



Neighborhood Notes

News for rental property owners & managers from the Office of Neighborhood Services – Nov. 2016

You're invited to a discussion on energy efficiency in rental property

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, November 29**. The Columbia/Boone County Energy & Environment Commission will be holding a forum to discuss how Columbia can increase energy efficiency in rental properties and the community is invited. The purpose is to brainstorm this topic with all stakeholders including property owners, renters and other community members.

The forum will be held in City Hall, 701 E. Broadway, 7-9 p.m.

Make monitoring your properties a routine

In the field we are hearing concerns about squatters and homeless entering vacant properties. We want to remind property owners to visit your vacant properties regularly (once per week is recommended) so that someone is not taking up residence in your units without your knowledge. Once someone is there for a while, received mail there, and considers it their residence, it is more difficult to get them removed and you may need to go through the eviction process.

Bruce Martin to retire December 2

Senior Code Enforcement Specialist Bruce Martin has announced he will retire December 2.



Bruce has been a dedicated City employee for more than 33 years. He began his service in 1983 as a Construction Specialist with Parks & Recreation and in 2007 transferred to Public Works – Protective Inspection as a Building Inspector. He was one of the original staff with the Office of Neighborhood Services and was promoted to Senior Code Enforcement Specialist in 2011.

This fall, Bruce was honored as the Missouri Association of Code Enforcement's Code Enforcement Officer of the Year.

A reception to honor Bruce's service will be held Friday, December 2, from 2-4 p.m. in City Hall, 701 E. Broadway. Many rental property owners have worked with Bruce over the years – you are invited to stop by to congratulate him!

Building addressing

The City encourages property owners to convert to a numeric numbering system on buildings in order to improve addressing and identification for public safety response.

Alphabetic identification (Units A, B, C, etc.) should be replaced with a numeric system that helps identify levels. For example, basement units would be 1, 2, 3; ground floor 101, 102, 103, second floor, 201, 202, 203, etc.

The City has hired Chris Valleroy as an addressing specialist to help with the process. To learn more about this issue or get your properties converted, please contact Chris at chris.valleroy@CoMo.gov or 874-6361.

Inspection Scheduling

In order to expedite rental inspections, our staff schedules with the goal of grouping inspections in the same area of town, with the same owner or manager and also to take them in the order of expiration. We know that time may not always work for you and want to be flexible.

If you receive an inspection appointment that will not work for your schedule, please contact our office at 817-5050 and we can find another time that will work. The sooner you call us the better so we can reschedule the inspector. This makes the best use of everyone's time.

Code Changes

Every three years, Columbia's Building Construction Codes Commission reviews the latest version of the International Code Council code books to determine how to apply these locally. The 2015 code has been adopted (as amended) and will take effect October 1.

There were limited changes to the International Property Maintenance Code which is the primary reference during rental inspections. The new code includes changes related to smoke detectors: **[F] 704.2.1.3 Installation near cooking appliances.** Smoke alarms shall not be installed in the following locations unless this should prevent placement of a smoke alarm in a location required by Section 704.2.1.1 or 704.2.1.2.

1. Ionization smoke alarms shall not be installed less than 20 feet (6096 m) horizontally from a permanently installed cooking appliance.

2. Ionization smoke alarms with an alarm-silencing switch shall not be installed less than 10 feet (3048 mm) horizontally from a permanently installed cooking appliance.

3. Photoelectric smoke alarms shall not be installed less than 6 feet (1829mm) horizontally from a permanently installed cooking appliance.

[F] 704.2.1.4 Installation near bathrooms. Smoke alarms shall be installed not less than 3 feet (914 mm) horizontally from the door or opening of a bathroom that contains a bathtub or shower unless this would prevent placement of a smoke alarm required by Section 704.2.1.1 or 704.2.1.2.

ONS staff realizes that some units may not have the physical space to meet these code requirements and will work with owner and managers. We have also posted an article explaining the differences in smoke alarms on our website at www.CoMo.gov/Neighborhoods.

Tenant Complaints

In FY16, ONS received 139 tenant complaints, representing about one-half of one percent of all rental units in the City. When a complaint is received, we verify that the tenant has made the landlord aware of the issue and given them a chance to remedy the problem. City staff also realize evictions and other civil matters complicate some situations. The goal of responding to tenant complaints is to have the property safe and in good repair.

Inspectors' shoes stay on for safety

Please know our inspection staff keep their shoes on during interior inspections as a safety precaution. Our staff understands we are entering someone's home. Inspectors conduct the interior inspection first before walking around the exterior to reduce the risk of tracking in dirt.

Revised Rental Application Form

Please note that the rental application has changed and now has **two places** for rental property owners or managers to sign: once to indicate the information is accurate and once to agree to an inspection. The application will not be considered complete without both signatures.

Rental Inspection Checklist

We don't want what our inspectors look for during the inspection to be a surprise to you! A "Rental Inspection Checklist" is mailed with your rental inspection appointment. Please take a look and we encourage you to do a pre-inspection so you can catch any issues before we do. Please call our office if you need clarification on any item as well.

Rental unit count

As of October 26, 2016 the City of Columbia had 10,006 buildings and 27,075 units registered under the Rental Unit Conservation Law.

Meet the ONS Staff

ONS has six inspectors who you might work with on various cases along with others who support our work. Here's a review of who is who, what we do, and how to reach us!

- David Brockhouse – Code Enforcement Specialist – Rental inspections & property maintenance cases – 441-5567, david.brockhouse@CoMo.gov
- Sara Ferrill - Code Enforcement Specialist – Rental inspections & property maintenance cases– 874-6351, sara.ferrill@CoMo.gov
- Lisa Frank, Code Enforcement Specialist – Health code violations, nuisances, unlicensed cars west of Providence, 874-7562, lisa.frank@CoMo.gov
- Bruce Martin – Sr. Code Enforcement Specialist – Nuisance structures, property maintenance, rental inspections – 817-6420, bruce.martin@CoMo.gov.
- Marsha Perkins - Sr. Code Enforcement Specialist – Health code violations, nuisances, unlicensed cars east of Providence, 874-7441, marsha.perkins@CoMo.gov.
- Ken Reeves - Code Enforcement Specialist – Rental inspections & property maintenance cases – 874-6334, ken.reeves@CoMo.gov

Other ONS staff you might work with:

- Officer Amy Bishop – CPD Officer assigned to our Division – 874-7426, amy.bishop@CoMo.gov.
- Bill Cantin – Neighborhood Communications Coordinator – 874-7248, bill.cantin@CoMo.gov.
- Leigh Kottwitz – Neighborhood Services Manager - 874-7504, leigh.kottwitz@CoMo.gov.

Julie Giboney and Katie Schatzer are our administrative professionals who keep everything going; they can be reached at 817-5050 or neighborhood@CoMo.gov.

City of Columbia

Community Development Department Office of Neighborhood Services

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