

Borough of Denver

Residential Rental Unit License and Inspection Program

A Guide for Tenants, Landlords, and the Community.



Borough of Denver
501 Main Street
Denver, PA 17517
717-336-2831
717-336-7190 fax
JHigh@denverboro.net
MGable@denverboro.net

www.denverboro.net

Rental Property Owners and Tenants:

With the goal of preserving and improving the Borough of Denver's rental properties and, in turn, its neighborhoods, the Borough of Denver is pleased to present you with this guide of useful and important information. The information in this guide will help the Borough of Denver work together with tenants, landlords, and the community to keep properties in good condition, to protect individual and business investments, and to make properties continually attractive and healthy for residents and visitors to enjoy.

The Borough encourages all landlords to understand and abide by the Borough's codes related to their properties and to be aware of their responsibility in ensuring the integrity of our valued neighborhoods. At the same time, the Borough encourages all tenants to understand their rights and to carry through with their responsibilities to properly maintain the properties in which they live as well as their obligations to their landlords and to the neighborhood as a whole.

All groups involved have a very important role in improving the quality of life in our Borough. Please read the material in this guide to understand your rights and responsibilities while learning how you can keep your neighborhoods safe and attractive.

In advance, thank you for taking your part in helping the Borough of Denver reach one of its goals of a livable neighborhoods.

Michael Hession
Borough Manager

Contact Information

To request a Residential Rental Unit Application, to ask questions relating to this program, or to schedule an inspection, please contact the Denver Borough Municipal Building during our regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

By Phone: 717-336-2831
By Fax: 717-336-7190
Website: www.denverboro.net

In Person: Denver Borough Municipal Building, 501 Main Street
Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Denver Borough Staff

Mike Gable, Housing and Code Inspector: Phone 717-336-2831 Ext. 3
Email: mgable@denverboro.net

Joan High, Office Assistant: Phone: 717-336-2831 Ext. 1
Email: jhigh@denverboro.net

Table of Contents

	PAGE
Fact Sheet	4
Residential Rental Unit Regulation Inspection Process	7
Tenant/Occupant Responsibilities	8
Frequently Asked Questions	8

**Borough of Denver
Residential Rental Unit Regulation Program**

Fact Sheet

Purpose

The purpose of the Borough of Denver's Residential Rental Property Inspection Program shall be to protect and promote the public health, safety and welfare of its citizens, to establish rights and obligations of owners and occupants relating to residential rental units in the Borough and to encourage owners and occupants to maintain and improve the quality of rental housing within the Borough through the systematic inspection program, registration, and licensing of residential rental units, and penalties.

What is covered by the Residential Rental Property Inspection Program?

All residential rental units in the Borough are included in the Residential Rental Unit Regulation Program. Residential Rental Units are defined as (i) a Rooming Unit or (ii) a dwelling unit let for rent or (iii) a residential unit occupied by any persons other than one occupied solely by the owner and members of the owner's family. Each individual townhouse dwelling, each individual apartment unit, each individual unit in a multifamily building, and each rooming unit shall be considered a separate Residential Rental Unit. If a structure contains a Rooming Unit or if any portion of the structure is let for rent, it shall be considered a Residential Rental Unit whether or not the Owner or a relative of the Owner also resides in the structure. A Residential Rental Unit shall not include a Hotel Unit or a Personal Care Home. A Residential Rental Unit includes dwelling units under lease-purchase agreements, or long-term [greater than six (6) months] agreements of sale.

What is the frequency/schedule for rental property inspections?

The Borough's Residential Rental Unit Regulation Program requires the inspection of all residential rental units according to the following schedule:

- Inspection of every residential rental unit prior to the arrival of a new tenant; and
- Inspection of every residential rental unit following a verified complaint or concern filed with the Rental Inspector, the East Cocalico Township Police Department, the Denver Fire Company, the Code Enforcement Officer, or any other organization or agency.
- Inspection of every residential rental unit at least once every three (3) years.

What is the cost to residential rental unit owners?

Residential Rental Licenses are issued annually to the owner or operators of rental units and are effective for the current occupants only. **Inspection of the unit must be completed prior to re-occupancy.** Owners must notify the Borough of Denver of the name of the new tenants within 30 days from occupancy.

