



Rental Housing Inspection Program

2021 Annual Report

Introduction

The Development Services Department provides an annual report on the rental inspection program to the City Council in July of each calendar year. The report includes 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 report covers program period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and also includes a completion summary for the “first round” of inspections from program inception through 2020.

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

First Round – 2017 to 2021

All of the original 786 properties registered have completed the first round of inspections and have either passed inspection or been removed from the program (see Table 1 at right). 67% of those properties are now on a 4 year inspection rotation cycle. Additionally, 82% of the properties inspected in the last 12-months that are part of the second round of inspections are on a 4 year inspection cycle. As properties continue to improve, this percentage will continue to increase with properties passing the first inspection.

Second Round – 2020 forward

Oskaloosa currently has a total of 791 properties registered with the inspection program containing a total of 1671 dwelling units.

During the previous 12-month period, 121 properties containing 233 dwelling units have been inspected. Of those, 98 properties (containing 200 dwelling units) passed the first inspection, an 82% passing rate. 23 properties (containing 33 dwelling units) failed the first inspection. Of those, 11 properties (containing 14 dwelling units) have been re-inspected. 11 properties (containing 15 dwelling units) have not yet been re-inspected. 1 property (containing 4 dwelling units) was condemned due to a fire (see Table 2, below).

Rental Inspection Summary		
Table 1: First Round Activity		
August 2017 through February 2021		
	Properties	Units
Passed 1st Inspection	535	849
Failed 1st Inspection	251	808
Passed Reinspection	206	642
Failed Reinspection	34	101
Condemned	6	21
Total Registered	786	1657
Total Inspected	786	1657
Percent Inspected	100%	100%

The most common inspection violations 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, 82% of the properties passed the first inspection and 100% of the properties re-inspected passed after the second inspection. This compares to 71% of the properties passing the first inspection and 93% passing after re-inspection during 2019-2020.

Rental Inspection Summary		
Table 2: Activity Since July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021		
	Properties	Units
Passed 1st Inspection	98	200
Failed 1st Inspection	23	33
Passed Re-inspection	11	14
Not Re-inspected yet	11	15
Condemned	1	4
Total Inspected	144	266
Total Registered	791	1671
Percent Inspected	18%	16%

Any 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 14 properties containing 19 dwelling units removed from the program during the last 12 months. Since inception in 2017, 143 properties containing 177 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.

There were three complaints received during the 2021 reporting period. These were tenant complaints filed against the landlords and the concerns were rectified shortly after the Building Official contacted the property owners. There have been no appeals filed to-date regarding any program activities.

As we start our second round of inspections, our goal is to inspect all registered properties again within four (4) years or less. We will continue checks for unregistered rental properties and will also increase focus on nuisance code enforcement. With exception to grass/weeds and snow removal nuisances, all nuisance infractions for rental properties which are not resolved by the established deadlines will trigger a required inspection as per adopted policy.

Conclusions

The program is functioning as intended and continues to be used as a model for other communities. The program has experienced a very high success rate since the start of the second round of inspections with 82% of the properties passing the first inspection and 100% 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.