

# CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

## MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING VIOLATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for your convenience and is designed to assist you in understanding inspection and code requirements. This checklist can be used by you on a regular basis to evaluate your property in regards to basic fire, electrical, plumbing, housing and mechanical code requirements. **Use of this checklist does not replace the City's routine inspection program, but it will help you understand the types of issues the City inspector looks for during the inspection. Items marked with a shaded box are considered serious violations, versus nonserious violations marked with an unshaded box. If used proactively, correcting any serious violations prior to the inspection can reduce the annual inspection fee. This is not an exhaustive or comprehensive list but only provided as a guide.**

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### Electrical Standards

- The electrical wiring of the garbage disposal must be properly installed. Flexible electrical cords shall be so connected to devices and fittings so that tension will not be transmitted to electrical joints or terminals and labeled on outlet.
- Grounded electrical outlets must be properly wired. Reverse polarity and/or open grounds are not allowed.
- All ground-type, three-prong receptacles must be properly grounded or provided with GFCI protection. All ground-type electrical receptacles wired to nongrounded electrical systems must be replaced with proper two-prong, nonground receptacles to prevent misuse and to protect users from possible injury.
- Circuit breakers or fuses must be legibly and durably marked at the circuit box or subpanel to indicate the circuit it protects. (No voids shall be left in panel.)
- All electrical light switches and receptacles shall be securely attached to the junction box and fit snugly against the wall surface. All faceplates must be solid, unbroken and secured tightly to the device yoke and flush against the wall.
- To prevent possible injury to the user, pull-chain switches for electrical fixtures must be made of nonconductive material at any point at which the user can make contact.
- Higher-ampage fuses than design and wire gauge are not allowed.
- Flexible electrical cords and cables (such as extension cords, etc.) cannot be used: (1) as a substitute for the fixed wiring of a structure; (2) through holes in walls, ceilings or floors; (3) through doorways, windows or similar openings; (4) where attached to building

surfaces; (5) where concealed behind building walls, ceilings or floors; (6) where installed in raceways.

- In locations where electrical equipment could be exposed to physical damage, appropriate enclosures or guards shall be installed to prevent damage to it.
- All splices and joints and the free ends of conductors shall be covered with an insulation equivalent to that of the conductors suitable for the purpose.
- No electrical system; including outlets, permanently wired outlet extensions and electrical devices, shall be installed or altered unless a separate permit for each building or structure has first been obtained from the building official.

### Fire Safety Standards

- To maintain required fire separation protection for dwelling units, all holes, gaps and openings in the ceiling and walls of the carport/garages must be filled. Finished surfaces must be solid, continuous and sealed around all penetrations. Repairs must be made in the same material as the original construction or of a material with equal fire rating.
- Vegetation overgrowth must not inhibit proper use of required exiting stairways. All encroaching vegetation must be trimmed or removed to assure safe ingress and egress.
- Every apartment complex is required to have at least one (1) 2-A:10-B:C rated fire extinguisher located within seventy-five (75) feet travel distance of the entrance door of each dwelling unit and fifty (50) feet travel distance of every covered parking stall. In multi-story apartment complexes, extinguishers must be provided and mounted on every floor so that travel on stairways will not be required to reach an extinguisher.

- All fire extinguishers are required to have a minimum 2-A:10-B:C rating. Soda acid and water load extinguishers are inadequate to fight electrical and oil fires and must be replaced.
- Fire extinguishers are required to be serviced, recharged and tagged by a State licensee at least once a year, after each use, or when pressure gauge shows recharge needed.
- Smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in full working order at all of the following locations: on the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms, in each room used for sleeping purposes and in each story within a dwelling unit and in enclosed common stairwells of apartment complexes and other multiple-dwelling complexes.
- A carbon monoxide (CO) alarm should be installed in all dwelling units of multi-unit occupancies having fossil-fuel-burning appliances or attached garages. CO devices should be installed outside each sleeping area. The device manufacturer's installation instructions should also be followed. (*Senate Bill 183, also known as the "Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act"*).
- Refuse dumpsters/containers with an individual capacity of 1.5 cubic yards or greater stored or placed within five (5) feet of combustible walls, openings or eave lines, shall be protected by an automatic fire protection (sprinkler) system.
- Windows, sliding glass doors and all exiting systems within a dwelling unit shall be obvious, unobstructed and permit exiting from the building in the case of an emergency.