Residential rental unit owners are required to submit an application making certain to indicate apartment numbers where applicable and giving the tenant's full name. Return the signed application with the required fee to the Borough of Denver. The cost for the Residential Rental License is as follows:

Each SINGLE RESIDENTIAL RENTAL UNIT	\$35.00
(Single house, semi-detached, ½ double, row house, etc.)	
SINGLE APARTMENT OR MOBILE HOME.	\$35.00
Each ADDITIONAL apartment or mobile home.	\$35.00
(in same building or complex)	
Each UNIT or ROOM IN ROOMING HOUSE, MOTEL, OR HOTEL.	\$35.00

*Residential Rental License applications and fees are required to be submitted to the Borough of Denver by January 1st of each year. **NOTE: A late fee of \$10.00 per rental unit shall be assessed if payment for the Residential Rental License or Licenses is not paid within thirty (30) days after the due date.**

What is inspected?

Residential rental units, common areas, and accessory structures are inspected for compliance with the Borough's Property Maintenance Code, including but not limited to the following items:

Exterior Property Areas

- Sanitation.
- Rodent harborage.
- Accessory structures including sheds, detached garages, fences, and walls.
- Stairways, decks, porches, and balconies.
- Doors, windows, and basement hatchways.
- Severely deteriorated exterior paint or siding.
- Illegal storage of hazardous materials or liquids.
- All rain spouts and down spouts must be in good condition and hooked up properly.

Interior Structure

- **Required Facilities**
 - Smoke detectors – number, location, and operation:
Single or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in Groups R-2, R-3, R-4, and in dwellings not regulated in Group R occupancies, regardless of occupant load at all the following locations:
 1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
 2. In each room used for sleeping purposes.
 3. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements and cellars but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.
 - Carbon monoxide detectors: Effective June 18, 2015, a new state law requires all multi-family residential rental dwellings with a fossil fuel burning heater or fireplace, or an attached garage, to have carbon monoxide alarms installed and operating in a central location in the vicinity of the bedrooms and the fossil fuel-burning heater or fireplace. Multi-family dwelling is defined as any house or building, or portion thereof, that is intended or designed to be occupied or leased for occupation or occupied as a home or residence for three (3) or more households living in separate apartments and doing their cooking on the premises. As per the new law, willful failure to install or maintain in operating condition any approved carbon monoxide alarm required by this act is a summary offense punishable by a fine of up to \$50.00.
 - Stove – type, burners, oven.
 - Heat – type, fuel, location, condition.
 - Hot water – type, location, vented.
 - Refrigerator – type, condition.
 - Sink.
- **Bathroom**
 - Floor, walls, ceilings.
 - Heat, closet, window.
 - Fl. Toilet, location.
 - Ventilation, lighting, outlets.
 - Plumbing, tub/shower, lavatory.

- **Kitchen**
 - Floor, walls, ceiling.
 - Ventilation, closet.
 - Lighting, outlets.
 - Windows, cabinets.
 - Garbage, condition.

- **Hallways and Exits**
 - Floor.
 - Walls.
 - Ceilings.
 - Stairs.
 - Closet
 - Railing.
 - Lighting.

- **Other Rooms**
 - Location.
 - Floors.
 - Walls.
 - Ceilings.
 - Windows.
 - Lighting.
 - Outlets.
 - Heat.
 - Closets.
 - Area.

- **Other**
 - Illegal storage of hazardous materials or liquids.
 - Insect or rodent infestation.
 - Accumulation of rubbish or garbage.
 - Occupancy limitations.

Residential Rental Unit Regulation Inspection Process

The Borough of Denver's Residential Rental Unit Regulation Inspection Process is designed to ensure that all rental properties in the Borough meet the basic health and safety code standards in the Borough's Property Maintenance Code. The Borough's Residential Rental Unit Regulation Inspection Program requires the inspection of the rental unit prior to the arrival of a new tenant and following the receipt and verification of a complaint filed with the Rental Inspector, the East Cocalico Township Police Department, the Denver Fire Company, the Code Enforcement Officer, or any other organization or agency.

