

10505

10505 WHAT IS THE "POINT OF SALE" HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM?

In 1989, the Richfield City Council passed an ordinance which requires that all single family and 2-family homes in the City (including condominiums) that transfer title after October 1, 1990 is inspected by the City of Richfield Inspection Division and a Certificate of Housing Maintenance be obtained prior to transfer of ownership or closing. (A copy of that ordinance is available upon request.) An application form must be completed and returned to the City, along with the appropriate fee.

WHEN IS AN INSPECTION REQUIRED AND WHO DOES THE INSPECTION?

The inspection must be completed prior to title transfer (closing). If repairs are needed to meet the housing code, they must be completed and re-inspected prior to closing and within 1 year of the initial inspection date. If the buyer assumes responsibility for repairs, the closing can only proceed under the conditions outlined on the back of this brochure under a Cash Escrow Agreement.

The property can be inspected anytime during the selling process. However, it is strongly recommended that the inspection be done prior to listing or advertising the dwelling for sale. Arranging for the inspection is the responsibility of the owner and not necessarily the real estate agent. A City Housing Inspector does the inspection.

In cases such as divorce or death in the family where one name is being removed from the title but no sale is occurring, an inspection is not required.

WHAT DOES THE INSPECTOR LOOK FOR DURING THE INSPECTION?

The Inspector visually checks the condition of the roof, foundation, doors, and windows, exterior paint or covering, electrical system, plumbing system, chimney, and heating/cooling system as well as various other items. This program does not require older houses to comply with today's stricter building standards. However, corrections must be made to deficiencies that violate the building codes that were in effect at the time the house was built and to problems that pose a health or safety hazard. Some items such as ceiling heights, floor area, and window size, may be exempt from the code if they are considered "built-in deficiencies" and do not present a safety hazard.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON HOUSING CODE VIOLATIONS?

Common correction examples include:

- √ Inoperable/missing smoke/CO detectors.
- √ No handrail/loose handrails.
- √ First floor windows that lack locks; windows that are stuck shut; damaged window screens.
- √ Bare wood or peeling paint.
- √ Storage sheds not secured or multiple storage sheds on site.
- √ Any added and/or altered plumbing for which no permit history is on file need certification by a licensed plumbing contractor.
- √ Overflow pipe from TPR valve on water heater not copper or within 18 inches of floor or missing.
- √ Improper flex-type gas-line to dryer/range etc.; Gas line at appliance missing shut off or dirt leg.
- √ Furnaces or space heaters installed without a permit.

- √ Transite chimneys require certification by licensed contractor.
- √ Any added and/or altered electrical work done without a permit requires certification by a licensed electrician.
- √ Underground 3-prong outlets or reverse polarity 3-prong outlets.
- √ Extension cords/adapters in place of permanent wiring; includes garage door openers, washer/dryer or fridge/range.
- √ Improper grounding or service and/or ground bond at water meter.
- √ No open bulb light fixtures allowed in clothes closets or above shelves must have a minimum of 12 inches of clearance from any potential storage items.
- √ Back-flow preventors missing at laundry tub faucets and exterior hose faucets.
- √ Vinyl or foil exhaust vent at dryer – vent must be metal to exterior not reduced in size and properly connected with foil tape (no screws or duct tape).
- √ Window glazing missing or deteriorated.
- √ Cracked or broken windows.
- √ UL listed flue cap damaged or missing at furnace flue.
- √ Gutters damaged/missing/clogged.

WHAT ABOUT REPAIRS?

Repairs made by the seller must be completed and re-inspected before the closing. If you own and occupy the home, in most cases you may do the work yourself. All repairs must meet City Codes. Code violations must be corrected even if the home does not sell and is taken off the market.

When violations have been corrected, a follow-up inspection will be conducted and a Certificate of Housing Maintenance Compliance will be issued, this is what you will need for your closing.

CAN THE BUYER MAKE THE REPAIRS?

Yes. The Buyer must review the work order with the housing inspector, submit a schedule for completion of the work order, determine the time of occupancy and removal of all immediate hazards, and sign a cash escrow agreement form supplied by the City of Richfield.

WHAT ABOUT RENTAL PROPERTY?

All residential rental property is required to be licensed and inspected. Questions on rental licenses should be directed to 612/861-9882.

IS THIS A WARRANTY?

NO. It should be noted that the code compliance "Certificate" does not constitute any representation, guarantee, or warranty about the building's condition. It does not guarantee the safety, fitness, or suitability of any dwelling in the city. It should not be relied upon as a substitute for a private inspection. Purchasers or occupants should take whatever steps they deem appropriate to protect their interests, health, safety and welfare prior to purchase or occupancy of the dwelling. Housing inspections are not for the benefit of buyer or seller, but are a community effort to maintain the quality of Richfield's houses and neighborhoods.

ARE ADDITIONAL PERMITS REQUIRED?

Before beginning the work, please check with the Inspections Division at 612/861-9882 to see if a permit is required. Repairs or alterations to electrical, plumbing and heating

system often require permits and inspections by specialized inspectors. A building permit may be required for remodeling and for repairs such as re-roofing.

HOW DO I ARRANGE A HOUSING INSPECTION?

WHERE: Richfield CD/Inspection
6700 Portland Ave. So.
Richfield, MN 55423
(by mail or in person)

WHEN: Office hours are 8:00 a.m.-
4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday.
Phone: 612/861-9882

HOW: Fill out applications, schedule inspection appointment allowing 1 hour for the inspection and explanation, and submit fee.

WHO: The person responsible for the repairs should be present during the inspection, if possible.

Call 612/861-9882 If you have questions or would like to schedule an inspection.

If you have a complaint about the program or would like to appeal a work order, call Assistant Community Development Director, Melissa Poehlman at 612/861-9760.



HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM

**Richfield CD/
Inspections Division**

**6700 Portland Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423**

