

Check

Your Home

A guide to property maintenance
for renters, landlords & homeowners



Table of Contents

Interior Maintenance	4	Around Your Home	12
Kitchen Compliance	5	Exterior Maintenance	13
Bathroom Compliance	6	Landlord Responsibilities.....	14
Smoke Detectors	7	Tenant Responsibilities.....	15
Occupancy Requirements	8	Remodeling and Repairs.....	16
Basement Compliance	9	Contact Information.....	17
Year-Round Maintenance Schedule		10	

This pamphlet is intended as an informal guide to the property Maintenance Codes and Ordinances adopted by the City of Manhattan. We hope that all residents will find this checklist useful in evaluating their housing needs and current housing situation.

The City of Manhattan cares about the availability of quality housing for renters, property owners and new home buyers. You may review a copy of the International Property Maintenance Code at the Code Office, 2000 Denison Ave., or online at <http://publiccodes.cyberregs.com/icod/ipmc>. City ordinances may be found at CityofMHK.com/CodeofOrdinances. For more information, call the Code Services office at 785-587-4506.

This booklet is not an adopted legal instrument. Please refer to the official International Property Maintenance Code for precise definitions and requirements.

About Code Services

Responsibilities of the Manhattan Code Services Division include building code and property maintenance enforcement. Code Services further enhances the community by assisting in the following ways:

- Cooperating with citizens in improving and preserving homes and properties within the City of Manhattan. Informed and involved citizens are crucial to the preservation and improvement process.
- Conducting periodic inspections to help prevent housing deterioration. Inspectors often discover defects and items needing repair that have gone unnoticed by property owners.
- Upholding municipal standards of housing safety and sanitation to promote proper maintenance among area homeowners, landlords and tenants. This ongoing commitment contributes to the excellent quality of life found in the Manhattan community.

Code Services Office
2000 Denison Ave.
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-587-4506
CityofMHK.com/Code

What's Going on Inside?

Check your home's interior to see if it is clean, safe and well-maintained. Is it free of rodent and insect infestation?

Walls and Ceilings

- Clean
- No holes
- No loose or peeling paint/wallpaper
- No cracked or missing plaster
- Dwelling appears to be structurally sound
- No visible insulation or wiring

Electrical Equipment

- Adequate service provided
- Two outlets per habitable space
- Wiring properly installed and maintained
- Equipment and appliances properly installed and safely maintained



Floors, Doors and Windows

Floors: Structurally sound, clean and in good condition

Doors: Easily opened from inside, not blocked

Windows: One 4-square-foot minimum opening area and 48" or less above the floor in sleeping rooms, one per habitable space (except bathrooms), open freely, no damage or broken glass



Know How to Find the Following in an Emergency:

- Main water shut-off valve
- Main electrical disconnect
- Circuit breaker or fuse panel
- Main gas valve/heating system disconnect

Is Your Kitchen Up to Code?

Conduct a safety check of your kitchen for the following items:

- A kitchen sink in every dwelling unit.
- The kitchen sink is equipped with hot and cold running water.
- Faucets, drains and pipes are free of drips and leaks.
- Wastewater drain pipe and water supply lines are free of cross connections.
- No direct connection between private and City of Manhattan water supply.
- Kitchen has at least two electrical outlets.
- Floor surface is clean and sanitary.
- Floor is in good repair.



Danger! During cold nights, there is a real temptation to turn on the burners of a gas stove. **Don't do it!** You and others within the structure can be overcome with carbon monoxide fumes.

Avoid these common oversights or you'll likely attract roaches, mice and other unsavory roommates:

- Leaving dirty dishes in the sink and around the home.
- Unrepaired cracked floor covering.
- Allowing stoves and refrigerators to harbor food bits/grime.
- Leaving garbage in open containers.
- Accumulation of grease and dirt on walls and ceilings.

