



Town Health Officers: Rental Housing Inspections



Town Health Officer Duties in Rental Housing

Town Health Officers in Rental Housing

Chapter 6 – Environmental Health Rules

Subchapter 6

Rental Housing Health Code

1.0 Authority

This code is adopted pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 102, 3 V.S.A. § 3003(a) and 3 V.S.A. § 801(b) (11).

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this code is to protect the health, safety and well-being of the occupants of rental housing. This code establishes minimum health and habitability standards that all residential rental housing in Vermont must conform to.

3.0 Scope

3.1 This Rental Housing Health Code shall apply to all rented dwellings, dwelling units, rooming houses, rooming units and mobile home lots used as a regular residence.

3.2 This code does not apply to a licensed lodging establishment when the occupancy is subject to meals and rooms tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. ch. 225. This code does not apply to tents or similar structures provided to persons choosing to live in such shelters as part of what is primarily an educational or experiential opportunity.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 “Common Space” means all interior passageways, hallways, foyers, stairways, basements and other rooms in a dwelling or rooming house used or intended for use by the occupants of more than one dwelling unit or rooming unit.

4.2 “Dwelling” means a rented building or structure, excluding tents or similar structures used for the express purpose of camping, that is wholly or partly used or intended to be used as a primary residence for living or sleeping by human inhabitants. This includes

- Town Health Officers (THOs) are the primary enforcers of the Rental Housing Health Code (RHHC)
 - ▣ The purpose of the RHHC is “to protect the health, safety and well-being of the occupants of rental housing.”
 - ▣ The code establishes minimum health and habitability standards for all residential rental housing in Vermont.

What is Rental Housing?



- The RHHC applies to all rented dwellings, dwelling units, rooming houses, rooming units and mobile home lots used as a regular residence.
- “Dwelling” means a rented building or structure that is wholly or partly used or intended to be used as a primary residence for living or sleeping by human inhabitants.
 - ▣ Includes rented mobile homes and housing provided as a benefit of farm employment
 - ▣ Excludes tents or similar structures used for the express purpose of camping,

THO Duties in Rental Housing




The THO **must** **conduct an investigation** if:

- ❑ A landlord requests an inspection,
- ❑ A tenant requests an inspection, or
- ❑ The THO receives information about a potential public health hazard.

After receiving a complaint or request for investigation, the THO should conduct the investigation as soon as possible, particularly for complaints of life threatening health or safety issues

Using the Rental Housing Inspection Form

 VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**Town Health Officer
Rental Housing Inspection Report**

Inspector Name: _____
☐ Health Officer ☐ Deputy Health Officer ☐ Other
Town: _____
Date of Inspection: _____
Type of Inspection: ☐ Initial ☐ Follow-Up (Last Inspection Date: _____)
Housing Type: _____

Property Address: _____
Property Owner Name: _____
Property Phone Number: _____
Reason for Inspection: _____

Tenant Name(s) and Phone Number(s):

Unit #	Name/Phone Number	Copy Given
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

Copy given to property owner ☐

Number of People Residing at the Home: Number of Bedrooms:
Total Number of Units in the Building: Location of Bedrooms:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTH OFFICER:

- Fill out the entire Rental Housing Inspection Report.
- Document violations and describe the necessary corrective actions for each.
- Establish deadlines for correcting the violations.
- Provide a copy of this Rental Housing Inspection Report to the property owner and any tenants affected by the violations.
- If the entire property is affected by a violation, post a copy of this report and a notice that it shall not be removed, in the common area of the property.
- Conduct follow-up inspection to ensure violations have been corrected by deadlines established in this report.

