

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WATERFORD

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EXISTING RENTAL HOUSING

These provisions shall govern the minimum standards for residential rental structures and shall be known and adopted as the "Minimum Standards for Existing Rental Housing." Every residential rental property shall comply with these provisions.

SECTION 1 – EXTERIOR PROPERTY AREA

1.1 Sanitation:

All exterior property and premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary condition. The occupant shall keep that part of the exterior property which such occupant occupies or controls in a clean and sanitary condition.

1.2 Grading and drainage:

All premises shall be graded and maintained to prevent the erosion of soil and to prevent the accumulation of stagnant water thereon, or within any structure located thereon.

Exception:

Water retention areas and reservoirs approved by the code official.

1.3 Sidewalks and driveways:

All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking spaces and similar areas shall be kept in a proper state of repair, and maintained free from hazardous conditions. Stairs shall comply with the requirements of Section 2.11 of these standards.

1.4 Rodent harborage:

All structures and exterior property shall be kept free from rodent infestation. Where rodents are found, they shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes which will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to prevent re-infestation.

1.5 Accessory structures:

All accessory structures, including detached garages, fences and walls, shall be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.

1.6 Accumulation of rubbish or garbage:

All exterior property and premises, and the interior of every structure shall be free from any accumulation of rubbish or garbage.

1.7 Disposal of rubbish:

Every occupant of a structure shall dispose of all rubbish in a clean and sanitary manner by placing such rubbish in approved containers.

SECTION 2 – EXTERIOR OF STRUCTURE

2.1 General:

The exterior of a structure shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and sanitary so as not to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare.

2.2 Exterior painting:

All wood and metal surfaces, including but not limited to, window frames, doors, door frames, cornices, porches and trim shall be maintained in good condition. Peeling, flaking and chipped paint shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted.

2.3 Street numbers:

Each structure to which a street number has been assigned shall have such number displayed in a position easily observed and readable from the public right-of-way. All numbers shall be in arabic numerals at least 4 inches (76 mm) high and 1/2-inch (13 mm) stroke.

2.4 Structural members:

All structural members shall be maintained free from deterioration, and shall be capable of safely supporting the imposed dead and live loads.

2.5 Foundation walls:

All foundation walls shall be maintained plumb and free from open cracks and breaks and shall be kept in condition so as to prevent the entry of rodents and other pests.

2.6 Exterior walls:

All exterior walls shall be free from holes, breaks, loose or rotting materials; and maintained weatherproof and properly surface coated where required to prevent deterioration.

2.7 Roofs and drainage:

The roof and flashing shall be sound, tight and not have defects that admit rain. Roof drainage shall be adequate to prevent dampness or deterioration in the walls or interior portion of the structure. Roof drains, gutters and downspouts shall be maintained in good repair and free from obstructions. Roof water shall not be discharged in a manner that creates a public nuisance.

2.8 Chimneys and towers:

All chimneys, cooling towers, smoke stacks, and similar appurtenances shall be maintained structurally safe and sound, and in good repair. All exposed surfaces of metal or wood shall be protected from the elements and against decay or rust by periodic application of weather-coating materials, such as paint or similar surface treatment.

2.9 Windows:

2.9.1 Every window, other than a fixed window, shall be easily openable and capable of being held in position by window hardware.

2.9.2 Every window sash shall be supplied with glass window panes or an approved substitute, properly sealed within each frame. Sharp or jagged edges or missing panes shall not be allowed.

2.9.3 One window in every habitable room, other than fixed windows, shall be capable of being easily opened, except where other means of ventilation exists. All operable windows on the first floor and basement shall be secured with a locking device. Screens must be in good repair, free from tears or large holes.

2.10 Doors:

All exterior doors and hardware shall be maintained in good condition. All exterior doors shall be provided with a properly installed locking device in good repair that can be operated from the inside without a key and from the outside only with a key. Exterior doors must open and close easily. If storm doors exist, they must be in good repair, free from tears and missing panels. Locks at all entrances to dwelling units, rooming units and guestrooms shall tightly secure the door.