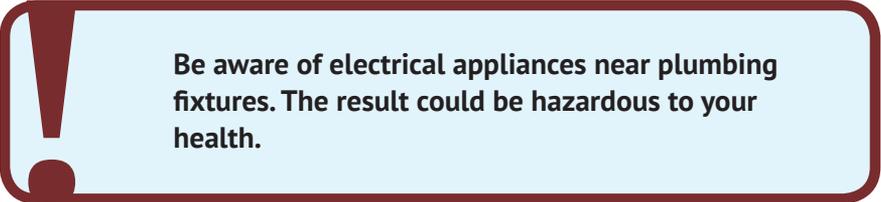
Bathroom Compliance

All bathrooms must have:

- Moisture resistant and sanitary floors and walls
- Proper size window or mechanical ventilation
- No passageway through bathroom
- At least one electrical outlet
- Assured privacy

These bathroom plumbing fixtures must be in good working condition:

- A bathtub or shower with reliable hot and cold running water
- A lavatory/sink with reliable hot and cold running water
- A toilet (should not run constantly)
- A light
- No cross connection of waste pipe and water supply lines
- No dripping faucets or leaks in drains or pipes



Be aware of electrical appliances near plumbing fixtures. The result could be hazardous to your health.

If you have questions or concerns about the condition of the plumbing/electricity in your rented home or apartment, call the landlord first and arrange for repairs.

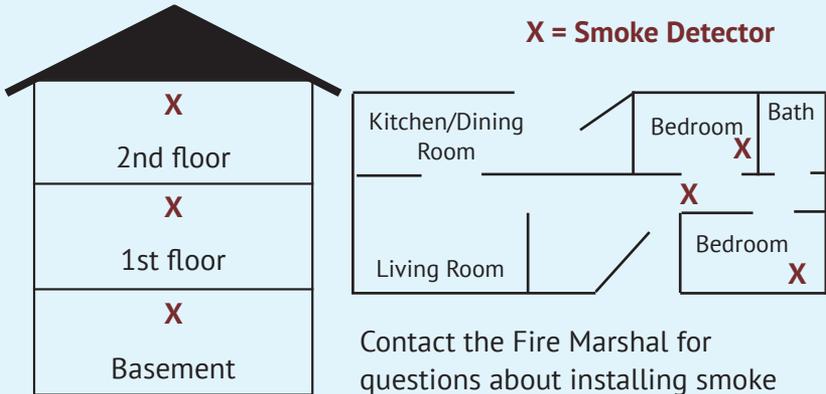
The Manhattan Code Office, 785-587-4506, is available to answer questions regarding the International Property Maintenance Code.

Smoke Detectors

Never underestimate the importance of a properly working smoke detector in your home; check the batteries regularly.

- A basic smoke detector shall be located in **every** sleeping room and between every sleeping area and the rest of the house.
- Place detectors on the ceiling or on the wall mounted between 4 and 12 inches from the ceiling.
- Avoid placing detectors near bathrooms and kitchens where steam or cooking might accidentally trigger the detector.
- In addition to the above requirements, at least one detector shall be installed on every level of the home if one is not present from the above requirements.

Diagram of smoke detector locations as required by Manhattan's property maintenance code



Contact the Fire Marshal for questions about installing smoke alarms at 785-587-4504

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

If there are gas-burning appliances present or if there is an attached garage in the home, carbon monoxide detectors are required in the following:

- New residential structures
- Existing residential structures containing 3 or more units

At least one detector is required near the sleeping areas.



**CAN'T BE
SEEN**



**CAN'T BE
SMELLED**



**CAN'T BE
HEARD**



**CAN BE
STOPPED**

Credit: CDC

Overcrowding

According to zoning requirements, no more than 4 residents per dwelling unit are allowed, unless all are related.

Occupancy Requirements

- A bedroom must have at least 70 square feet for 1 person and 50 square feet per person for more than one.
- The number of persons occupying a dwelling unit shall not create unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
- Ceiling height must be generally at 7 feet minimum. Basements may be 6 feet, 8 inches.
- Attic ceilings or top “half-stories” must be at least 7 feet high over one third of the required area.
- Each dwelling unit must have separate access to a hall, landing, stair or street.
- No habitable room except a kitchen or bathroom shall be less than 7 feet in any dimension.

Check the Basement

If the basement is occupied:

- It must have emergency egress and windows (approved size for bedrooms).
- It must have an exterior door or emergency egress window in each bedroom that is at least 4 square feet (openable) in area with no more than 48 inches from finished floor to sill.
- Walls should be waterproof.
- There should be no cross-connection of wastewater and fresh water pipes.
- Faucet on sinks and tub should be higher than the basin rim.