NOTICE TO TENANTS:

- The property owner or their agents must have access to the unit to make the repairs required by this report.
- To make repairs, the property owner may enter the unit with your consent, or with 48 hours' notice. 9 V.S.A. § 4460

NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER:

- Until the violations described in this report are corrected, you are prohibited from renting the affected unit(s) to new tenants. 18 V.S.A. § 603(a)(2)(iv)
- A fine of up to \$100 per day may be imposed for each violation not corrected by the deadline provided in this report or if an affected unit is rented to a new tenant before the violation(s) are corrected. 18 V.S.A. § 603(b)

Section 1
REV: 6/2018

pg. 1

- During the investigation, THOs must document findings using the Rental Housing Inspection Report form
 - This is available on the Health Dept. website and in the THO manual
 - This form can be printed and filled in by hand, or completed electronically on a tablet or smart phone
- This form is in a checklist format and walks through all of the requirements of the Rental Housing Health Code

Documenting RHHC Violations

- When completed, the form serves as a written inspection report, which is required by law at 18 VSA § 603(a)(1)
- The form describes violations of the RHHC observed during the inspection
- Go through the entire form during the inspection, don't just focus on the subject of the complaint
- If it is a multi-unit building, it's not necessary to inspect every unit, only the unit from which the complaint originated, and any interior and exterior common areas

Counter surfaces in the bathroom of dwelling units and rooming houses shall be smooth, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent and waterproof covering.

2.7	Are the countertops nonabsorbent?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
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Floor surfaces in the bathroom of dwelling units and rooming houses shall be smooth, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent and waterproof covering. RHHC, §§ 5.3, 5.3.1, 5.3.2

2.8	Is the floor made of:				Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
	a. Smooth, nonabsorbent, non-corrosive, non-slip, waterproof covering? (ex: tile)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA
	b. Carpeting with a solid, water repellent backing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

All toilets must be working flush toilets. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.9	Do all toilets flush?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If "No", is there at least one working toilet for tenants? If there is at least one working toilet, Owner to correct within a reasonable period. If all toilets do not flush, owner needs to begin resolving within 24 hours. Also see Question 3.8a-b.</p> <p>Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline</p> <p>The toilet does not flush properly. Property owner must fix within 24 hours of inspection.</p>
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Shower/tub and sink/toilet must be separate from habitable rooms. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.10	Is the shower/tub and sink/toilet separate from habitable rooms?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline</p> <p>NA</p>
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3. SANITATION FACILITIES (II)

Occupants must have access to public drinking water or good quality private system. RHHC, §§ 5.4.1, 5.4.2

Water Supply/Wastewater Disposal		Y	N	NA	
3.1	Is there currently a water supply to the unit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If "No", owner needs to provide temporary water supply to occupants until long-term solution is achieved. Owner must begin working on long-term solution within 24 hours.</p> <p>Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline</p> <p>Water not running. Landlord must immediately supply potable water and contact plumber within 24 hours to ensure water is back on.</p>

Documenting RHHC Violations, continued

- The form provides references to the RHHC for each requirement, but also frames it in a easy-to-understand question form:

- ▣ Ex: RHHC Section 5.2.1 requires that “all toilets must be working flush toilets”

- ▣ The inspection form asks “Do all toilets flush?”

- The THO answers the question, yes or no, then adds additional details as necessary, such as “2nd floor bathroom toilet does not flush.”

- Violations can also be documented with photos, as appropriate.

Counter surfaces in the bathroom of dwelling units and rooming houses shall be smooth, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent and waterproof covering.

2.7	Are the countertops nonabsorbent?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
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2.8	Is the floor made of:				Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
	a. Smooth, nonabsorbent, non-corrosive, non-slip, waterproof covering? (ex: tile)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA
	b. Carpeting with a solid, water repellant backing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

All toilets must be working flush toilets. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.9	Do all toilets flush?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “No”, is there at least one working toilet for tenants? If there is at least one working toilet, Owner to correct within a reasonable period. If all toilets do not flush, owner needs to begin resolving within 24 hours. Also see Question 3.8a-b. Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline The toilet does not flush properly. Property owner must fix within 24 hours of inspection.
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Shower/tub and sink/toilet must be separate from habitable rooms. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.10	Is the shower/tub and sink/toilet separate from habitable rooms?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline NA
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3. SANITATION FACILITIES (II)

Occupants must have access to public drinking water or good quality private system. RHHC, §§ 5.4.1, 5.4.2

Water Supply/Wastewater Disposal		Y	N	NA	
3.1	Is there currently a water supply to the unit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “No”, owner needs to provide temporary water supply to occupants until long-term solution is achieved. Owner must begin working on long-term solution within 24 hours. Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline Water not running. Landlord must immediately supply potable water and contact plumber within 24 hours to ensure water is back on.

