

General Safety Checklist

- Do the locks on all the doors operate properly?
- Do cover plates protect all the switches and outlets? Do all switches and outlets work?
- Do the oven and/or all stove burners work? (Built in units only.)
- Are there working smoke detectors in hallways and near sleeping rooms?
- Are the gas appliances free of odors that indicate gas leak? Do they have shut off valves at the appliance/gas line connection?
- Are all heaters, particularly those recessed into walls and floors, clear of combustible material?
- Are CO alarms installed outside each separate dwelling unit sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom(s), in a bedroom where a gas burning appliance is located and on each occupiable level including basements?
- Are handrails and guardrails securely fastened?
- Are the stairs in good condition?
- Is the floor free of trip hazards?
- Do windows open and close completely? Are the window panes intact?
- If there are window bars, do they have an operational quick-release mechanism inside?
- If the kitchen or bathrooms have no windows, is the mechanical ventilation working?
- Is the plumbing free of leaks? Do faucets turn on and off completely? Do sinks and tubs drain? Do toilets flush properly?
- Are exit doors kept clear?
- If there are EXIT signs, are they clearly visible? Are all lighted EXIT signs working?
- Is the area beneath exit stairs free of combustible material?

The above questions are just a few of the items which may constitute a violation of the Housing Code. If the answer is "No" to any of the above questions, you may want to request an inspection of your rental unit.

For more information, please contact

Housing Code Enforcement at (510) 981-5444.

All Web Addresses have the following prefix:

www.cityofberkeley.info/

Housing Code Enforcement and Rental Housing Safety Program (RHSP)

Telephone: (510) 981-5444

Internet: /housingcodeenforcement

Berkeley Housing Authority

Section 8 related inquiries

Telephone: (510) 981-5470

Internet: /BHA

Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board

Tenant Rights/Eviction/Rent questions

Telephone: (510) 981-7368 (981-RENT)

Internet: /Rent

Fire Department (non emergency)

Telephone: (510) 981-3473 (981-FIRE)

Internet: /Fire

Environmental Health and Vector Control

Insect and Rodent questions & inspections

Telephone: (510) 981-5310

Internet: /EnvironmentalHealth

UC Environmental Health & Safety (Safe Student Housing)

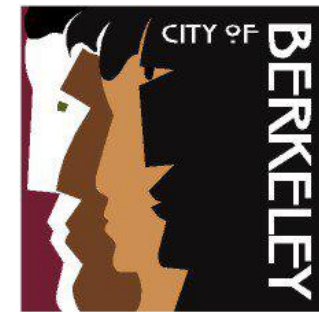
Telephone: (510) 642-1977

City of Berkeley TDD

Telephone: (510) 981-7474

RHSP Guide

RENTAL HOUSING SAFETY PROGRAM (RHSP)



**A collaboration between the City,
rental property owners, tenants, and
the community.**

**1947 Center Street, 3rd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704**

**telephone: (510) 981-5444
email: rhsp@cityofberkeley.info
web: cityofberkeley.info/housing/rhsp**

Updated September 2020

RHSP Mission

The mission of the RHSP is to help prevent deaths, injuries, and ill health from unsafe housing conditions through collaboration between the City, rental property owners, tenants and the community.

Program Applicability

The RHSP requirements are contained in Sections 12.48 & 19.40 of the Berkeley Municipal Code and require owners of rental housing to certify that their rental units meet certain minimum safety requirements.

RHSP City Inspections

The City will respond to all code complaints, and will check the unit for all housing code violations as part of the inspection. Owners and tenants may ask the Housing Code Enforcement office for an inspection. Under the RHSP, the City will also inspect a number of rental units proactively. Tenant/landlord cooperation is crucial to ensure access and quickly bring units into code compliance.

There are two types of fees associated with RHSP:

1. An annual flat fee of \$56 per unit, or \$28 per room in boarding houses or residential hotels with five or more units. These fees are billed on a yearly basis through the Finance Department
2. A reinspection fee is charged for each reinspection of a unit/room where violations of the Housing Code have been identified if the repair(s) are not completed by the first scheduled reinspection date.

Responsibilities

Owners

- Inspect all rental units every year for safety hazards or code violations using the City's RHSP Safety Certification Checklist (Schedule A form), and correct any items that cannot be verified as working properly or certified on the inspection checklist. Note: All repair work must meet minimum Berkeley housing code requirements.
- Provide tenants with copy of completed City's Safety Certification Checklist for their unit. Tenant's signature is not required on this form.
- *Notify the Housing Code Enforcement office if you cannot complete the Certification Form due to lack of access.*

Tenants

- Maintain units to housing code and safety standards. Do not change or alter the rental property without owner consent and never in ways that create safety hazards.
- Be vigilant and mindful of residential safety and potential hazards. Review the RHSP checklist the owner provides.
- Request necessary repairs from owner or property manager in writing. If no action is taken, report unresolved code violations to the Housing Code Enforcement office.
- *Notify the City if you do not receive a copy of the City's RHSP Safety Certification Checklist (Schedule A form) from the owner annually.*

City of Berkeley

- Inform citizens of safety hazards and ways to prevent potentially fatal or unsafe conditions.
- Investigate complaints of code violations.
- Conduct both proactive and reactive (complaint driven) inspections of rental units for safety and code compliance.

RHSP Owner Certification

By July 1st of each year, with few exceptions, all owners of residential rental property (including boarding houses and residential hotels with five or more rooms) must complete an inspection of those properties using the City's RHSP Safety Certification Checklist (Schedule A form), and provide a copy of it to the tenants. If the owner cannot certify that a unit/room complies with the checklist, he/she must notify the Housing Code Enforcement office indicating why.

New construction/units built within the last 5 years are exempt from the City's RHSP Safety Certification Checklist (Schedule A form). Units that received a City Housing Inspection by Housing Code Enforcement/RHSP staff are exempt from certifying for a 3-year period from the date the Notice of Closure/Compliance is issued.

Penalties for Non-Compliance – Owners failing to meet compliance requirements may be issued an Administrative Citation for each unit or room in violation of Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) 12.48.050. Administrative Citations include a monetary fine of not less than \$200 per unit or room, followed by additional citations and fines for continued failure to comply with the Program's certification requirements.

To obtain forms or for further information, please contact the Housing Code Enforcement/RHSP office at 1947 Center Street 3rd Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704; or call (510) 981-5444; by e-mail at rhsp@cityofberkeley.info; or via the web at: www.CityofBerkeley.info/housing/rhsp