



# HOUSING INSPECTION NEWS

ISSUE 34, FALL 2023

One call to City Hall!

Call

**3-1-1**

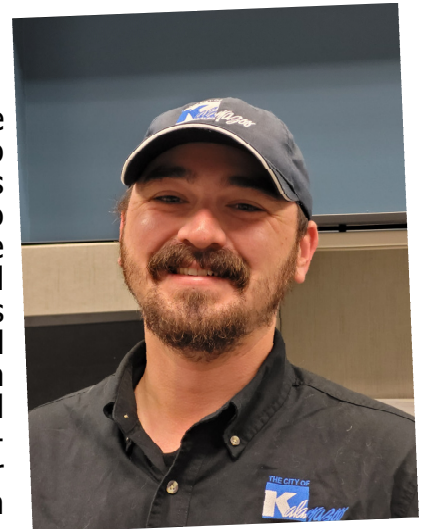
or 337-8000 for  
all non-emergency  
city services

241 W South Street  
kalamazoo.city.org



## Welcome Our New Housing Inspector

We said "bon voyage" to Yvonne Wright, Housing Inspector, who retired in May after over 30 years with the city. We are pleased to announce that in September, the city hired Alan VanderBeek to fill the vacant position. Alan has lived in Kalamazoo since 2011 and has over 10 years of experience in property management and maintenance. Training is complete and Alan has taken over Yvonne's inspection area which includes Westwood, Arcadia, campus area, the Oakland/Winchell neighborhoods, Oakwood, as well as parts of the South Westnedge/Kilgore and Westnedge Hill neighborhoods. Welcome Alan!



### Highlights in this Issue

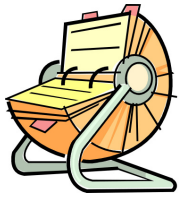
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## Have an Expired Certificate on an Occupied Rental Property?

There has been a significant uptick in the practice of continuously rescheduling inspection appointments, not having repairs done at reinspections and/or not showing up for rental inspections. Continually rescheduling inspections for properties that should have already been certified is causing a significant strain on inspector calendars. Over the next several months, and into 2024, occupied rental properties that have rental certificates more than four months past due will receive enforcement regardless of scheduled status and be further evaluated for a repair/vacate order and/or referral to the City Attorney's office.

If you have an inspection or reinspection scheduled, please keep it and please have the repairs done so a certificate can be issued. Thank you!



## Please Keep Your Rental Registration Up To Date

If you have moved, gotten a new phone number or changed your email address, it's likely your rental registration is not up to date. If this is the case, you will not receive important info about your rental certificate. **Please** make sure your owner and agent contact information current! Submit any updates or by submitting a new Rental Registration Application within 10 days of a change. It's quick and easy!

[www.kalamazoo.org/rentalregistration](http://www.kalamazoo.org/rentalregistration)

**\* Owner address changes must also be provided to the City Assessor at 269-337-8036 \***



## Keep Curblawn Tidy

The curblawn is the area between the property line and the public street. Often it includes a sidewalk. Property owners are responsible for maintenance of this area.

The city battles curblawn trash all year round. Property owners and occupants are charged with making sure their properties stay cleaned up of junk and debris, and may only place items in the curblawn (in approved herbys) for collection on trash day. Quarterly bulk trash is also available. Make sure your tenants know weekly trash day and quarterly bulk trash days as well as what may be placed out for bulk trash. If items are placed at curb outside of these permitted times, they are subject to immediate clean up by the city and the property owner will be billed for the clean up.



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## Have Vacant Units?

Housing Resources, Inc. needs stable housing for families in the Kalamazoo area. Landlords who would like to place vacant units on HRI's Available Housing List can call (269) 382-0287 for information.



## Help Keep Kalamazoo Clean!



Call **311** or **337-8000** to report trash on the curb lawn, trash on private property or herby curby trash containers out past trash pick up day.

## RentAble Program Expanded



The RentAble program is designed to promote housing stability for renters over 18 years old who currently live in Kalamazoo or are looking to move Kalamazoo County and have a barrier to renting. The barrier may include a prior eviction, an arrest or incarceration record, poor credit or having been a victim of domestic violence or human trafficking. Income limits will also be in effect.

The RentAble program is administered by the Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care, which is part of the United Way of South Central Michigan. The program provides one-time assistance up to \$2000 per household for housing related costs, such as application fees, security deposit, utility payments, or other verifiable approved cost.

If you know someone that could use help and need more information, email [CoC@uwscmi.org](mailto:CoC@uwscmi.org) or find info online at: <https://kzoococ.org/rentable-program>

## Placement of Smoke Detectors & Fire Extinguishers



Smoke detectors should always be installed per manufacturer's instructions. General guidelines provide they be placed on the ceiling at least 4" from a wall and away from ceiling fans; or mounted on the wall about 12 inches down from the ceiling. Smoke rises, and tends to curl around corners, so these locations will allow the detector to give earliest warning.