2.11 Stairs, Porches, and Railings.

2.11.1 Every outside stair, porch, attachment, and railing shall be safe and capable of supporting a handrail and railing. There shall not be any missing or loose treads, decking or rails. Open railings shall be constructed such that a sphere four (4) inches in diameter cannot pass between them. Every railing shall be firmly fastened.

2.11.2 Existing stairs, porches and railings on the effective date of these guidelines, may be allowed if there is no hazard to the health and safety of the occupants and may be repaired with like kind construction. New or replacement stairs and railings shall meet the requirements current Michigan Residential Code.

2.11.3 Every flight of stairs more than three (3) risers high shall have handrails. The top of handrails shall not be placed less than thirty-four (34) inches nor more than thirty-eight (38) inches above landings and the nosing of treads. Handrails shall continue the full length of the stairs. The handgrip portion of the handrails shall not be less than one and one-quarter (1-1/4) inches nor more than two (2) inches in cross-sectional dimension. Handrails projecting from a wall surface shall have a space of not less than 1-1/2 inches between the handrail and the wall.

2.11.4 Surfaces located more than thirty (30) inches above the floor or grade below shall have guardrails not less than thirty-six (36) inches in height. The top of guardrails for stairways, exclusive of their landings, may have a height of thirty-four (34) inches to match handrails.

Exception: Properties in actual or proposed historic districts or with historic architectural significance are exempt from handrail requirements and spacing, and railing height requirements to match the original historic construction.

SECTION 3 – INTERIOR OF STRUCTURE

3.1 General:

The interior of a structure and equipment therein shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and in a sanitary condition. Every occupant shall keep that part of the structure which such occupant occupies or controls in a clean and sanitary condition. Every owner of a structure containing a rooming house, a hotel, a dormitory, two or more dwelling units or two or more nonresidential occupancies, shall maintain, in a clean and sanitary condition, the shared or public areas of the structure and exterior property.

3.2 Water Seepage/Standing Water

Every building, cellar, basement and crawl space shall be maintained reasonably free from water seepage and/or standing water which is conducive to decay or deterioration of the structure.

3.3 Structural members:

All structural members shall be maintained structurally sound, and be capable of supporting the imposed loads. Structural members shall be free of deterioration, defect and rotted material.

3.4 Interior surfaces:

All interior surfaces, including windows and doors, shall be maintained in good, clean and sanitary condition. Peeling paint, cracked or loose plaster, decayed wood, and other defective surface conditions shall be corrected.

3.5 Stairs and railings:

All interior stairs and railings shall be maintained in sound condition and good repair. Every stair, attachment and railing shall be safe and capable of supporting the loads as required by the Michigan Residential Code. There shall not be any missing or loose treads, decking or rails. Open railings shall be constructed such that a sphere four (4) inches in diameter cannot pass between them. Existing stairs and railings on the effective date of these guidelines, may be allowed if there is no hazard to the health and safety of the occupants and may be repaired with like kind construction. New or replacement stairs and railings shall meet the current Michigan Residential Code.

3.5 Handrails

Every flight of stairs, which is more than three (3) risers high, shall have handrails. The top of handrails shall not be placed less than thirty-four (34) inches nor more than thirty-eight (38) inches above landings and the nosing of treads. Handrails shall continue the full length of the stairs. The handgrip portion of the handrails shall not be less than one and one-quarter (1-1/4) inches nor more than two (2) inches in cross sectional dimension. Handrails projecting from a wall surface shall have a space of not less than one and one-half (1-1/2) inches between the handrail and the wall. Every handrail shall be firmly fastened and must be maintained in good condition.

Exception: Properties in actual or proposed historic districts or with historic architectural significance are exempt from handrail requirements, and spacing, and railing height requirements to match the original historic construction

3.6 Infestation:

All structures shall be kept free from insect and rodent infestation. All structures in which insects or rodents are found shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes that will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to prevent reinfestation.