Stairway Safety

- Is it well lit?
- Are the handrails/guardrails secure and in good condition?
- Are the steps sturdy and solid?

Water Heater

- The water heater should be properly vented, have a temperature and pressure relief valve installed with extension tube, and have proper combustion air.

Heating System

- The heating system should be capable of maintaining habitable rooms at 65 degrees, have ducts and vents in good condition, and have proper combustion air – not to be taken directly from sleeping rooms or bathrooms.
- Keep flammables away from the heating system and away from the water heater.

Electrical System

- Electrical System must be properly grounded.
- Extension cords should not be used as permanent wiring.
- Electrical panels need to be covered and labeled.
- Fuses and breakers must be properly sized to handle the electrical demands of the household.

Year-Round Home M

January

- Keep garage doors closed
- Remove outdoor holiday lighting
- Remove any Christmas trees (natural trees can be recycled for fish habitats). Check CityofMHK.com for more information
- **Test smoke detectors**

February

- Change furnace filter
- Keep garage doors closed to prevent unnecessary heat loss
- Clean closets, attics and remove burning appliances from them
- **Practice home fire ev**

April

- Flush the sump pump drain line
- Clean gutters and downspouts
- Trim tree limbs/shrubs
- Air out the home
- **Test smoke detectors**

May

- Change furnace filter
- Check for damaged, missing or shingles
- Trim shrubs away from house
- **Test the main water shut-off and opening it**

July

- Conserve energy; use your oven sparingly
- Plan ahead and cook several meals at once (freeze extra meals)
- Trim shrubs around heat pump
- Clean/change window AC unit filter
- **Test smoke detectors**

August

- Change furnace filter
- Check furnace and water heater operation
- Have gas-fueled appliances inspected if necessary
- **Inspect and service gas**

October

- Have chimneys cleaned to ensure they are not blocked by bird nests or debris
- Make and practice a fire escape plan
- Clean out roof and gable vents
- Test smoke detectors
- **Change batteries in smoke detectors**

November

- Change furnace filter
- Clean floor register grilles
- Check water pipes for leaks to ensure they won't freeze
- Lubricate automatic garage door opener
- **Practice home fire ev**

Maintenance Schedule

rs
losed to prevent
ss
and areas around fuel-
for safety
Evacuation plan

March

- Test smoke detectors and batteries
- Remove potential fire hazards (paint, oil-based/petroleum-based products)
- Repair weather damaged windows and doors
- Conduct a tornado drill – plan ahead
- **Community Spring Cleanup**

rs
loose or missing siding
om siding
shutoff valve by closing

June

- Keep windows covered during the day to keep indoor temperature down (dark draperies and window blinds are efficient options)
- Trim shrubs around air conditioner
- Check windows for easy operation
- **Practice home fire evacuation plan**

rs
water heater for proper
liances cleaned, if
garage door

September

- Check your home for weather-stripping, attic insulation and broken windows
- Clean out garage and outdoor sheds (remove anything that might freeze in unheated areas)
- Prepare your home for cooler weather
- **Conduct a tornado drill – plan ahead**

rs
grills
r freezing; take steps to
garage door mechanism
Evacuation plan

December

- Check all chimneys for proper drafting
- Check water pipes for freezing, leaks, etc.
- Check all electrical holiday decorations and lights; **use only outdoor approved decorations and extension cords for exterior lighting**

Around Your Home

First, look at the area around your home or rental unit:

- Is the yard clean and well maintained?
- Are there abandoned refrigerators, furniture or other appliances stored in the yard or alley?
- Are weeds and grass cut so they are shorter than 12 inches?
- Are sidewalks and driveways kept free of obstructions?
- Are sheds, garages, fences and walls maintained?
- Be sure vehicles are parked on a driveway surface, are operable, and currently tagged (except those stored within enclosed structures).

Trash

Trash containers need to be leak proof, have lids and have the company name and phone number if owned by a trash company. Containers should be set at curbside on the scheduled trash day and removed as soon as possible after the trash is collected. The area must be cleaned of loose trash and spillage.

Recycle

The following locations accept donations of used goods. Contact each one for hours and details.

