



City of Carbondale
Building & Neighborhood Services
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM

Q. If I purchase a house for my children to live in while they attend SIU do I have to register this property as a rental unit?

A. No. As long as the house is only occupied by family members, rental registration is not required.

Q. If I rent a room in my house to someone, is my house considered a rental?

A. Yes. You have allowed occupancy for rent and therefore your home is now considered a rental unit and must be registered with the City.

Q. Why are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors important?

A. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are the only early warning device against fire and gas and are required by City Ordinances and State law to be in good working condition at the time of lease.

Q. What are the requirements on carbon monoxide alarms?

A. Every dwelling unit shall be equipped with at least one approved carbon monoxide alarm in an operating condition within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes. It is the responsibility of the owner of a structure to supply and install all required alarms.

The tenant is responsible for replacement of any required batteries in the carbon monoxide alarms in the tenant's dwelling unit, except that the owner shall ensure that the batteries are in operating condition at the time the tenant takes possession of the dwelling unit. A carbon monoxide detector is not required in a residential unit in a building that does not have any fuel burning devices and is not connected in any way to a garage.

Note: The Public Act does not specify where to install the carbon monoxide detector other than within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes; nor does it specify the power source therefore battery operated, hardwired, or plug in units are acceptable.

Reference: Public Act 094-0741: Carbon Monoxide Alarm Detector Act

Q. What can be done about a problem tenant?

A. In 2003 the City adopted the International Property Maintenance Code, which puts responsibility for keeping the property in a safe and sanitary manner on the tenant.

Note: The City cannot assist in landlord/tenant disputes such as nonpayment or rent.

Q. Is there a fee for rental property inspections?

A. There is no fee for the initial and follow-up inspection; however, if additional inspections are required due to failure to make the required repairs then there is a \$50 fee for each inspection required by the City.

Q. What can I do to ensure that my property meets the requirements to pass inspection on the first visit?

A. A checklist of items that the inspectors look for is available through BNS. Also, it is suggested that you walk through the unit in advance of the inspection and look for items that you know will not pass and make the corrections and repairs in advance. This saves you time and eliminates the need to reschedule follow-up inspections.

Q. What about exterior painting of my property if the inspection is done in the middle of winter?

A. Exterior painting will be treated separately from all other items on the inspection violation list with regard to the amount of time given to complete the painting. No re-inspection fee will apply if completed within the specified time frame.

Q. If I sell my property during the year, will I receive a refund of the prorated portion of the year?

A. No. There are no prorated fees under the Rental Registration Program. A record of sale or copy of the transfer of real estate will be required to assist the Building & Neighborhood Services Division with record keeping.

Q. If I purchase a property mid-year do I pay the entire \$35 fee at the time of registration?

A. Yes. There are no prorated fees under the mandatory Rental Registration Program. You will be required to pay the \$35 fee for the remainder of the year.

Q. If I close a property and secure it (board up the structure) do I have to still pay an annual registration fee?

A. No registration fee will be charged until such time as the structure is repaired and inspected and approved by the Building & Neighborhood Services Division prior to occupancy as a rental unit.

Q. What options do I have if I don't agree with some of the findings of the inspector or interpretation of the codes?

A. Initially we recommend scheduling a meeting with the inspector and Neighborhood Inspector Supervisor to discuss specifics of the situation. If this fails to resolve the dispute there is the option of a formal appeal before the Building Board of Appeals which requires a non-refundable fee of \$100.

Q. Can I obtain an extension to the time required to complete the required repairs and improvements?

A. Yes. An extension to the time allotted to make the repairs can be granted provided good cause is shown. However, extensions are normally not granted for items that pose an immediate life safety hazard to the occupants.