3.7 Windows:

Every habitable space shall have at least one window of approved size facing directly to the outdoors or to a court. The minimum total window area, measured between stops, for every habitable space shall be 8 percent of the floor area of such room, except in kitchens where artificial light is provided in accordance with the provisions of the Michigan Residential Code. Wherever walls or other portions of a structure face a window of any room and such obstructions are located less than 3 feet (914 mm) from the window and extend to a level above that of the ceiling of the room, such window shall not be deemed to face directly to the outdoors nor to a court and shall not be included as contributing to the required minimum total window area for the room.

3.8 Illumination of common halls and stairways:

Every common hall and stairway, other than in one- and two-family dwellings, shall be lighted at all times with at least a 60-watt standard incandescent light bulb or equivalent for each 200 square feet (19 m²) of floor area, provided that the spacing between lights shall not be greater than 30 feet (9144 mm). Every exterior stairway shall be illuminated with a minimum of 1 footcandle (11 lux) at floors, landings and treads.

3.9 Illumination of other spaces:

All other spaces shall be provided with natural or artificial light sufficient to permit the maintenance of sanitary conditions, and the safe occupancy of the space and utilization of the appliances, equipment and fixtures.

3.10 Access from sleeping rooms:

Sleeping rooms shall not constitute the only means of access to other sleeping rooms or habitable spaces. Every room intended to be used as a bedroom shall be supplied with a properly installed door with hardware and latch.

Exception: Dwelling units that contain fewer than two bedrooms.

3.11 Area for sleeping purposes:

Every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant shall contain at least 70 square feet (6.5 m²) of floor area, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one person shall contain at least 50 square feet (4.6 m²) of floor area for each occupant thereof. All bedrooms must be equipped with one easily operable window with a minimum area of five (5) square feet a minimum height dimension of 24 inches, a minimum width of 20 inches, and a maximum sill height of 44 inches above the floor.

Exception: Windows in existing original bedrooms.

3.12 Water closet accessibility:

Every bedroom shall have access to at least one water closet and one lavatory without passing through another bedroom.

3.13 Bathroom, Lavatory and Kitchen Floors:

Every bathroom, lavatory and kitchen floor shall be substantially impervious to water.

3.14 Overcrowding:

Dwelling units shall not be occupied by more occupants than permitted by the minimum area requirements listed below:

MINIMUM AREA REQUIREMENTS

Space	Minimum area in square feet		
	1-2 occupants	3-5 occupants	6 or more
Living room	No requirements	120	150
Dining room	No requirements	80	100
Kitchen	50	50	60
Bedrooms	Shall comply with Section 3.11 of these standards.		

3.15 Prohibited occupancy:

Kitchens, nonhabitable spaces and interior public areas shall not be occupied for sleeping purposes.

3.16 Minimum ceiling heights:

Habitable spaces, hallways, corridors, laundry areas, bathrooms, toilet rooms and habitable basement areas shall have a clear ceiling height of not less than 7 feet (2134 mm).

Exceptions:

1. In one- and two-family dwellings, beams or girders spaced not less than 4 feet (1219 mm) on center and projecting not more than 6 inches (152 mm) below the required ceiling height.
2. Basement rooms in one- and two-family dwellings occupied exclusively for laundry, study or recreation purposes, having a ceiling height of not less than 6 feet 8 inches (2033 mm) with not less than 6 feet 4 inches (1932 mm) of clear height under beams, girders, ducts and

similar obstructions.

3. Rooms occupied exclusively for sleeping, study or similar purposes and having a sloped ceiling over all or part of the room, with a clear ceiling height of at least 7 feet (2134 mm) over not less than one-third of the required minimum floor area. In calculating the floor area of such rooms, only those portions of the floor area with a clear ceiling height of 5 feet (1524 mm) or more shall be included.

3.17 Minimum room widths:

A habitable room, other than a kitchen, shall not be less than 7 feet (2134 mm) in any plan dimension. Kitchens shall have a clear passageway of not less than 3 feet (914 mm) between counterfronts and appliances or counterfronts and walls.