Clothing & Household Items

- Goodwill, 421 E. Poyntz Ave.
- Salvation Army Thrift Store, 310 Poyntz Ave.
- Seven Dolors Budget Shop, 728 Colorado St.
- Grandma's Trunk, 1304 Pillsbury Dr.
- Manhattan Emergency Shelter, 416 S. 4th St.

Building Materials & Large Appliances

- Habitat ReStore, 2711 Amherst Ave.

Cleaning Supplies & Paint

- Household Hazardous Waste, 6245 Tuttle Creek Blvd.

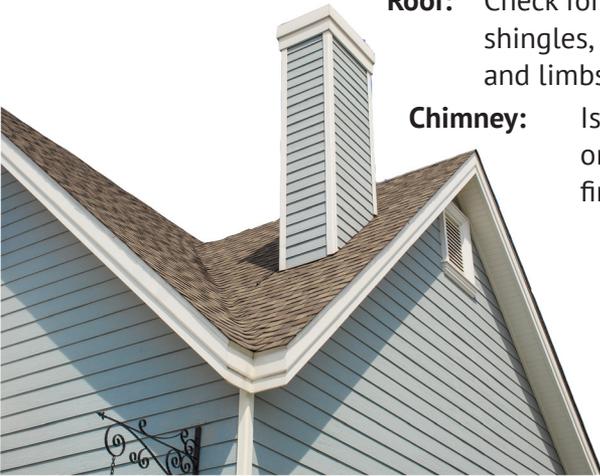
Your Home's Exterior

It is important to periodically check your home's foundation, chimneys and weather-stressed structures. A good place to begin your home inspection is outside. As you walk around the perimeter of the building, take notes of what you observe. Be sure to check the following items:

- Address:** Is it easily read from the street?
- Walls:** Are they watertight and intact?
- Windows:** Are they operable, unbroken, watertight and screened?
- Doors:** Ensure they are watertight and the hinges and latches are operable.
- Paint:** Inspect to see if it is weather resistant, not peeling.
- Steps:** Must be in a safe condition and must have handrails when there are more than four risers.
- Decks:** Must have guard railings if the deck is more than 30 inches high.
- Porches:** Are there supports and railings, and is it structurally sound?
- Foundation:** Must be structurally sound and free of defects such as cracking. Drainage should be directed away from the foundation.

Roof: Check for sagging, excessive layers of shingles, curled or missing shingles, and limbs hanging over the roof.

Chimney: Is it secure? Check for cracks or movement. Inspect your fireplaces annually.



14 LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES

- **All housing must comply with the International Property Maintenance Code.**
- Common areas shared by two or more units must be kept clean.
- Eliminate rats, insects and other pests (maintain regular upkeep and pest control).
- In case of emergencies or questions relating to the property, the owner/agent must provide tenants with the property manager's name, home address (*not a P.O. Box*) and telephone number.
- Occupants must be notified of all exits.
- Avoid overcrowding your leased property. Check housing designations for each property before renting.
- Reliable hot and cold running water supply must be available to all tenants.
- A 30-day written notice must be issued to all tenants before assessing any rental fee increase.
- If a security deposit is to be returned to the tenant, it must be returned within 30 days of lease termination.
- Establish rules about pets before the contracts are signed.

Take an inventory

- Inventory of the premises must be conducted with the tenant and recorded in writing.
- Written inventories must be signed by both tenant and landlord and completed within 5 days of occupancy.
- Both parties are to keep copies of the signed inventories.

- **Keep your home clean, including floors and walls.**
- Dispose of trash in garbage cans rather than streets or yards.
- Prevent vandalism in your neighborhood.
- Keep exits and stairways free of furniture, baby strollers, bicycles, etc.
- Store flammable liquids safely away from the home.
- Allow owner access to make repairs at reasonable times.
- Comply with all agreed upon rules and those brought to your attention in writing.
- Use appliances, electrical fixtures (including smoke detectors) and plumbing fixtures as the manufacturer intended.
- Take an inventory of the premises within five days of occupancy. Keep a written copy that has been signed by both landlord and tenant.

