



Rental Housing Inspection Program

2019 Annual Report

Introduction

The Administrative Policy for the Oskaloosa Rental Housing Inspection Program states that, after completion of an initial audit, the Development Services Department shall provide an annual report to the City Council in July of each calendar year. The report shall provide data on the number of housing units in the City and the frequency and type of violations that have been found in the previous year. This annual report covers program period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 and also includes information on activity and findings since program inception.

Program Overview

The Oskaloosa Rental Housing Inspection Program took effect on July 1, 2017. The purpose of this program is to provide safe and sanitary housing conditions for the residents of Oskaloosa by establishing minimum standards and regular inspections for all rental housing units in Oskaloosa. Authorization to carry out this program is set out in Oskaloosa Municipal Code (OMC), Title 15, Chapter 60, which authorizes inspections of rental properties in order to enforce regulations set forth in OMC Title 8 (Health and Safety), Title 15 (Buildings & Construction), and Title 17 (Zoning).

Program Progress

Oskaloosa currently has a total of 711 properties registered with the rental housing inspection program containing a total of 1667 dwelling units.

During the previous 12-month period, 323 properties containing 681 dwelling units have been inspected. Of those, 249 properties (containing 441 dwelling units) passed the first inspection, a 77% passing rate. 74 properties (containing 240 dwelling units) failed the first inspection. Of those, 46 properties (containing 212 dwelling units) passed the re-inspection. 11 properties containing 33 dwelling units failed the re-inspection. 1 property containing 7 dwelling units was condemned by the City. (See Table 1 at right)

Rental Inspection Summary		
Table 1: Annual Activity July 2018 through June 2019		
	Properties	Units
Passed 1st Inspection	249	441
Failed 1st Inspection	74	240
Passed Re-inspection	46	212
Failed Re-inspection	11	33
Condemned	1	7
Total Inspected	323	681

Since inception in 2017, 611 properties containing 1205 dwelling units have been inspected. Of those, 406 properties containing 707 units passed the first inspection, a 66% passing rate. 205 properties (containing 498 units) failed the first inspection. Of those, 169 properties (containing 347 dwelling units) passed the re-inspection. 25 properties containing 68 dwelling units failed the re-inspection. 4 properties containing 15 dwelling units have been condemned by the City. (See Table 2, next page)

The most common violations found during inspections include:

- Inadequate or missing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Blocked egress routes
- Lack of GFCI protected outlets near water sources
- Lack of pressure relief valve (PRV) on water heater
- Extension cords as permanent power supply
- Inadequate or missing clothes dryer vents
- Inadequate or missing handrails on decks
- Inadequate or missing fire extinguishers
- Excessive peeling paint
- Junk/debris on property

During the last 12-months, 77 percent of the properties passed the first inspection and 91 percent passed after re-inspection. This compares to 55 percent of the properties passing the first inspection and 97 percent passing after re-inspection during 2017-2018.

Rental Inspection Summary		
Table 2: Activity Since Inception August 2017 through June 2019		
	Properties	Units
Passed 1st Inspection	406	707
Failed 1st Inspection	205	498
Passed Re-inspection	169	347
Failed Re-inspection	25	68
Condemned	4	15
Total Inspected	611	1205
Total Registered	711	1667
Percent Inspected	86%	72%

The small percentage of remaining properties where violations aren't rectified continue through enforcement proceedings with assistance from the City's attorney for rental housing infractions or nuisance infractions. These properties are eventually corrected, vacated, or condemned.

There were 52 properties containing 57 dwelling units removed from the program during the last 12 months. Since inception, 100 properties containing 119 dwelling units have been removed. Some are sold, either outright by deed or on contract to another property owner or tenant. Others are voluntarily removed from the program by the property owner by being vacated or discontinued as a rental property. Properties containing nuisance issues which don't qualify as rental properties are processed for nuisance infractions and abatement.

The initial heavy workload has diminished and the program is now functioning as intended, meeting the goal of 10-12 staff hours per week on average. Annual inspections are increasing as property conditions improve. In February 2019, there were a few specific concerns and suggestions raised by one property owner regarding procedures with the inspection contractor. Feedback was provided regarding payment, reporting, follow-up inspections, clarifications on criteria, and additional training. These items were promptly discussed and resolved with the owner. There have been no appeals filed to-date regarding any program activities.

Conclusions

Program changes resulting from the initial audit in 2018 have been effective, and there are no changes recommended for fiscal year 2019-2020. Inspection progress is on track and will easily meet our goal to have all rental properties inspected in three (3) years or less. The program has experienced a very high success rate since inception with 66 percent of the properties passing the first inspection and 94 percent of properties passing after re-inspection. With corrections to the most common violations listed above, Oskaloosa's rental housing units are safer and more pleasant living environments due to this program.