3.18 Food preparation:

All spaces to be occupied for food preparation purposes shall contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve foods in a sanitary manner. There shall be adequate facilities and services for the sanitary disposal of food wastes and refuse, including facilities for temporary storage.

3.19 Means of Egress:

A safe, continuous and unobstructed means of egress shall be provided from the interior of a structure to a public way. Exits from dwelling units, rooming units, guestrooms and dormitory units shall not lead through other such units, or through toilet rooms or bathrooms.

3.20 Locked doors:

All means of egress doors shall be readily openable from the side from which egress is to be made without the need for keys, special knowledge or effort, except as provided for in 3.21.

3.21 Locks permitted:

Locks or fasteners shall not be installed on egress doors except in accordance with the following conditions:

1. In mental, penal or other institutions where the security of inmates is necessary, in which case properly trained supervisory personnel shall be continuously on duty and approved provisions are made to remove occupants safely in case of fire or other emergency.
2. In problem security areas, special-purpose door alarms or locking devices shall be approved prior to installation. Manually operated edge or surface-molded flush bolts are prohibited.
3. Where the door hardware conforms to that permitted by the Michigan Residential Code.

3.22 Emergency escape:

Every sleeping room shall have at least one openable egress window or exterior door for emergency egress or rescue; or shall have access to not less than two approved independent exits. All egress windows shall be easily operable with a minimum area of five (5) square feet, a minimum height dimension of 24 inches, a minimum width of 20 inches, and a maximum sill height of 44 inches above the floor.

Exceptions:

1. Buildings equipped throughout with an automatic fire suppression system.
2. Original windows in existing homes constructed prior to 1960.

SECTION 4 – FIRE PROTECTION

4.1 Smoke detectors:

A minimum of one approved single-station or multiple-station smoke detector shall be installed in each guestroom, suite or sleeping area in occupancies in Use Groups R-1 and I-1, and in dwelling units in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms in occupancies in Use Groups R-2 and R-3. In all residential occupancies, smoke detectors shall be required on every story of the dwelling unit, including basements. In dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke detector 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.

4.2 Smoke Detector Installation:

All detectors shall be installed in accordance with the Michigan Residential Code. When actuated, the smoke detectors shall provide an alarm suitable to warn the occupants within the individual room or dwelling unit.

4.3 Smoke Detector Power source:

The power source for smoke detectors shall be either an AC primary power source or a monitored battery primary power source.

4.4 Fire Separation:

All rental units within a multi-unit dwelling shall have a minimum of one (1) hour fire separation between them.

SECTION 5 – ELECTRICAL

5.1 Facilities required:

Every occupied building shall be provided with an electrical system in compliance with the requirements of this section.

5.2 Service:

The size and usage of appliances and equipment shall serve as a basis for determining the need for additional facilities in accordance with NFPA 70. Every dwelling shall be served by a main service that is not less than 60 amperes, three wires.

5.3 Electrical system hazards:

Where it is found that the electrical system in a structure constitutes a hazard to the occupants or the structure by reason of inadequate service, improper fusing, insufficient outlets, improper wiring or installation, deterioration or damage, or for similar reasons, the code official shall require the defects to be corrected to eliminate the hazard.

5.4 Installation:

All electrical equipment, wiring and appliances shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe and approved manner.

5.5 Receptacles:

Every habitable space in a dwelling shall contain at least two separate and remote receptacle outlets. Every laundry area shall contain at least one grounded-type receptacle. Every bathroom shall contain at least one receptacle.

5.6 Lighting fixtures:

Every public hall, interior stairway, water closet compartment, bathroom, laundry room and furnace room shall contain at least one electric lighting fixture.

5.7 Entrances and Exits:

Where two (2) or more entrances and/or exits exist, at least two (2) shall be illuminated by exterior lights. Exterior lights shall be controlled by interior wall switches, located for convenient and readily accessible use.

5.8 Living Room:

The living room shall be provided with a conveniently located wall-switch-controlled light or receptacle. The switched receptacle may be one of the required receptacles in the room. Duplex receptacles shall be equally spaced around the walls of the room, one duplex receptacle on each wall; unless the spacing requirements of Section 210-52(a) of the N.E.C. (NFPA 70) are met.

