

13 Most Common Property Maintenance Violations (and how to avoid them)



1900 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97201
503-823-7300
bds@portlandoregon.gov
www.Portland.gov/BDS

Portland's Property Maintenance code (Title 29) sets the basic requirements for all living units within the city. The main goals of Title 29 include:

- protection of health
- safety and welfare of citizens
- preservation of housing
- prevention of exterior deterioration of non-residential structures
- neighborhood livability

Homeowners and renters must follow the property maintenance code. Learn more about the most common places we find violations in apartments and homes and what you can do to make sure your property is up to code.

To report violations of these requirements, call the City of Portland's Property Compliance at 503-823-2633 or online at www.portland.gov/bds/code-enforcement/report-violation-and-check-status-reported-violation.



1. Smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors/alarms

- Working smoke detectors located in sleeping rooms, nearby the sleeping rooms and on each level of the house, including basements and attics with living space.
- Working carbon monoxide detectors located within each bedroom/sleeping area or within 15' outside of each bedroom/sleeping area in dwelling units and any enclosed common area containing a carbon monoxide source or connected to a common area containing a carbon monoxide source.



2. Emergency exits

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



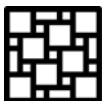
3. Doors and windows

- Repair broken, missing or poorly fitted doors and windows to prevent weather entry.
- Properly working window and door locks, strike plates and jambs in good repair.
- Bedroom windows must open and stay open for ventilation or emergency exit.



4. Walls and ceilings

- Plaster, wallboard and paneling isn't damaged or missing.
- Paint and wallpaper aren't peeling away from the wall.



5. Floors

- All carpets, tiles, and floor linoleum and vinyl (particularly in bathrooms and kitchens) properly maintained and not worn, cracked, missing or damaged.



6. Stairs

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



7. Electrical- most electrical work requires a permit

- Adequate electrical service in a building prevents tripping circuit breakers and the excessive use of extension cords.
- Wiring located inside walls, boxes or metal conduit.
- Electric fixtures securely fastened in place.



8. Plumbing- most plumbing work requires a permit

- Properly install water pipes, drainpipes and fixtures and keep them leak free.



9. Heating systems

- Keep furnaces or wall heaters in working order and capable of heating all living spaces to at least 68 degrees. You cannot use portable heaters to meet this requirement.



10. Wood stoves- a permit is required to install all wood stoves

- Install wood stoves to maintain a certain distance from combustible walls, ceilings, floors and household items.



11. Equipment and appliances

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



12. Basic utilities

- All residential dwelling units have working water, electric and/or gas and sanitary services.



13. Conversion of basements, attics, garages and accessory structures

- You must get a building permit before changing a basement, attic, garage or accessory structure to a separate dwelling unit or living space.



14. Basements and crawl spaces

- Repair or replace cracked or settled basement walls.
- Eliminate the cause of any standing water.
- Prevent or eliminate insect or rodent infestations.



15. Foundations

- Repair or replace settling, cracked, crumbling or excessively leaning foundation walls.



16. Porches and steps

- Repair broken and deteriorated porch deck boards, steps and handrails and broken outdoor concrete steps.



17. Siding

- Maintain siding so it is free of damage, missing, loose or rotten boards, peeling paint and bare wood.



18. Roofs

- Replace loose, missing or excessively worn shingles to prevent leaks.
- Repair sagging and/or damaged rafters.



19. Gutters and downspouts

- Drain and properly connect shutters and downspouts in order to channel water away from the foundation to an approved point of disposal.



20. Chimneys

- Structurally sound chimneys have no cracks, deteriorated mortar, missing or broken brick.
- Maintain chimneys to prevent chimney fires and the back-up of noxious gases.



21. Fences

- Repair, replace or remove damaged or broken fences that pose a danger to people or a neighbor's property.



22. Walks and driveways

- Repair excessive cracks and damage in all walkways to prevent pedestrian injury.



23. Garbage collection

- Owners of rental residential property must subscribe to and pay for weekly recycling and composting service and every other week garbage service for each rental unit.

24. Sanitation



- Keep dwelling units reasonably free of dampness to prevent conditions of decay and mold growth.
- Keep all living units, both inside and out, free of garbage or trash.
- Have adequate garbage capacity and service, a minimum of one 20-gallon receptacle per dwelling unit.
- Keep dwelling units free of insect and rodent infestation; and if found properly exterminated.



25. Accessory buildings

- Garages, carports and sheds must be structurally sound and well maintained and not occupied for living purposes.

Who can do the work

For work that requires a permit, the owner of a single-family home or duplex may hire a licensed contractor to do the work, or in some cases, do the work themselves. If the owner performs the work, then the owner will be responsible for doing the work themselves unless they hire someone who holds an appropriate contractor's license. The permit requirements for an owner doing their own work are the same as those for a contractor doing the work.

NOTE: If electrical work is required in a vacant and/or rental property or if the property is for sale or will be for sale, then a licensed electrical contractor is required to pull the electrical permit and perform the work. If the site is an owner-occupied property, then the owner and immediate family can obtain the permit and perform the work.

If plumbing work is required in a rental property that has 3 or more units, then a licensed plumbing contractor is required. If the site has 1 or 2 dwelling units, then the owner can do their own work.

Empowered Neighborhoods Program

Black, Indigenous, people of color and persons with disabilities who got a violation letter in the mail from the City can get assistance from our staff. Call 503-823-7300 or visit our webpage:

www.portland.gov/bds/empowered-communities-programs/neighborhoods.

Contact Us

Bureau of Development Services
 City of Portland, Oregon
 1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, OR 97201
www.portland.gov/bds

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 BDS main number: 503-823-7300

Permit Information is available at the following location:

- Development Services Center (First Floor)
 For Hours Call 503-823-7310 or visit www.portland.gov/bds
- Permitting Services (Second Floor)
 For Hours Call 503-823-7310 or visit www.portland.gov/bds

Important Telephone Numbers

BDS main number	503-823-7300
Property Compliance	503-823-2633
DSC automated information line	503-823-7310
Building code information	503-823-1456
Zoning code information	503-823-7526
Permit information for electrical, mechanical, plumbing, sewer, and signs	503-823-7363
Permitting process and fee information	503-823-7357
Resources and records	503-823-7660
BDS 24-hour inspection request line (requires IVR number and three-digit inspection code)	503-823-7000
Residential information for one and two family dwellings ...	503-823-7388
Oregon Relay Service	711

For more detailed information regarding the bureau's hours of operation and available services:

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.PORTLAND.GOV/BDS**

Note: All information in this brochure is subject to change.

Traducción e interpretación | Chuyển Ngữ hoặc Phiên Dịch | 翻译或传译
 Turjumida ama Fasiraadda | 翻訳または通訳 | Письменный или устный перевод
 Traducere sau Interpretare | 번역 및 통역 | الترجمة التحريرية أو الشفوية |
 ການແປພາສາ ຫຼື ການອະທິບາຍ | Письмовий або усний переклад

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The City of Portland is committed to providing meaningful access. For accommodations, modifications, translation, interpretation, or other services, please call **503-823-7300** or the **Oregon Relay Service** at **711**.