



Mason City Rental Housing
Inspection Program
10 1st St. NW
Mason City, IA 50401
www.masoncity.net



Rental Housing Inspection Information



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10 1st St. NW
Mason City, IA 50401
Tel: 641-421-3380
Fax: 641-421-3623
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Types of Rental Housing

- **Definition of a Rental or Rental Unit:** For the purposes of the Mason City Housing Code, except as specifically otherwise noted therein, a rental dwelling shall include any dwelling, dwelling unit, duplex, apartment, rooming unit, or a rooming house, **occupied by any person but not by any record-titleholder of the property.**
- **Single-Family:** A house rented to one tenant/family
- **Duplex:** A structure containing two dwelling units.
- **Apartment:** A structure containing three or more dwelling units in one building.
- **Rooming Unit:** A building containing one or more rooming units with no separate kitchen or bathroom in which space is let to 3 or more roomers.



Ray Quayle, Inspector for the Mason City Rental Housing Inspection Program

Registration and Fee Procedures

1. Initially a landlord shall file an application for a landlord's license indicating all dwelling units. **The annual fee for the license is \$20 per registered landlord and expires on February 15th every year.** Invoices are mailed to landlords two months prior to the expiration date.
2. **An initial dwelling inspection will be performed on each registered unit.** A written notice of the inspection time will be sent to the landlord. **The inspection fees for Single-family dwelling and rooming houses is \$60, the fee for a duplex is \$70 and apartment fees are \$80 per building and \$17 for each unit.** Fees for re-inspections to verify compliance vary depending on the number of return visits required.
3. **Furnace Inspection.** All rental properties must have a heating/cooling contractor inspect the furnace for safety of the unit and controls. **A furnace inspection is current if it has been done within two (2) years prior to your periodic inspection.**
4. Once compliance with the housing code has been met, the rental dwelling permit will be issued.
5. **Units will be inspected on a rotating basis every 5 years.**



For More Information:

Mason City Rental Housing Inspection Program
City Hall ♦ 10 1st St. NW ♦ Mason City, Iowa
T: 641-421-3380 ♦ F: 641-421-3623
Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
or visit us on the web at www.masoncity.net

Basic Rental Housing Requirements

Minimum Space

- **Minimum Floor Space Per Dwelling Unit:** 150 sq. ft. for 1st occupant and 50 additional sq. ft. for each additional occupant.
- **Minimum Floor Space for Sleeping Rooms and Rooming Units:** 70 sq. ft. for 1st occupant and an additional 40 sq. ft. for each additional occupant.
- **Maximum Occupancy:** Regulated by floor space. Not more than one occupant group plus two roomers.

Natural Light

- Every habitable room, except a kitchen, shall have at least one window or skylight facing directly to the outdoors and shall not be less than 1/10 of the floor area of such room unless adequate artificial light is provided.



Ventilation

- Must be free from air pollutants.
- Openable window requirement of at least 45% of the minimum window area required for natural light.
- In lieu of natural ventilation, mechanical ventilation is allowable providing not less than 2 air changes per hour discharging directly to the outside air.



Electrical System

- Three electrical outlets are required in each habitable room or two electrical outlets and a light controlled by a wall switch.
- All stairways, entrances and exits shall be lighted and controlled by interior switches.



Extension Cords

- Extension cords longer than 12' are not allowed.
- Electrical overload by the use of extension cords is also prohibited.

Plumbing System

- Each dwelling unit must have a bathroom containing a toilet, bathroom sink and bathtub or shower.
- Each dwelling unit shall have a kitchen with a kitchen sink.
- All plumbing fixtures shall be connected to an approved water supply system and sanitary sewer system.
- Hot water must be at least 120 degrees.



Heating Systems

- Must be capable of heating all habitable rooms to 70 degrees at a point 3' feet above the floor.
- Unvented fuel burners are prohibited.
- Fuel burners are prohibited in bathrooms and sleeping rooms.

Fire Safety

Exits: Every dwelling unit must have 2 unobstructed escape routes. Basement sleeping rooms must have an egress window not more than 44 inches from the floor and have an opening of at least 5.7 square feet.

Fire Extinguishers: Apartment and rooming houses shall be supplied with a properly hung fire extinguisher.

Smoke Detectors: All dwelling units must be supplied with smoke detectors. The detectors shall be mounted on the ceiling or wall at a point centrally located in the corridor or room giving access to the sleeping rooms. Smoke detectors shall also be installed in common areas and basements. All detectors shall be located according to manufacturer's directions.

Owner Responsibilities for Maintenance and Occupancy

- The dwelling shall be maintained in a safe and sound condition.
- Proper drainage should be installed to direct rainwater away from the dwelling, steps and walkways.
- Exterior wood surfaces shall be protected from the elements and decay with non-lead based paint or other protective coating.
- Providing and installing screens no later than May 1 of each year and storm windows no later than November 1 of each year, unless there is an agreement between the landlord and occupant to the contrary.

Owner Responsibilities continued

- Provide proper maintenance of the units electrical, plumbing and heating systems.
- Flooring shall be constructed and maintained to allow it to be kept clean and sanitary.
- Supply working fire extinguishers and smoke detectors as required.
- Maintain common areas where there are two or more units unless there is a written agreement between the landlord and the occupants of the contrary.
- Supply adequate, approved garbage receptacles/containers for the disposal of garbage.

Occupant Responsibilities for Maintenance and Occupancy

- Maintain their dwelling unit in a clean, safe and sanitary condition.
- Occupants of single-family dwelling shall supply pest control services if an infestation occurs
- Properly dispose of garbage.
- Limit the use of extension cords.
- Provide replacement batteries for smoke detectors.
- Provide replacement light bulbs as needed.
- If a stove or microwave and refrigerator are not supplied by the landlord, the occupant will be required to supply these appliances.
- Not allow the occupancy of the unit to exceed the number of persons listed on the rental dwelling permit.