5.9 Kitchen:

The kitchen shall be provided with illumination. The required illumination shall be controlled by a wall switch. A separate kitchen appliance circuit shall be provided, supplying a minimum of three (3) grounding-type duplex receptacle outlets. The grounding contacts of these receptacles shall be grounded. Two (2) of these receptacles shall be readily accessible and spaced for convenient use of portable appliances. New appliance circuits shall be 20 ampere capacity. G.F.C.I. protection shall not be used as a substitute for grounding with kitchen receptacles.

5.10 Bathroom:

Bathrooms shall be provided with illumination, controlled by a conveniently located wall switch. A receptacle separate from a light fixture shall be provided. All bathroom receptacles shall have G.F.C.I. protection.

5.11 All Other habitable Rooms:

Habitable rooms shall be provided with a conveniently located wall-switch-controlled light or receptacle. A minimum of two (2) additional duplex receptacles are required, equally spaced around the room.

5.12 Basement:

The basement shall have a minimum of one lighting outlet for general illumination. All enclosed areas that may be walked into (except coal bins) shall be provided with a lighting outlet.

5.13 Laundry Area:

Laundry areas shall be provided with illumination. A grounding-type duplex receptacle shall be provided adjacent to the laundry equipment, on a separate circuit. New laundry circuits shall be 20 ampere capacity.

5.14 Space Heating System:

Heating equipment that requires electricity for operation of any facet shall be provided with an individual circuit. A disconnect switch shall be provided on or adjacent to the equipment. (Exception: Thermo-pile controlled furnaces.)

5.15 Stairwells:

Stairwells shall be adequately illuminated. Lighting outlets shall be controlled by wall switches. Switches shall not be located where it is necessary to use darkened stair sections for their operation. Stairwells connecting finished portions of dwellings shall be

provided multiple-switch control: One at head, the other at the foot of the stairwell.

5.16 Service and/or Feeder:

The service or feeder to an existing dwelling unit shall be a minimum of three-wire, one hundred ampere capacity. Service equipment shall be dead front, having no live parts exposed whereby accidental contact could be made. All plug type fuses shall be Type S.

Exception: An existing properly installed fifty-five ampere capacity, three wire service and feeders of thirty ampere, two wire-wire are acceptable if adequate for the load being served.

5.17 Existing Wiring and Equipment:

Existing wiring and equipment shall be in good repair. Circuit extensions made with flexible cord wiring in lieu of permanent wiring shall be eliminated.

SECTION 6 – MECHANICAL

6.1 Heating facilities for residential buildings:

Every residential building shall be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 65 degrees F. (18 degrees C.) in all habitable rooms, bathrooms and toilet rooms. Portable space heaters shall not be used as the sole source of heat for any habitable room. The required room temperatures shall be measured at a point 3 feet (914 mm) above the floor and 3 feet (914 mm) from the exterior walls.

6.2 Mechanical equipment:

All mechanical equipment, fireplaces and solid fuel-burning appliances shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe working condition, and shall be capable of performing the intended function.

6.3 Mechanical Rooms:

The mechanical room cannot be located within or have access through a bedroom or a bathroom and shall have adequate combustion air available to supply the appliances within.

6.4 Cooking and heating equipment:

All cooking and heating equipment, components and accessories in every heating, cooking and water-heating device shall be maintained free from leaks and obstructions.

6.5 Safety controls:

All safety controls for fuel-burning equipment shall be maintained in effective operation.

6.6 Combustion air:

A supply of air for complete combustion of the fuel and for ventilation of the space shall be provided for the fuel-burning equipment.

6.7 Bathrooms and toilet rooms:

Every bathroom and toilet room shall comply with the ventilation requirements for habitable spaces as required by Section 3.7 of these standards, except that a window shall not be required in spaces equipped with a mechanical ventilation system that complies with the following:

1. Air exhausted by a mechanical ventilation system from a bathroom within a dwelling unit shall be exhausted to the exterior and shall not be recirculated to any space, including the space from which such air is withdrawn.

