



**Housing & Community Development's  
Housing Inspection Office**

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**Recent Consistent Rental Housing Code Fail Items – 2016**

The following is a list including some of the most common fail items found during housing inspections. This list is not all encompassing, but does include the most frequent fail items and can be used as a reference. For specific questions, please contact the Housing Inspectors at 641-754-6582.

**Smoke detectors & Fire Extinguishers:**

- Smoke detector removed or batteries unhooked/removed. If detector is chirping, replace battery.
- Hard wired detectors missing/unhooked battery, hanging from wiring, detector unhooked from wiring or one is not sounding alarm when other detector is sprayed (inter-connected).
- If smoke detectors are gone or if property is a new rental, then State Fire Marshal has ordered any replaced/new must now be a dual sensor smoke detector. It will have an I (for ionization) and a P (for photoelectric) on the detector and package.
- Fire extinguishers not serviced or replaced on a yearly basis as required. One in kitchen area on path of exit and one in basement near staircase. All must be installed so visible and accessible. Not inside cabinets, closets or behind closed doors. Must have dated store receipt attached when new extinguisher is purchased or tagged by service company.
- Fire extinguisher is a BC instead of the required 1-ABC.

**Electrical now required for all rentals**

- All outlets within 6 feet of a sink, tub, shower or toilet's edge must be a GFCI outlet or on a GFCI protected circuit with each protected outlet labeled GFCI protected.
- All living rooms & family rooms are recommended or might be required to have at least 2 properly testing 3-prong outlets or 3-prong GFCIs. This is due to many of today's electronics coming with grounded plugs and fire & electrical codes prohibit the use of adapters. This applies to older homes with older wiring.
- All bedrooms and other rooms such as dining rooms are recommended or might be required to have at least 1 properly testing 3-prong outlet or 3-prong GFCI. This is due to many of today's electronics coming with grounded plugs and fire & electrical codes prohibit the use of adapters. This applies to older homes with older wiring.

**Typical Electrical Code Violations:**

- GFCI outlets (ground fault circuit interrupter) that no longer trip off or trip buttons that are painted over.
- Extension cords in use or adapters in use including using air fresheners as an outlet that have adapters built in.
- 3-prong appliances, power strips or 6-plexes with ground plug removed or plugged into adapter and then plugged into 2-prong outlets.
- Fixed appliances such as microwaves, refrigerators, stoves, window air conditioners and garage door openers that plug into a power strip. Must plug directly into properly testing 3-prong outlets or 3-prong GFCIs.
- Light fixtures missing light bulbs or with burned out bulbs or even missing their covers resulting in a fail or inconclusive.
- Frayed electrical cords, taped or spliced cords to electrical items such as lamps, etc.

**General Health & Safety Issues:**






- Bedroom windows blocked for rescue/egress.
- Cannot store combustibles within 3 feet of furnace, water heater, clothes dryer, electrical panel or water heater.
- Infestation (Cockroaches, fleas, mice, bed bugs, etc.).
- Site conditions such as large amount of garbage and/or debris either inside or outside of rental property. Presence of unlicensed or junk vehicles. Or units that have large amount of trash and debris in them. This would also include poor housekeeping.
- Garbage cans without tight fitting lids and no regular garbage service in place.
- Space heaters in use; cannot use space heaters.
- Doors that are 20 minute fire rated door that self closes with a UL listed closer but no longer securely latches such as buildings with multiple units and have interior entrance doors and/or doors to basements or units with doors to attached garages.
- Deteriorating paint when there are children under the age of six living at unit or visiting there regularly.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Doors with loose or broken off doorknobs/locks and kitchen or bathroom cabinets with broken or missing drawers or doors.

# City of Marshalltown Rental Inspection Office – 641-754-6582

## Examples of Electrical Items You Can Use and Cannot Use.

Can use items in this column/Permitido	Cannot Use/Prohibido <u>All of the below items are fire hazards and not allowed,</u>
 <p>Can use power strip or surge protector that has a breaker switch but only if they are plugged into properly testing 3-prong outlets or 3-prong GFCIs. [Cannot plug power strips/surge protectors into each other (piggy-back)].</p>	 <p>Cannot use extension (drop) cords of any kind.</p>
 <p>Can use 3-prong six-plex if they are plugged into properly testing 3-prong outlets or 3-prong GFCIs. Do not cut off ground plug so can plug into 2-prong outlets.</p>	 <p>More examples of extension (drop) you cannot use.</p>
 <p>You can use 2-prong 6-plex or 4-plex but only on 2-prong outlets.</p>	 <p>Cannot use single, dual or 3-way adapters. Also cannot use air freshener type plug-ins as adapters.</p>
 <p>Can use this type of single surge protector.</p>	 <p>Cannot use screw-in adapters such as those you screw into light fixtures.</p>

**Please Remember:**

1. All fixed appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, clothes washers, microwaves and garage door openers must plug directly into properly testing 3-prong outlet or properly testing 3-prong GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter).
  - a. The same rule applies to power strips.
2. You cannot use adapters to convert any 3-prong plug to the 2-prong outlet.