



# Portland's Top 25 Basic Requirements For Housing Units

Portland's housing code (Title 29) sets the basic requirements for all living units within the city. Health and safety protection and the preservation of housing are two main goals of Title 29.

Most requirements are common sense, but others may not be obvious. Listed below are 25 areas around the home or apartment where violations of the housing code are most often found.

To report violations of these requirements, call the City of Portland Neighborhood Inspections Office, 503-823-7306. The City's TDD may be accessed at 503-823-6868.

## 1 Smoke Detectors

- Smoke detectors must work and be located in sleeping rooms, in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping rooms and on each level of the house, including basements and attics with habitable space.



## 5 Floors

- All carpets, tiles, and floor linoleum and vinyl (particularly in bathrooms and kitchens) must be maintained so as not to be worn, cracked, missing or damaged.



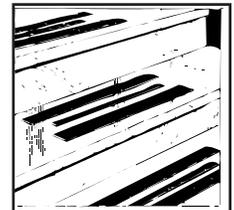
## 2 Emergency Exits

- Each apartment or house must have at least one approved emergency exit.
- Every bedroom must have a working window or door that opens directly to the outside.
- Windows and doors should never be blocked.



## 6 Stairs

- Steps must be kept in good repair, with no broken or damaged treads.
- Stairs and landings must have intact handrails and/or guardrails.



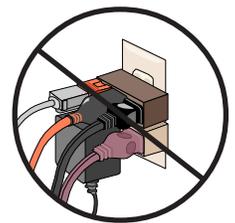
## 3 Doors and Windows

- Broken, missing or poorly fitted doors and windows must be repaired to prevent weather entry.
- Window and door locks, striker plates and jambs must work properly and be in good repair.
- Bedroom windows must open and be able to stay open for ventilation or emergency exit.



## 7 Electrical

- The electrical service to a dwelling must be adequate to prevent "tripping" circuit breakers or the excessive use of extension cords.
- Wiring must be located inside walls, boxes or metal conduit.
- Electric fixtures must be securely fastened in place.
- Most electrical work requires a permit.



## 4 Walls and Ceilings

- Plaster, wallboard and paneling must not be damaged or missing.
- Paint and wallpaper should not be peeling away from the wall.



## 8 Plumbing

- Water pipes, drain pipes and fixtures must be properly installed and kept leak free.
- Most plumbing work requires a permit.



## 9 Heating systems

- Furnaces or wall heaters must be in working order and capable of heating all living spaces in a house or apartment to at least 68 degrees. Portable heaters cannot be used to meet this requirement.



## 10 Woodstoves

- Woodstoves must be installed to maintain a certain distance from combustible walls, ceilings, floors and household items.
- A permit is required to install all woodstoves.

## 11 Equipment and Appliances

- Fans, thermostats and major appliances should function properly.
- Hot water heaters must be equipped with a pressure relief valve and pressure relief drain tube.
- All hot water heater replacements require permits and earthquake bracing.



## 12 Basic Utilities

- All homes and apartments must have working water, electric and sanitary services.

## 13 Conversion of Basements, Attics and Garages

- A building permit is required before changing a basement, attic or garage to an apartment or sleeping room.

## 14 Basements and Crawlspace

- Cracked or settled basement walls must be repaired or replaced.
- The cause of any standing water must be eliminated.
- Insect or rodent infestations must be prevented or eliminated.



## 15 Foundations

- Settling, cracked, crumbling or excessively leaning foundation walls must be repaired or replaced.



## 16 Outside Porches and Steps

- Broken and deteriorated porch deck boards, steps and handrails, as well as broken outdoor concrete steps, must be repaired.



## 17 Siding

- Siding must be maintained free of damage, missing, loose or rotten boards and peeling paint.



## 18 Roofs

- Loose, missing or excessively worn shingles must be replaced to prevent leaks.
- Sagging and/or damaged rafters must be repaired.

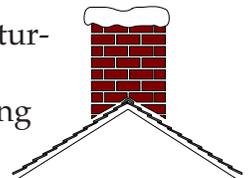


## 19 Gutters and Downspouts

- Gutters and downspouts should drain and be properly connected in order to channel water away from the foundation to an approved location.

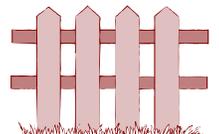
## 20 Chimneys

- Chimneys should be structurally sound with no cracks, deteriorated mortar, missing or broken brick.
- Chimneys must be maintained to prevent chimney fires and the back-up of noxious gases.



## 21 Fences

- Damaged or broken fences that pose a danger to people or a neighbor's property must be repaired or replaced.



## 22 Walks and Driveways

- Cracks and damage in all walkways must be repaired to prevent pedestrian injury.



## 23 Garbage Collection

- Owners of rental property must subscribe to and pay for weekly garbage service for each rental unit.



## 24 Sanitation

- Dwelling units must be kept reasonably free of dampness.
- All living units, both inside and out, must be free of piles of garbage or trash.

## 25 Accessory Buildings

- Garages and sheds must be structurally sound and well maintained.



## Development Services Center

First Floor  
1900 SW 4th Avenue — Portland, OR 97201

### Hours:

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Residential Permit Night — Thursday Evenings  
5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
for homeowners and residential contractors

### Important Telephone Numbers

#### Building Permits

Building Code Information	503-823-7310
Zoning Information	503-823-PLAN
Intake Appointments for 1 & 2 Family Building Permits	503-823-0672

#### Trade Permits

Permit Information	503-823-7363
Trade Permits by FAX	503-823-3018

#### Document Services

Permit Status/Current Applications	503-823-7000
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#### Resource and Records

Inspection Records/Finalled Permits	503-823-7660
FAX Requests for Records	503-823-7765

#### Inspections

24-Hour Inspection Request Line	503-823-7000
Residential (1 & 2 family dwellings)	503-823-7388
Commercial-	
Building & Mechanical	503-823-7303
Electrical	503-823-7304
Plumbing	503-823-7302
TDD	503-823-6868

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