### General Exterior Standards

- The exterior surfaces of the buildings must be maintained, including replacement of broken and cracked windows and doors and providing paint or other approved protective covering for weather-exposed surfaces.
- All crawl space vent openings must be covered with a corrosion-resistant wire mesh with mesh openings of 1/4" in dimension. All screens must seal tightly to prevent infestation.
- Crawlspace shall be provided with a minimum 18" by 24" opening unobstructed by pipes, ducts, crawl spaces and similar construction.

- Leaking roofs should be repaired or replaced.
- The guardrails and/or handrails of exterior stairways and balconies must be securely attached to the deck or structure.
- The swimming pool or the entire property on which it is located shall be walled or fenced as to prevent uncontrolled access by children from the street or from adjacent properties. The wall or fence shall be a minimum of 60" high with a self-closing, self-latching device placed no lower than 60" above the ground.
- All required security lighting must be maintained operational at all times. All automatic control devices must be periodically adjusted to assure lighting fixtures will operate from before dusk to after dawn.
- All garbage containers are required to have tight-fitting lids which must be in place at all times in order to promote sanitation and health.
- Property owners shall provide a sufficient number of standard garbage containers with close-fitting covers for receiving and holding all garbage from the premises without leakage or escape of odor.
- Registration shall be current for all vehicles on a property unless vehicles are completely enclosed within a building.
- Fences, walls, hedges, or street plantings shall not exceed three feet (3') in height within the required front yard or street setback.

### General Interior Standards

- Surfaces shall be protected by appropriate moisture-resistant wall covering or paint.
- All holes, gaps, cracks and openings in floors, walls and ceilings must be patched and sealed, and all baseboards secured in place to prevent insect infestation.
- All water-damaged surfaces must be restored to their original condition.
- All missing, broken and loose wall and/or countertop ceramic tile must be replaced and/or reattached to create a solid surface. All cracked ceramic tile must be sealed to prevent water entry to the substructure and water damage to the structure.