Maintain your yard

Yards should be maintained and rubbish free. According to city ordinance, the following items are not allowed to remain outside a dwelling for more than 48 hours in any location visible from streets or sidewalks:

- Appliances
- Bedding, bottles, boxes, broken glass
- Cans, cardboard, cartons
- Furniture manufactured for indoor use only
- Household appliances
- Jars
- Lumber and building supply materials that are not neatly stacked
- Machine parts, motor vehicle parts
- Pallets, paper, plumbing fixtures
- Rags
- Scrap metal
- Tire rims, tires
- Water heaters

Before Remodeling or Making Repairs

Make sure the property owner or property manager has approved your remodel/repair plans.

- Be sure your plans meet the requirements for housing, building and zoning. Obtain any required permits.
- Beware of “cut rate” repairs; they may cost you more than you save over the long term.
- Secure legal advice before contracts are let or before arranging loans for the repairs.
- Make financial arrangements that fit your particular financial situation.
- It is a good idea to gather more than one damage and repair estimate as well as multiple estimates of costs to remodel and project completion time frame.

Find a licensed contractor

The City of Manhattan maintains an online contractor license database with all currently licensed contractors in the City of Manhattan. View the database at CityofMHK.com/Contractors. Call 785-587-4506 to verify any of the information in the database.

Secure advice and estimates from reliable licensed tradespersons. The Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Northeast Kansas is a reliable resource in checking the reliability and references of potential contractors. The BBB of Northeast Kansas can be reached by writing to them at 501 Southeast Jefferson, Ste. 24, Topeka, KS 66607 -1190. You may also contact them by calling 785-232-0454 or via email at topekabbb@kansasone.com.

Contact Code Services for:

- Inspections on construction, existing structures and nuisances
- Building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, moving, curb cut, demolition and mobile home permits
- Construction plans needing review
- Contractor and trade licenses
- Lead-based paint information

785-587-4506 • code@cityofmhk.com

Contact Customer Service for:

- Water service
- City parking permits
- Block party permits
- Pet licensing

785-587-2480 • customerservice@cityofmhk.com

Call Human Resources for:

- Fair housing
- Landlord-tenant law

785-587-2440 • ada@cityofmhk.com

Call the Zoning Inspector for:

- Occupancy (per dwelling unit) issues
- Parking and driveway requirements
- Fence requirements
- Sign and setback requirements
- Floodplain information
- Zoning and rezoning (what type of structure may be built in a given area or how existing structures may be used)

785-587-2412 • signs@cityofmhk.com

18 CONTACT INFORMATION

Call local private contractors for:

- Bulk item pickup/dumpsters
- Brush removal
- Recycling programs
- Tire removal

Spring Cleanup

Each year, the City of Manhattan sponsors a Spring Cleanup event in late March or early April to assist homeowners with yard cleanup. The City will pick up limbs and properly bagged yard debris for free. Visit [CityofMHK.com/SpringCleanup](https://www.cityofmhk.com/SpringCleanup) for details on dates and specific requirements.

Call Local Service Organizations:

- Housing and Credit Counseling (Landlord-tenant issues)
785-234-0217 • HCCI-KS.org
- KSU Student Legal Services, 785-532-6541
785-532-6541 • K-State.edu/Legal
- Fort Riley Off-Post Housing Office
785-239-2405 • FtRileyHousing.com

Renters insurance

Your landlord's insurance policy covers damage to the building you live in, but not your personal property. In the case of disaster, you are responsible for



replacing all of your personal items that were stolen or damaged. In addition, your insurance policy might not cover injuries or accidents that occur in your home, even if they weren't your fault. That leaves you responsible for any medical bills or court judgment against you.

Many insurance companies offer renters insurance policies for just a few dollars a month. There are a variety of plans available that can cover losses due to theft, vandalism, damage from windstorms and hail, damage from explosions, fire and smoke damage, and many other hazards. Additional coverage is available for sewer backups, flooding and plumbing problems.

Take an inventory

When considering renters insurance, it is helpful to take inventory of your belongings so you really know what they are worth. This will also aid in determining the amount of coverage you need.

After taking an inventory, go through the renters insurance checklist to prepare for a meeting with an insurance agent, then contact the Kansas Insurance Department for more information about local companies and premium quotes.

Resources

ProtectYourPossessions.com

KSInsurance.org



Code Services
785-587-4506
CityofMHK.com/Code

Revised 2016