Specifying Corrective Actions and Timelines

Counter surfaces in the bathroom of dwelling units and rooming houses shall be smooth, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent and waterproof covering.

2.7	Are the countertops nonabsorbent?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
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Floor surfaces in the bathroom of dwelling units and rooming houses shall be smooth, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent and waterproof covering. RHHC, §§ 5.3, 5.3.1, 5.3.2

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	b. Carpeting with a solid, water repellant backing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

All toilets must be working flush toilets. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.9	Do all toilets flush?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If "No", is there at least one working toilet for tenants? If there is at least one working toilet, Owner to correct within a reasonable period. If all toilets do not flush, owner needs to begin resolving within 24 hours. Also see Question 3.8a-b.</p> <p>Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline</p> <p>The toilet does not flush properly. Property owner must fix within 24 hours of inspection.</p>
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Shower/tub and sink/toilet must be separate from habitable rooms. RHHC, § 5.2.1

2.10	Is the shower/tub and sink/toilet separate from habitable rooms?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline
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Occupants must have access to public drinking water or good quality private system. RHHC, §§ 5.4.1, 5.4.2

Water Supply/Wastewater Disposal		Y	N	NA	
3.1	Is there currently a water supply to the unit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If "No", owner needs to provide temporary water supply to occupants until long-term solution is achieved. Owner must begin working on long-term solution within 24 hours.</p> <p>Required Corrective Actions AND Deadline</p> <p>Water not running. Landlord must immediately supply potable water and contact plumber within 24 hours to ensure water is back on.</p>

- After determining that there is a violation, the THO must specify, in the report, two things:
 - ▣ The action required to correct the violation
 - Ex: Property owner must fix toilet so that it flushes.
 - ▣ The timeline for correction
 - Ex: Within 24 hours of inspection
 - Ex: By (date)
- The form itself has suggested corrective actions and deadlines for THOs, depending on the severity of the violation
 - ▣ Ex: no running water must be corrected immediately, but if a missing window screen, giving the landlord a few weeks to fix the problem may be more appropriate

Reaching Out to Other Agencies

1. LIFE SAFETY				
There must be a working smoke alarm (detector) on each level of the dwelling including basements and within each bedroom or room used for sleeping. All newly installed smoke alarms must be the photoelectric-only type. NFPA 101-31.3.4.2 & NFPA 101-24.3.4				
	Answer			Violation
	Y	N	NA	Required Corrective Action AND Deadline
1.1 Is there a working smoke alarm:				
a. On each level of the dwelling including basements?				
b. Near each bedroom?				
There must be a working carbon monoxide alarm (detector) in the immediate vicinity of each bedroom or room used for sleeping. CO alarms are also required in each sleeping room that has a fuel-fired appliance such as a gas-fired room heater, gas hot water heater, or fireplace/woodstove. NFPA 101-31.3.4.6				
1.2 Is there a working carbon monoxide (CO) alarm:				
a. Near each bedroom?				
b. In each room used for sleeping that contains a fuel-burning appliance?				
All stairs must have handrails that are easy to grasp and that are securely mounted at a height between 30" and 38" above the leading edge of the tread. NFPA 101-7.2.2.4				
1.3 Do all stairways have handrails that are securely mounted?				

- ❑ There are some items in the inspection report form that are enforced by other agencies
- ❑ If the THO finds a violation of another agency's code, they should immediately inform that agency of the violation; the form identifies when it's appropriate to contact another agency
- ❑ The contact information for the relevant agencies is on page 2 of the inspection report form.

For example, if the THO finds violations of the life or fire safety codes (such as missing smoke or CO detectors), they should reach out the Dept. of Public Safety's Division of Fire Safety.

