working order.

6.1) Exposed unprotected wiring is evident in any room.

6.2) Dwelling unit is not served by 3-wire 120/240 volt single phase electric service of at least 60 amperes.

6.3) Any electrical equipment (meter bays, service panel, subpanels, shutoff) is improperly installed or connected, tampered with, or unsafe.

6.4) Any habitable room, including kitchen, does not have either an operable light fixture and an electrical outlet, or two electrical outlets.

6.5) Any bathroom, laundry room, utility room, common hallway, stairway, or porch does not have an operable light fixture.

6.6) Receptacle at clothes washer not grounded.

7. Plumbing and Hot Water

Plumbing systems must be properly installed, functional, sanitary, and maintained in good condition. Water temperature reaches at least 110°F after running water for two minutes

7.1) Running water temperature is below 110°F.

7.2) Any individual unit water heater is set above 120°F.

7.3) Evidence that plumbing is not connected to an approved sewer or not functioning properly. Evidence includes, for example: strong sewer gas smell in the basement or outside of unit, major leaking of basement plumbing pipes, numerous clogged or very slow drains.

8. Sanitation Standards: Bathrooms

Every unit has at least one directly accessible bathroom (primary bathroom) that includes an operable toilet, sink, and tub or shower, all in safe and sound condition and sanitary working order. Does not apply to a legally established rooming house/boarding house that does not have a bathroom, although any associated common or shared bathroom must meet these standards.

8.1) No fully functional or properly functioning bathroom (must include sink, toilet, and tub or shower).

8.2) The only access from a bedroom to the only bathroom is through another bedroom.

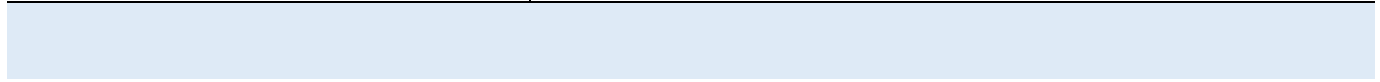
8.3) Tight-fitting door missing if bathroom is in a food preparation area.

8.4) Toilet does not flush, is broken, leaks at the base, or is not secure to the floor

8.5) Sink is functional, not leaking, and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacteria growth.

- a. Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain, or broken but operable handles or knobs
- b. Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet cannot turn on, or no hot and cold water
- c. Under sink plumbing pipes or connectors are leaking

8.6) Shower or bathtub is functional , not leaking, and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacteria growth.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain, or broken but operable handles or knobs
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet cannot turn on, or no hot and cold water
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Plumbing pipes or connectors are leaking



<input type="checkbox"/>	8.7) Bathroom counter is missing tile, pieces are broken, is made of a porous material, or is pulling away from the wall.
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8.8) Wall, floor, or ceiling coverings:	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Broken such that floor, wall, or ceiling studs or joists are visually exposed
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Soft, spongy, or wet to the touch

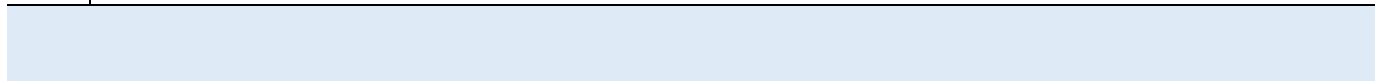


9. Sanitation Standards: Kitchen
 Every unit has a kitchen with a sink, counter, cabinets, cooking appliance, and refrigerator maintained in safe, sound, and sanitary condition. This does not apply to units comprised of a single habitable room such as a rooming house/boarding house, when the unit does not have a kitchen. Common kitchen must meet these standards.

<input type="checkbox"/>	9.1) Dwelling unit does not have a kitchen (must include sink, counter, cabinets, cooking appliance, and refrigerator).
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<input type="checkbox"/>	9.2) Counter is missing tile, pieces are broken, is made of a porous material, or is pulling away from the wall
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9.3) Refrigerator/freezer (if provided by landlord):	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Missing a handle or seal is compromised
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Is inoperable or not in good working condition

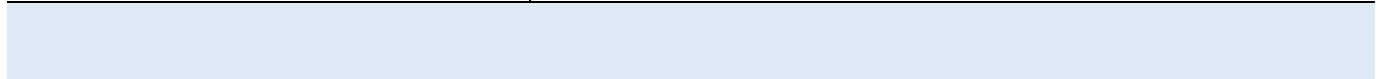


9.4) Cooking appliance (if provided by landlord):	<input type="checkbox"/> a. One or more parts are inoperable or missing but appliance still has food cooking capability
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	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Not rated for indoor use or entire appliance is inoperable
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9.5) Sink is functional , not leaking, and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacteria growth	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain, slow drain, or broken but operable handles or knobs
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet cannot turn on, or no hot and cold water
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Under sink plumbing assemblies including any piping, faucet risers, traps, or sink connectors are leaking



9.6) Gas piping:	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Gas piping is leaking, kinked, crushed, or pulling away from the wall (NOTE: if leak detected, evacuate and call 911 immediately)
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Gas shutoff valve not located within 3 feet of appliance



9.7) Wall, floor, or ceiling coverings:	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Broken such that floor, wall or ceiling studs or joists are visually exposed
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Soft, spongy, or wet to the touch



10. Owners' Obligations
 Property owners are responsible for ensuring that the property is free of excess trash; insects and rodents have been exterminated; unit and building doors lock with a deadbolt or dead-latch; and working smoke detectors are installed outside sleeping rooms.

<input type="checkbox"/>	10.1) Garbage/rubbish is accumulated outside of trash receptacles.
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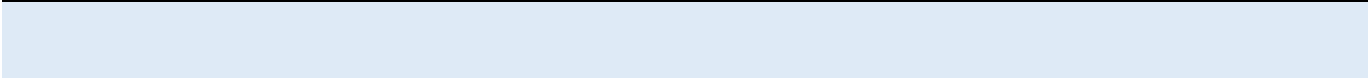
<input type="checkbox"/>	10.2) Visible evidence of rodents or insects such as bedbugs, ants, cockroaches, or silverfish.
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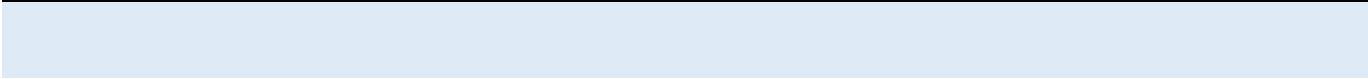
10.3) Door locks, frames, or jambs allow unit or building doors to close and lock securely.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Door locks, frames, or jambs are broken or do not close and lock securely
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Exterior doors are not capable of being locked from the inside without the use of a key



<input type="checkbox"/>	10.4) Smoke alarms missing, not functional, or not located in correct places (as determined by alarm type)
	a. Hardwired: <i>will automatically have correct placement, if installed per building code</i>
	b. Battery operated: <i>one on each floor</i>
	c. No smoke alarms or evidence of previous installation: <i>one on each floor, one centrally located in hallway outside sleeping rooms, and one in each room used for sleeping.</i>



<input type="checkbox"/>	10.5) Carbon monoxide alarms missing, not functional, or not centrally located in hallways outside sleeping rooms.
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Inspection Result		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass	<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Uninhabitable
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-inspection Not Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Re-inspection Required By _____ (date)

Inspector Notes:

Inspector Signature _____
 Date _____