

Questions Provided to Rental Housing Services in Advance of 11/21/2024

1. Are current inspectors experiencing challenges in managing their caseloads, especially given the volume of rental properties?
2. Is there a need for additional staffing to ensure thorough and timely inspections?
3. With the green rental ordinance in place, how will this affect the current inspection process?
4. Are there specific areas where additional time or expertise will be required from inspectors due to new sustainability measures?
5. Will the timeline for inspections need to be adjusted to accommodate these new requirements with current staffing levels?
6. Can you provide an update on what the new short-term rental software has found regarding illegal rentals?
7. Why was a new software platform chosen instead of using the feature within Legistar or its associated software, which is already integrated with the city's system? Would it have been more efficient to use an existing platform?
8. Why are rentals not inspected on a yearly basis? Are there specific logistical or regulatory reasons for the current inspection schedule?
9. How often do rental properties fail inspections, and what are the most common reasons for failure?
10. Under what circumstances are rental certificates revoked, and how often does this happen?
11. Is there a mechanism in place to prevent serial offenders (property owners or managers with repeated violations) from receiving rental certificates in the future?
12. How does the department track and manage repeat offenders, and are there any actions beyond fines or penalties to permanently disqualify them?
13. What is the average time frame for completing inspections, from initial request to final approval?
14. Are there any current backlogs, and if so, how are they being addressed?
15. Are inspectors being trained on how to evaluate compliance with the green rental ordinance, or will this require external experts?
16. How does the department plan to ensure consistency in enforcing new sustainability standards?
17. Beyond the short-term rental software, are there any other technological tools or systems being considered to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the rental inspection process?
18. What efforts are being made to educate both tenants and landlords about their responsibilities and rights related to inspections, including compliance with the new green ordinance?
19. If a landlord or tenant disputes an inspection outcome, what is the process for appeal or review?
20. How often do such disputes occur, and what are the typical outcomes?
21. How well does the rental inspection process coordinate with other city services, such as fire safety or building code enforcement, to ensure holistic property safety and maintenance?
22. Is there a system for collecting and acting on tenant complaints about inspection results or issues not being addressed by landlords?

Questions Provided to Rental Housing Services in Advance of 11/21/2024

23. How are these complaints incorporated into future inspections or compliance checks?

24. With the ongoing development of new rental units and the anticipated addition of thousands more, how is the department preparing to handle the increased demand for rental inspections? Will additional staffing be necessary to keep up with the volume? How will this growth impact the timing of inspections? Will there be delays in inspection scheduling or completing inspections due to the increased workload?

Topic	Question
Information Accessibility	How can records of previous inspections and complaints be accessed via the STREAM / eTrakit system? Does the city track the instances in which tenants are forced to move out for their unit being deemed uninhabitable?
Information Accessibility	8:517. - Registry of owners and premises <i>Registration of agent.</i> If the premises are managed or operated by an agent, the agent's name, date of birth and both the street address and mailing address of the business shall be placed with the name of the owner in the registry. Where can a tenant find this information? Does this specifically apply to management companies? Would a landlord need to register this information themselves?
Enforcement (Other)	8:529. - Privacy. How should tenants seek help if their privacy requests are being repeatedly violated even after they've provided a written request to their landlord?
Enforcement (Other)	8:509. - General requirements relating to the maintenance of dwellings, parts of dwellings, and facilities. <i>(1) Structural maintenance.</i> Every foundation, floor, wall, ceiling and roof shall be reasonably weathertight, watertight, and rodent proof; <i>(2) Openings.</i> Every window, exterior door, and basement hatchway shall be reasonably weathertight, watertight and rodent proof, and shall be kept in sound working condition and good repair. Can you please clarify what is considered 'reasonable' in this context? For example, would water leakage thru a sliding door during heavy rains violate this code requirement? Would water leakage from a tub/shower resulting in fungal growth violate this code? Do general requirements such as this include shared spaces within an apartment complex, like a hallway or stairway?
Other	Generally speaking, what sorts of code violations warrant filing a complaint? Is it reasonable for a tenant to file a complaint over code violations that do not pose an immediate health/safety risk? What is a reasonable timeframe a tenant should allow for a landlord to make repairs before potentially filing a complaint?
Enforcement (Other)	Weatherization has been in the code since the 1980s and there has never been a citation for lack of attic insulation. Understandable it isn't easy for inspectors to get into the attic. But given this history how can the department handle the increase of inspection duties with the new proposed green rental housing standards?
Enforcement (Other)	Last year the Renters Commission requested that the Department start tracking the landlords that complied with warnings about providing the required Rights and Duties booklet. We don't want the same landlords to get away with not providing the booklets year after year. Do you now have a system to track violations that just receive a warning and not a ticket?

Questions Provided to Rental Housing Services in Advance of 11/21/2024

Enforcement (Other)	Last year the Renters Commission asked for information about funds raised by collecting on citations with the aim of trying to find ways to increase funding for the Department. Is that information now available?
Enforcement (Other)	When an inspector clearly ignores a violation pointed out by the tenant, what recourse does the tenant have? We know many violations are not cited by inspectors. How do we protect tenants and Ann Arbor's housing stock?
Enforcement (8:530)	Section 8:528 of the housing code pertains to smoke and fire detection services. The ordinance states that "No person shall let to another for occupancy any dwelling or dwelling units which are not equipped with smoke or fire detectors, or with an automatic fire alarm system." Yet we routinely hear that the smoke alarm in buildings do not work. We are interested in knowing an estimate of noncompliance with this ordinance, and the city's enforcement mechanisms for this.