Contact Information:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vermont Department of Health (VDH) - Environmental Health phone numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekdays from 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM: 800-439-8550 • All other times: 800-640-4374 ▪ Department of Public Safety (DPS/DFS) phone number to call varies based on property region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region #1 – Williston Office: 1-800-366-8325 • Region #2 – Barre Office: 1-888-870-7888 • Region #3 – Rutland Office: 1-888-370-4834 • Region #4 – Springfield Office: 866-404-8883 ▪ Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regional and main phone numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement Office (to report violations) – 802-828-1254 • Montpelier (Main) Office – 802-828-1556 • Barre Office – 802-476-0190 • Essex Office – 802-879-5656 • Rutland Office – 802-786-5900 • Springfield Office – 802-885-8855 • St. Johnsbury Office – 802-751-0130
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information on issuing an Emergency Health Order can be found in 18 VSA Chapter 3 §127. ❑ Town Health Officer Manual can be found at • http://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/Env_THO_THOManual.pdf

Summary of Facts

- Page 2 of the inspection report provides a box in which the THO can summarize the findings of fact from the inspection.
- Summarize what was observed that was a violation of the RHHC. For example:
 - The 2nd floor toilet does not flush.
 - The paint is peeling on the exterior of the house.
 - Dryer does not vent to the exterior.
 - Water marks on ceiling suggest moisture intrusion.

FACTS THAT SUPPORT EACH VIOLATION:



Contact Information:

- Vermont Department of Health (VDH) - Environmental Health phone numbers:
 - Weekdays from 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM: 800-439-8550
 - All other times: 800-640-4374
- Department of Public Safety (DPS/DFS) phone number to call varies based on property region:
 - Region #1 – Williston Office: 1-800-366-8325
 - Region #2 – Barre Office: 1-888-870-7888
 - Region #3 – Rutland Office: 1-888-370-4834
 - Region #4 – Springfield Office: 866-404-8883
- Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regional and main phone numbers:
 - Enforcement Office (to report violations) – 802-828-1254
 - Montpelier (Main) Office – 802-828-1556
 - Barre Office – 802-476-0190
 - Essex Office – 802-879-5656
 - Rutland Office – 802-786-5900
 - Springfield Office – 802-885-8855
 - St. Johnsbury Office – 802-751-0130
- Additional information on issuing an **Emergency Health Order** can be found in 18 VSA Chapter 3 §127.
- Town Health Officer Manual can be found at
 - http://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/Env_THO_THOManual.pdf

Copies of the Inspection Report

The image shows three overlapping copies of the Vermont Department of Health Rental Housing Inspection Report. The forms are titled 'TOWN HEALTH OFFICER Rental Housing Inspection Report' and include fields for 'Property Address', 'Property Owner Name', 'Property Phone Number', 'Reason for Inspection', 'Inspector Name', 'Date of Inspection', 'Type of Inspection', 'Housing Type', 'Tenant Name(s) and Phone Number(s)', 'Unit #', 'Name/Phone Number', 'Copy Given', 'Number of Bedrooms', and 'Location of Bedrooms'. The bottom form also includes a section for 'INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTH OFFICERS' and a 'NOTICE TO TENANTS' section. The bottom form is labeled 'Section 1 REV: 6/2018'.

- The THO must give a copy of the completed inspection form to the landlord and any tenants affected by the violation(s)
 - ▣ Ex: if the violation is in a common area, all tenants must be given a copy of the inspection report
 - ▣ Ex: if the violation is only in one unit, then only the tenant in that unit needs to receive a copy
- The report can be given to the landlord and tenant(s) in person, by mail, or by leaving a copy at the affected units
- The inspection report should be given to the landlord and any affected tenants in a timely manner, as soon as possible after the inspection is conducted
- It's good practice to keep a copy of the report on file in the town offices since it's a public record.

Notice of Violation

NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Rental Housing Health Code

This property located at: _____

is in violation of Vermont's Rental Housing Health Code.

For a detailed description of the violations and the required corrective actions, please see the attached inspection report.

The Health Officer may be reached at: _____

This notice must not be removed until authorized by the Health Officer, pursuant to 18 V.S.A §603(a)(4)

- If the violation affects the whole property, the town health officer must post a notice of violation in the common area and provide access to the inspection report for all tenants
 - ▣ Ex: if the violation is a structural issue, is in the common area, or on the grounds of the property
 - ▣ This NOV form is on the Health Department website and in the THO manual

- As required by Act 188, the inspection report provides notice:
 - ▣ To the landlord and tenant(s) that the unit affected by the violations may not be rented to a new tenant until the violations are corrected; and
 - ▣ To tenants that the landlord must have access to the unit to make the corrections.
- However, THOs should also inform the tenant(s) and landlord of these requirements during or after the inspection

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTH OFFICER:

- Fill out the entire Rental Housing Inspection Report.
- Document violations and describe the necessary corrective actions for each.
- Establish deadlines for correcting the violations.
- Provide a copy of this Rental Housing Inspection Report to the property owner and any tenants affected by the violations.
- If the entire property is affected by a violation, post a copy of this report and a notice that it shall not be removed in the common area of the property.
- Conduct follow-up inspection to ensure violations have been corrected by deadlines established in this report.