2. Air exhausted by a mechanical ventilation system from all other bathrooms or toilet rooms shall be exhausted to the exterior without recirculation to any space, or not more than 85 percent of the exhaust air shall be recirculated where the system is provided with effective absorption and filtering equipment.

6.8 Cooking facilities:

Unless approved through the certificate of occupancy, cooking shall not be permitted in any rooming unit or dormitory unit, and a cooking facility or appliance shall not be permitted to be present in a rooming unit or dormitory unit.

Exception: Where specifically approved in writing by the code official.

6.9 Process ventilation:

Where injurious, toxic, irritating or noxious fumes, gases, dusts or mists are generated, a local exhaust ventilation system shall be provided.

6.10 Water Heating Facilities:

Every rental unit shall be supplied with water heating facilities which are capable of heating water to such a temperature as to permit an adequate amount of water to be drawn at every required fixture, except toilets, at a temperature of not less than one hundred twenty degrees (120°) Fahrenheit as required for the reasonable use by occupants. Temperature and pressure relief valves shall be piped full size to within four inches of the floor. Water heaters located in garages or rooms where combustible liquids are stored shall be 18" above the floor.

6.11 Clothes dryer exhaust:

Clothes dryer venting systems shall be independent of all other systems and shall be vented in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

SECTION 7 – PLUMBING

7.1 Required Facilities:

Each dwelling unit shall include the following facilities within the dwelling unit:

7.1.1 Toilet. A toilet that is separate from the habitable rooms and is properly connected to the sanitary sewer and water supply.

7.1.2 Lavatory. A lavatory, located in the same room with the toilet, properly connected to the sanitary sewer and water supply.

7.1.3 Bathtub or Shower. A bathtub or shower which affords privacy to the user and is properly connected to the sanitary sewer and water supply. Every room with a tub or shower shall have a source of natural ventilation through an operable window to the outside or ventilation provided by a mechanical exhaust fan that is vented to the outside.

7.1.4 Kitchen Sink. A separate kitchen sink, properly connected to the sanitary sewer and water supply.

7.2 Potable water supply:

Every sink, lavatory, bathtub or shower, drinking fountain, water closet or other plumbing fixture shall be properly connected to either a public water system or to an approved private water system. All kitchen sinks, lavatories, laundry facilities, bathtubs and showers shall be supplied with hot or tempered and cold running water. The water supply system shall be installed and maintained to provide a supply of water to plumbing fixtures, devices and appurtenances in sufficient volume and at pressures adequate to enable the fixtures to function properly, safely, and free from defects and leaks.

7.3 Contamination:

The water supply shall be maintained free from contamination, and all water inlets for plumbing fixtures shall be located above the flood-level rim of the fixture. Shampoo basin faucets, janitor sink faucets, and other hose bibs or faucets to which hoses are attached and left in place, shall be protected by an approved atmospheric-type vacuum breaker or an approved permanently attached hose connection vacuum breaker.

7.4 Privacy:

Toilet rooms and bathrooms shall provide privacy and shall not constitute the only passageway to a hall or other space, or to the exterior.

7.5 Fixture Installation:

All plumbing fixtures shall be properly installed and maintained in working order, and shall be kept free from obstructions, leaks and defects and be capable of performing the function for which such plumbing fixtures are designed. All plumbing fixtures shall be maintained in a safe, sanitary and functional condition.

7.6 Fixture clearances:

Plumbing fixtures shall have adequate clearances for usage and cleaning.

7.7 Sanitary sewer connections:

All plumbing fixtures shall be properly connected to either a public sanitary sewer system or to an approved private sewage disposal system. Discharge from sump pumps and roofs shall not be connected to the sanitary sewer.

7.8 Sanitary sewer maintenance:

Every plumbing stack, vent, waste and sewer line shall function properly and be kept free from obstructions, leaks and defects.

7.9 Storm drainage:

Drainage sump pumps, roofs, paved areas, yards and courts, and other open areas on the premises shall not be discharged in a manner that creates a public nuisance.