The number one rule in a fire is to GET OUT. Extinguishers should be placed in the path of egress between the kitchen and an exit door, preferably not in the kitchen. Mount on a wall within easy reach of an average adult at least 4" off the floor and no higher than about 5 feet off the floor. Fire extinguishers allow occupants to make a decision to try and put out a fire before it gets out of control after they are safe.



## Eviction Diversion Assistance Available to Tenants & Landlords

Eviction diversion is a collaborative program to help tenants pay overdue rent and stabilize their housing situation. Tenants must be no more than three months behind in rent. Landlords must want the tenant to stay and the tenant must be able to sustain rent payments after assistance. Tenants may call 211 to be screened for eligibility.

## Ready for Inspection?

Believe it or not, often the rental inspection is one of the only times property owners and/or managers enter a unit for inspection. It is wise to include the right to periodic inspections in the lease. Be proactive and regularly check exterior property areas for needed repairs. At minimum, it's a great idea to check smoke detectors and fire extinguishers (most commonly cited items) before the rental inspector arrives to ensure they are in working order and not past the manufacturer's expiration. Finally, making sure hired contractors obtain proper permits for installation of water heaters, furnaces, and roofs mid-inspection cycle will save a lot of hassle down the road. An inspection checklist of common violations is sent with every courtesy expiration notice and is available at:



[kalamazoocity.org/Community/Rental-Housing](http://kalamazoocity.org/Community/Rental-Housing)

## Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detector Requirements for Existing Structures



In January 2023, the city began enforcing rules of the 2021 International Property Maintenance Code and the International Fire Code (IFC) regarding carbon monoxide alarms in existing dwelling units and sleeping units (efficiency spaces).

**WHEN REQUIRED:** Carbon monoxide detectors are required in dwelling units and sleeping units if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- If there is a fuel burning appliance (stove, dryer, etc.)
- If there is a fuel burning fireplace
- If there is a fuel burning forced air furnace
- If the dwelling unit has an attached private garage

**TYPE REQUIRED:** In these situations, carbon monoxide detectors may be stand-alone (not interconnected) & may be battery operated or plug-in. Combined smoke/carbon monoxide detectors are also permitted.

**PLACEMENT:** Carbon monoxide detectors shall be placed:

- Outside each bedroom/sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms; **and**
- Inside a bedroom or sleeping room, including efficiency units, if there is a fuel burning appliance in the bedroom or in an attached bathroom.



## Rental Registration Database

To access the rental database go to:

[www.kalamazoocity.org/rental](http://www.kalamazoocity.org/rental) and then

**"Check If Rental Property is Registered"**  
from the listed links

## The City of Kalamazoo

**\*\*FREE\*\***

### Lead-Based Paint

### Hazard Reduction Program

The City of Kalamazoo, in partnership with Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., (KNHS), is removing and abating lead-based paint hazards in qualifying residential households at not cost to the property owner. Yes you read that correct,

**FREE!**

According to the CDC, approximately 24 million housing units have deteriorated leaded paint and elevated levels of lead-contaminated house dust. More than four million of these dwellings are homes with one or more young children. Properties built prior to 1978 that have peeling or cracking paint most likely have lead paint chips and/or lead dust as well. Areas of specific concern are often around windows, doors, cabinets, stairways, porches and floors.

Lead-based paint chips and dust can be detrimental to a child's health, resulting in behavior problems, learning disabilities and, in extreme cases, seizures or death. The toxicity of lead when absorbed in the body can also result in brain damage as well as damage to other vital systems such as the kidneys, nerves and blood.

Don't chance the health of children. If you rent to tenants with children (or a pregnant woman) in a property built prior to 1978, and those tenants can meet eligibility requirements (low to moderate income), your property may qualify for the program. Contact KNHS today.

Applications are being  
accepted & processed by  
KNHS located at:

1219 S. Park Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
269-385-2916

Did we mention  
it's **FREE?**

Households that qualify for the Lead-Based Paint program will also receive a Healthy Homes assessment which in-







# How to Reach Us...

Community Planning & Economic Development  
Code Administration  
245 N. Rose, Suite 100, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## One Call to City Hall!

Have a question? If you are located within city limits simply call 311. If you are outside city limits call 269-337-8000. You can also reach code enforcement staff directly by email.

General help: [code@kalamazoo-city.org](mailto:code@kalamazoo-city.org)

For all email addresses use: [@kalamazoo-city.org](mailto:@kalamazoo-city.org)