NOTICE TO TENANTS:

- The property owner or their agents must have access to the unit to make the repairs required by this report.
- To make repairs, the property owner may enter the unit with your consent, or with 48 hours' notice. 9 V.S.A. § 4460

NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER:

- Until the violations described in this report are corrected, you are prohibited from renting the affected unit(s) to new tenants. 18 V.S.A. § 603(a)(2)(iv)
- A fine of up to \$100 per day may be imposed for each violation not corrected by the deadline provided in this report or if an affected unit is rented to a new tenant before the violation(s) are corrected. 18 V.S.A. § 603(b)

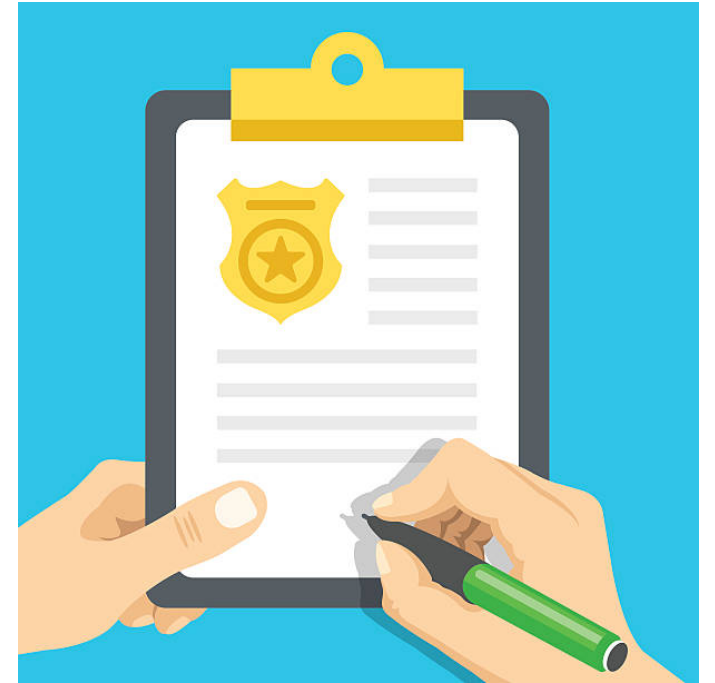
Voluntary Compliance

- ❑ After the inspection has been conducted and the landlord and tenants have received copies of the inspection report, the THO should follow-up to ensure the violations are corrected by the deadlines set in the inspection report
- ❑ Follow-up may include:
 - ▣ Checking with tenants and/or the landlord to ensure that the work has been completed
 - ▣ Asking for receipts showing the work has done – for example, a receipt from the plumber
 - ▣ Re-inspecting, if necessary
 - ▣ Coordinating with other agencies like Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Dept. of Health, as necessary



Enforcement

- If the THO can't achieve voluntary compliance, then:
 - ▣ Act 48, effective July 1, 2019 provides that the THO may impose a civil penalty of up to \$200/day for each violation
 - Whether to implement the fine and the procedure for doing so should be agreed upon with the Selectboard and town attorney
 - See 18 V.S.A.603(b)
 - ▣ Alternatively, the THO may issue a health order or emergency health order requiring the violations be corrected
 - This should be also coordinated with the Selectboard and town attorney



Municipalities with Code Enforcement

- ❑ Several municipalities have incorporated the RHHC into their local ordinances and added additional requirements
- ❑ Those municipalities that have their own code enforcement offices follow procedures established by the municipality when conducting rental housing inspections and enforcing health and safety codes.