- All habitable rooms within a dwelling unit shall have a minimum net glazed opening of not less than 8 percent of the floor area of the room served.
- All habitable rooms within a dwelling unit shall be provided with natural ventilation by means of openable exterior openings with an area of not less than 4 percent of the floor area being ventilated.
- In lieu of required exterior openings for natural ventilation, a mechanical ventilation system may be provided. Such mechanical ventilation system must be maintained in full operational condition at all times.
- Shower walls shall have smooth, hard, nonabsorbent surfaces such as Portland cement, concrete, ceramic tile or other approved material to a height of seventy inches (70") above the drain inlet. All valves, faucets, shower assemblies provided on these walls shall be installed and sealed in an appropriate manner to protect structural elements from moisture and water damage.
- Water heating equipment shall be provided with an approved listed, adequately sized pressure relief valve.
- All water heater pressure relief valves installed on water heaters located within a building or structure shall be provided with full-sized drain of galvanized steel or hard-drawn copper piping and fittings. Such pipes shall extend from the valve to the outside of the building, with the end of the pipe not more than two feet (2') nor less than six inches (6") above ground and pointing downward. No part of such pipe shall be trapped, and the terminal end of the drainpipe shall not be threaded.
- An odorizing agent in natural gas has a detrimental effect on copper gas lines, causing deterioration to the inside of the pipe. The Uniform Plumbing Code requires the replacement of all copper gas lines supplying gas-burning appliances with approved materials.
- No drainpipe for any clothes washer shall extend more than thirty inches (30") nor less than eighteen inches (18") above the trap. Clothes washer drainpipe traps shall be installed not less than six inches (6") and not more than eighteen inches (18") above the floor.
- Clothes washers and similar plumbing appliances shall not be directly connected to the building drainage system in such a manner as to create a back-siphonage due to suction.
- All floor-mounted plumbing fixtures, such as toilets, shall be rigidly secured to the drainage connection and to the floor and caulked around the base.
- No domestic dishwashing machine shall be directly connected to a drainage system or food waste disposer without the use of an approved dishwasher air-gap fitting on the discharge side of the dishwashing machine.
- All faucets, stop valves, drains, shower heads and toilet assemblies shall be drip-free and not leak.
- Bathroom sink drain stop valve strainers are required to prevent rodent and vermin migration through the drainage system.
- Gas-burning water heaters shall be securely fastened in place by anchors or strapping to resist horizontal displacement due to earthquake motion. Strapping shall be at points within the upper one-third (1/3) and lower one-third (1/3) of its vertical dimensions. At the lower point, a minimum distance of four inches (4") shall be maintained above the controls with the strapping.
- Tub and shower enclosures, as well as sinks and countertops, require caulking, grouting or sealing to prevent water leaks and damage to substructures.
- The drainage system (including "P-traps" and trap arms) is required to have a smooth and uniform interior waterway with a minimum 1/4" per foot slope and smooth interior surfaces for all drainage pipes and fittings. The use of "corrugated" flexible elbow pipes, traps and trap arms is not permitted.
- The minimum required total area of combustion air openings in enclosures for gas-burning appliances shall be one hundred (100) square inches each; openings shall be located within the upper 12" of the enclosure and in the lower 12".
- Combustion air openings to attic spaces for gas-burning appliances are to be provided with galvanized sleeves of not less than 26-gauge steel or other approved material extending from the appliance enclosure to at least 6" above the top of the ceiling joist. Such openings must not be covered with screens.
- Domestic clothes dryers must terminate to the outside of the building and must be equipped with backdraft dampers. Ducts used for domestic clothes dryers must be of metal and shall have smooth interior surfaces. Screws are not permitted in ducts.

- No part of the grille for wall-mounted, gas-burning heaters shall be closer than 18" to combustible materials; i.e., couches.
- Dwelling units shall be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 68 degrees F. at a point 3' above the floor in all habitable rooms.
- Water heaters which depend on the combustion of fuel for heat shall not be installed in a room used or designed to be used for sleeping purposes, bathroom, clothes closets or in a closet or other confined space opening into a bath or bedroom.
- ❑ Warm-air furnaces shall not be located in a room used or designed to be used as a bedroom, bathroom, closet or in any enclosed space with access only through such room or space.
- ❑ Unused openings in a venting system must be closed or capped.
- Heating system and water heater flues must be properly connected. (Single-wall pipe connections shall be secured with three (3) screws.)
- ❑ The filter and filter enclosure cover for all furnaces must be maintained in proper position.
- An accessible shutoff valve must exist in the fuel-gas piping outside of each appliance and ahead of the union connection.
- ❑ Sliding glass windows shall have both a primary and an auxiliary locking device.
- ❑ A vent connector which is part of a gravity-type venting system shall have a continuous rise of not less than 1/4" per foot of length measured from the appliance vent collar to the vent.
- ❑ A manager, janitor, housekeeper or other responsible person shall reside on the premises and shall have charge of every apartment complex in which there are 16 or more dwelling units.
- ❑ Openable windows must have screens.
- ❑ All window opening/closing devices for casement windows must be operable to allow window operation.
- The apartment complex shall be free of cockroach or rat infestations.
- ❑ Locks and latches for exit doors must allow opening from the inside without the use of a key or any special

knowledge or effort. Locks, latches and deadbolts for exiting doors of individual dwelling units must be mounted no higher than 48" above the floor level.

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