<u>INSPECTOR</u>	<u>AREA SERVED</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Rental Registration Information & Forms .....		<a href="http://www.kalamazoo-city.org/rental">www.kalamazoo-city.org/rental</a>
Register a Rental Property Online .....		<a href="http://www.kalamazoo-city.org/rentalregistration">www.kalamazoo-city.org/rentalregistration</a>
Schedule Rental Inspection ..call 311 or 269-337-8000.....		or email: <a href="mailto:rentalinspection@kalamazoo-city.org">rentalinspection@</a>
Debra Miller, Code Administration Manager .....		<a href="mailto:millerd@kalamazoo-city.org">millerd@</a>
Kevin Staten.....	Housing Inspector (Vine south of Lovell St.).....	<a href="mailto:statenk@kalamazoo-city.org">statenk@</a>
Chris Ruohonen .....	Housing Inspector (Burke Acres, CBD, west Northside, Stuart, Fairmont) .....	<a href="mailto:ruohonenc@kalamazoo-city.org">ruohonenc@</a>
Matt Schott .....	Housing Inspector (south Edison, Southside, Milwood, S. Westnedge) .....	<a href="mailto:schottm@kalamazoo-city.org">schottm@</a>
Alan VanderBeek.....	Housing Inspector (Campus, Winchell, Oakwood, Westnedge Hill).....	<a href="mailto:vanderbeeka@kalamazoo-city.org">vanderbeeka@</a>
Charlotte Deur .....	Housing Inspector (east Northside, Eastside, north Edison).....	<a href="mailto:deurc@kalamazoo-city.org">deurc@</a>
Karleen Steppenwolf.....	Rental Registration Coordinator (registration/billing) .....	<a href="mailto:steppenwolfk@kalamazoo-city.org">steppenwolfk@</a>
Heather Bowers.....	Rental Inspection Scheduling.....	<a href="mailto:rentalinspection@kalamazoo-city.org">rentalinspection@</a>
Jason Adams.....	Code Compliance I Inspector (south of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main) .....	<a href="mailto:adamsj@kalamazoo-city.org">adamsj@</a>
Laquana Coleman.....	Code Compliance I Inspector (north of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main).....	<a href="mailto:colemanl@kalamazoo-city.org">colemanl@</a>
Carmela Hostiguin Haba .....	Code Compliance III Inspector (south of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main) .....	<a href="mailto:habac@kalamazoo-city.org">habac@</a>
Marvella Vincent.....	Code Compliance III Inspector (north of Stadium/Mich Ave/East Main) .....	<a href="mailto:vincentm@kalamazoo-city.org">vincentm@</a>
Roger Iveson.....	Building Official.....	<a href="mailto:ivesonr@kalamazoo-city.org">ivesonr@</a>
Shelby Donaldson.....	Building & Trades Permit Tech (permit questions) .....	<a href="mailto:donaldsons@kalamazoo-city.org">donaldsons@</a>
Casey Boekhoven .....	Community Development Secretary (permit questions) .....	<a href="mailto:boekhovenc@kalamazoo-city.org">boekhovenc@</a>
Pete Eldridge.....	Zoning Administrator .....	<a href="mailto:eldridgep@kalamazoo-city.org">eldridgep@</a>
Kris DeBarmore.....	Building Trades Code Compliance Officer .....	<a href="mailto:debarmorek@kalamazoo-city.org">debarmorek@</a>
TBD .....	Seasonal Code Compliance Inspector (May thru October) .....	TBD
Luis Pena.....	Historic Preservation Coordinator.....	<a href="mailto:penal@kalamazoo-city.org">penal@</a>

<b>REPORT A CONCERN OR ASK A QUESTION.....</b>	<b>from inside city 311; from outside city 269-337-8000</b>
STREETLIGHTS, CONSUMER'S ENERGY .....	800-477-5050
PUBLIC SAFETY NON-EMERGENCY .....	488-8911
<b>PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY.....</b>	<b>911</b>

## Avoid Nuisance Enforcement & Fees

Enforcement of City Ordinances may subject property owners to violation notices and subsequent cost recovery fees. Please be sure to share this information with tenants.

- ♦ **Curblawn Nuisances:** Discarded items, brush and other unsightly materials that are placed in the curblawn outside of bulk trash collection are considered a public nuisance and subject to immediate corrective action without notice. Clean-up costs are billed to the property owner of record.
- ♦ **Trash on Private Property:** Keep all litter, trash, junk and debris picked up. Property owners in violation are subject to nuisance violation notices (with a fee) and also additional clean up fees if not corrected.
- ♦ **Garbage Container Storage:** Garbage and recycling containers must be stored on private property in back of the front façade of the dwelling. Containers stored in violation of the ordinance are subject to immediate relocation which is billed to the property owner. Also, know your weekly trash pick up day and quarterly bulk trash pick up day, and only place items out for collection the day prior to scheduled pick up.
- ♦ **Junk Autos:** Any car not in operating condition, or not properly licensed, is considered a junk auto. Junk autos located in the public right-of-way will be tagged by Public Safety. Junk autos on private property will be issued a 10-day violation notice, and if not removed a civil infraction ticket will be issued that may result in a compliance order and/or towing.

## Hot Code Topics

**Shovel Your Sidewalk.** Please be sure and clear snow from public walkways within 48 hours of a snow event. This helps kids walking to school, those who take the bus as well as all those who enjoy a walk in the winter wonderland.

**Space Heaters** are a significant fire hazard. They should only be used for emergency heating, and may not be used as a permanent source of heat. If needed, make sure space heater is for indoor use and plugged directly into the wall (no extension cord or adaptor), and are not near any flammable materials.

**Permits:** When you have work done by a contractor between inspection cycles, make sure they are obtaining permits and getting inspections to save a headache later.