The image shows two overlapping code enforcement complaint forms. The top form is from Burlington, VT, titled "Minimum Housing Complaint Form". It includes a header with the Burlington, VT Code Enforcement logo and contact information for the Code Enforcement Office (645A Pine St, PO Box 849, Burlington, VT 05402-0849). The form contains sections for "Exterior Property" (listing issues like trash, weeds, parking, etc.), "Interior Property" (listing issues like defective stairs, smoke, etc.), and "Other". It also has a section for "COMPLAINT INFORMATION" with checkboxes for various types of complaints (e.g., Electrical, Structural, Plumbing, etc.). The bottom form is from the City of Barre, Vermont, titled "CODE ENFORCEMENT COMPLAINT FORM". It includes a header with the City of Barre logo and contact information for the City Fire Marshal's Office (15 Fourth Street, Barre, Vermont 05641). This form also contains sections for "COMPLAINT INFORMATION" with checkboxes for various types of complaints (e.g., Electrical, Structural, Plumbing, etc.). Both forms have a "Return this completed and signed complaint form to the City of Barre Fire Dept. or City of Barre Zoning Dept." instruction.

Act 48: New Reporting Requirements

- The legislature passed a new law, in effect on July 1, 2019.
- The law requires municipalities to submit to the Health Dept. data on rental housing inspections from July 2018 on. These data will help inform a future rental housing inspection system.
 - ▣ **For municipalities with no code enforcement office**, for rental inspections from 7/1/2019 on, complete this form within 7 days of issuing the inspection report: [Tinyurl.com/VTrentalinspection](https://tinyurl.com/VTrentalinspection)
 - ▣ **For municipalities that have their own code enforcement programs**, for inspection activities from 7/1/2019 on, submit monthly summaries: [Tinyurl.com/VTMonthlyReport](https://tinyurl.com/VTMonthlyReport)

* * * Housing Health and Safety; Rental Housing

Health Code Enforcement * * *

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The Department of Health shall:

(1) Conduct studies, develop State plans, and administer programs and State plans for hospital survey and construction, hospital operation and maintenance, medical care, and treatment of substance abuse.

(2) Provide methods of administration and such other action as may be necessary to comply with the requirements of federal acts and regulations as relate to studies, development of plans and administration of programs in the fields of health, public health, health education, hospital construction and maintenance, and medical care.

(3) Appoint advisory councils, with the approval of the Governor.



Rental Housing Health Code

Life Safety

- Requirements:
 - ▣ Working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
 - ▣ At least 2 different, unblocked exits from the building
 - ▣ A working fire extinguisher
 - ▣ A working egress window in every room – minimum of 20 X 24 inches, a 5 sq. ft opening, not more than 44 inches above the floor
- These are requirements in the fire code, so any violations should be reported to the regional Dept. of Public Safety office



Kitchen Space

- For sanitary food prep, there must be:
 - Space to store and prepare food
 - A kitchen sink
 - Counters and floors made of nonabsorbent materials (tile, concrete, sealed wood, etc.)



Bathrooms



- In each dwelling unit there must be
 - ▣ At least 1 bathroom
 - ▣ A working sink, toilet, and shower or bathtub per every 10 people
- Bathroom must be separate from other habitable space in the unit
- Counters and floors must be made of nonabsorbent materials (tile, concrete, sealed wood)
- Toilets flush and plumbing must be in working condition

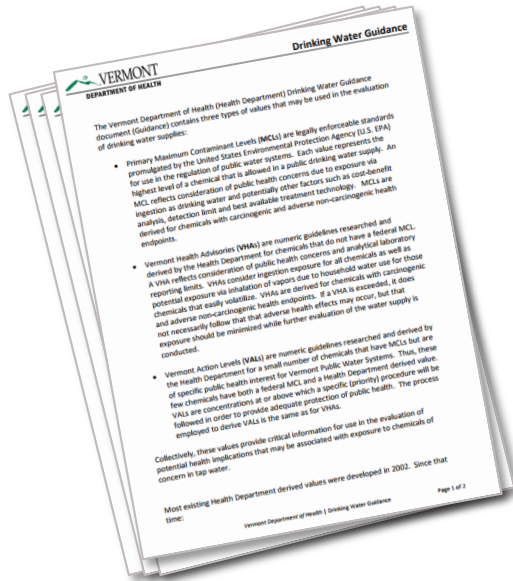
Water

- Clean, potable water must be supplied at all times
- Private well water must meet VT Dept. of Health Drinking Water Guidance



