

## Landlords!

**It is your responsibility** to ensure that rental units are inspected prior to occupancy. This requirement applies every time there is a changeover in tenants.

**To license a rental property**, visit the 2nd floor of City Hall in the Department of Inspections and complete a non-occupant owner license application with the required fee (see listing of annual fees below).

**You must resolve any violations** that may result from an inspection. If violations are not resolved, notices to appear in court will be issued.

### **All non-occupant landlords must be licensed.**

The Division of Housing maintains a database of all licensed properties in the city, which makes it possible to verify whether a particular property is licensed. Additionally, a landlord must display his or her license by posting it on the upper edge of the building's front door.

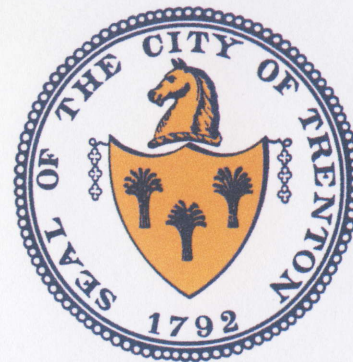
### **Annual fees for licensing:**

- ≈ **Residential Property** - \$45 per structure, plus \$10 per unit (minimum fee \$55 for single family residence.)
- ≈ **Commercial Property** - \$100 per structure, plus \$20 for each business unit (minimum fee \$120 for one commercial unit).
- ≈ **Mixed Use - Residential and Commercial** - \$100 per structure, plus \$20 for each commercial unit and \$10 for each residential unit.

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*As part of this program, periodic inspections are performed to check for housing code violations.*

## **Did you know?**

- ≈ You can learn **THE STATUS OF A CASE** by calling the housing inspection division to speak to the inspector of record. He or she will provide information about the case as well as all actions being taken at that time.
- ≈ **CASE INFORMATION IS PUBLIC INFORMATION** but personal information such as an unpublished telephone number or social security number is confidential. Therefore, a person may look at the parts of a file that are not considered confidential and take notes for his or her records. A subpoena for the accompaniment of an inspector to court is required for a complete copy of the file. Also, an attorney may request copies for his or her file.
- ≈ **ALL HOUSING INSPECTORS HAVE IDENTIFICATION** with the city seal. If you are unsure about whether someone is an inspector, ask to see his or her ID or call the City at 989-3560 to confirm that inspector's identity.
- ≈ **THE LANDLORD AND THE TENANT ARE EQUALLY RESPONSIBLE** for maintenance and care of living units. The lease agreement determines the responsibility of yard maintenance.
- ≈ **BOTH LANDLORD AND TENANT HAVE A RIGHT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT.**
- ≈ **SMOKE DETECTORS ARE REQUIRED** on each level of a home.
- ≈ **CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS ARE REQUIRED ON ANY FLOOR WHERE A BEDROOM EXISTS.**



## ***NEED TO KNOW ...***

# **What is Required of Landlords and Tenants?**



*The City's Department of Inspections works in many ways to protect the quality of life of residents. This "Need to Know" brochure is designed to provide basic information to help both tenants and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities. Please contact our Housing Division if you need additional assistance ...*

***We're here to help!***



## Tenants!

Before moving into a rental unit, make sure the apartment building is licensed with the City by looking for a current sticker on the upper edge of the front door. If there is no sticker, call 989-3563 to report the situation. If there is a sticker, the landlord is required to provide a clean, habitable living unit. Be sure to check for infestation, cold and hot water pressure, and water leaks. Make sure that the apartment meets the renter's needs and has appropriate conditions for the following:

↻ **Bathroom** — Make sure that the toilet works. Check for loose tiles on the walls and floor.

↻ **Kitchen** — There should be a stove and refrigerator properly connected to the appropriate utility.

↻ **Ceiling** — Check the ceiling and walls for water leak stains, dampness, loose plaster, holes, or cracks.

↻ **Windows** — Check the locks, screens, glass, frames, and weatherproofing. Screens are required, from May to October.

↻ **Floors** — Look for rotten wood, loose tiles, splinters, and water stains.

↻ **Electricity** — Make sure that the light switches and fixtures work, and look for hanging or open wires, which should be addressed prior to occupancy. There should be covers on all outlets and light switches.

↻ **Heat** — Don't forget to make sure that the heating system works properly, especially if you rent in the summer. Ask about the last time that the heating unit was serviced and the chimney was cleaned.

↻ **Basement** — Look for dirt, trash, leaks (or evidence of leaks), loose wires, broken windows, and crumbling walls.

↻ **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors** — Check for the installation of smoke detectors on all levels and at the steps going to another floor, and make sure they work properly. Battery maintenance is the tenant's responsibility. Carbon monoxide detectors must be located on any floor where there is a bedroom.

↻ **Doors** — Check the locks on the entrance door and ensure that all doors are weather tight.

↻ **Paint** — Look in all rooms to make sure paint is fresh; make sure that walls are smooth and that they can be cleaned.

The tenant is expected to exercise reasonable care of the unit, which includes keeping it clean and sanitary. All facilities supplied to the tenant must be properly used.

**Remember:** A tenant can be found in violation if proper care is not taken of the dwelling unit. This includes the proper disposal of garbage on collection days and the maintenance of the yard.

## Things to Remember!

A **TENANT OCCUPANCY LIMIT** may be reached in an agreement with the landlord (whether in a written or oral agreement) but also is governed by the total habitable floor space within the unit.

**TO ADDRESS A HOUSING PROBLEM**, first notify the landlord of the problem and allow a reasonable time for the landlord to address it. If the problem persists, contact the housing inspection office at 989-3560, 989-3562 or 989-3563. Be prepared to describe the problem, state how long it has existed, and provide a contact number.

Usually, the **RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEAT AND UTILITIES** is agreed upon in the lease. The City cannot provide legal advice pertaining to landlord-tenant disputes, but Legal Aid provides this service and can be reached at 695-6249.

If you have a housing problem, call the inspector immediately – especially if it is an emergency. The Housing Division is always willing to respond to a citizen or landlord complaint to ensure that quality of life and life safety concerns are addressed.

**Douglas H. Palmer, Mayor**

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**Leonard Pucciatti, Director**  
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*We're on the web:* <http://www.trentonnj.org>