The Residential Rental Unit Inspection will focus on health and safety issues and has been designed to balance the responsibilities to create a safe housing are for tenants while not placing an unnecessary burden on landlords. Listed below is a summary of the process:

- Prior to the arrival of a new tenant in a residential rental unit, the owner or designee shall contact the Denver Borough Municipal Building at 717-336-2831, Ext. 3 to arrange for a rental inspection and to provide the name of the new tenant.
- The owner or designee shall have an authorized representative available to meet the Rental Inspector during the day and time of the scheduled inspection.
- The Borough staff shall compile a list of residential rental unit inspection requests for the Rental Inspector.
- The Rental Inspector shall contact the Municipal Building on a weekly basis to obtain the rental inspection list.
- The Rental Inspector shall coordinate the inspection dates and times directly with the owner and/or designee.
- During the inspection, the Rental Inspector shall complete the Denver Rental Unit Inspection Report. If the rental unit passes the inspection, the Rental Inspector shall issue an Occupancy Permit.
- If the residential rental unit does not pass the inspection, the Rental Inspector shall contact the owner or designee to explain the reasons for the failure and to schedule a re-inspection following the completion of the repairs. Tenants are not permitted to occupy the residential rental unit until the items are repaired and confirmed through a follow-up inspection and an Occupancy Permit is issued.
- The Rental Inspector shall file with the Borough on a monthly basis a copy of the completed Denver Rental Unit Inspection Reports. The Borough shall file the copy of the completed reports in the master property files at the Municipal Building.

If you have any questions regarding these procedures, do not hesitate to contact the Municipal Building at 717-336-2831.

Tenant Responsibilities

Occupants of a residential rental unit in the Borough are charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Comply with all obligations of the Borough's Residential Rental Unit Regulation Ordinance, and all applicable Codes and Borough Ordinances, as well as all state laws and regulations.
2. Conduct himself/herself and require other persons, including, but not limited to, guests on the premises and within their residential rental unit with their consent, to conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb the peaceful enjoyment of the premises by others and that will not disturb the peaceful enjoyment of adjacent or nearby dwellings by people occupying the same.
3. Not engage in, nor tolerate, nor permit others on the premises to cause damage to the residential rental unit or engage in disruptive conduct, or other violations of any Codes, Borough Ordinances, or applicable state laws.
4. Use the trash and recyclable collection services provided by the owner.
5. Use the residential rental unit for no purpose other than as a residence.
6. Maintain the residential rental unit in a manner meeting all requirements for occupants of structures set forth in the Property Maintenance Code.
7. Allow the Rental Inspector and/or the Code Enforcement Officer to inspect the residential rental unit in accordance with this Part at reasonable times.
8. Not allow persons other than those identified on the lease to reside in the residential rental unit.
9. Not allow the residential rental unit to be occupied by more than one family. For the purposes of this Paragraph, a "family" shall be considered to be a "family" as that term is defined in the Zoning Ordinance.
10. Not permit the possession of, serving to or consumption of alcohol by underage persons.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q) What is the benefit of this program?

A) This program provides a benefit to the tenant, the owner, and the community by ensuring that tenants have safe and sanitary conditions to live in;

Q) Are my tax dollars paying for this program?

A) No. Rental Property owners pay an annual license fee that pays for all aspects of this program.

Q) Do I have to obtain a residential rental license each year?

A) Yes, Rental Property owners are required to submit Residential Rental License applications and fees to the Borough of Denver by January 1st of each year.

Q) Does my residential rental unit need to be inspected each year?

A) No, the residential rental unit needs to be inspected prior to a change in tenant and then at least once every three (3) years for a long term tenant.

Q) Do I have to pay a separate fee for the rental inspection?

A) No, the cost for the rental inspection is included in your annual residential rental license.

Q) Can I put the water and sewer bill in my tenant's name?

A) No, the water and sewer bills are billed directly to the property owner. This enables the Borough to place a municipal lien on the property to recover any unpaid water and sewer rents. Tenants can request a duplicate copy of the bill from the Borough.