- Water at sinks, showers, and bathtubs capable of heating to between 100 and 120F at the faucet
- Wastewater/septic system functioning properly

Drinking Water Testing



- ❑ **Kit A** – tests for total coliform bacteria and *E. coli* [every year]
- ❑ **Kit C** – tests for inorganic chemicals (arsenic, uranium, lead) [every five years]
- ❑ **Kit RA** – tests for gross alpha radiation [every five years]

- ❑ To order test kits, call the Vermont Public Health Laboratory directly – contact info is in the THO manual.
- ❑ For questions about test results or if you are unsure what test kits to order, call the Department of Health, Environmental Health Division

Garbage Removal & Universal Recycling Law

- ❑ Watertight containers with fitted lid of sufficient size must be provided
- ❑ Trash, recycling, and food scraps must be removed from inside unit at least once a week
- ❑ Arrangements must be made for removal* of trash, recycling, and food scraps (pick-up, or taken to local dump site)



*On-site composting is allowed if it does not create a public health hazard

Pest Infestation

- ❑ Dwelling must be free from any pest or bedbug that creates a health hazard or other risk to the preservation of public health: cockroaches, fleas, bedbugs, rats and mice
- ❑ Who is responsible?
 - ▣ The owner is responsible when:
 - The infestation in a dwelling unit is caused by his or her failure to maintain the dwelling, or
 - The infestation exists in two or more of the dwelling units in any dwelling
 - ▣ The occupant is responsible when the infestation is caused by his or her failure to maintain the dwelling unit



Heating

- ❑ Heat must be available when outside temperature is less than 55F
- ❑ Heating system must be able to maintain a minimum of 65F in all habitable space at without overheating portions of the unit
- ❑ All fuel-fired heating systems must be vented to the outside of the building
- ❑ Heating system must be serviced at least every two years by a qualified technician



Ventilation

- ❑ All habitable rooms must have at least 1 functioning window with a screen
- ❑ Bathrooms must have either a mechanical vent or functioning window
- ❑ Clothes dryers (when provided) must be properly vented to the outside of the building



Lighting & Electricity

- Each habitable room must have at least two electrical outlets OR one electrical outlet and one permanent light fixture
- All electrical systems must be working



- Unit entrance must have adequate and safe lighting
- Electrical outlets in kitchens and bathrooms must be Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected

Structure



- ❑ Foundation, floors, walls, doors, windows, ceilings, roof, staircases, chimney and structural elements must be maintained to be weather/water tight, rodent proof, and in good repair
- ❑ There must be no standing water or excessive moisture that may cause mold growth
- ❑ There must be compliance with Vermont Lead Law for pre-1978 units

Farm Labor Housing

- The RHHC definition of “dwelling” includes farm labor housing, which includes:
 - ▣ Housing owned or controlled by the farm employer, whether located on or off the farm premises, and provided for the occupancy of the farm employee and the farm employee's family or household members for no payment other than the farm employee's labor.
 - ▣ Utility and fuel charges paid by the farm employee does not affect the designation of housing provided as a benefit of farm employment. 9 V.S.A. § 4469(a)(3)



- Labor Management Resources:
http://agriculture.vermont.gov/producer_partner_resources/labor_management_resources
- UVM Extension Vermont Migrant Education Program:
<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/vmep/?Page=contact.html>

Mobile Home Lots



- ❑ Under the RHHC, the owner of a rented mobile home lot is responsible for providing connection to electrical services, water supply and sewage disposal to a location on each lot from which these services can be connected to the mobile home.
- ❑ The RHHC does not regulate mobile home parks (3+ mobile homes), as those are covered by regulations at the VT Dept. of Housing & Community Development
 - ▣ However, THO could potentially have a role in investigating issues in a mobile home park if there is a possibility that a public health hazard exists.
- ❑ The RHHC also applies if the mobile home itself is rented.

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Compliance and Enforcement Advisor

**Vermont Department of Health
Division of Environmental Health**

[http://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/town-
health-officer](http://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/town-health-officer)

800-439-8550

Thank you!