
The Belleville Beat

Belleville Police Department
Belleville, IL 62220

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From the Desk of Sgt. Don Sax

Welcome again to *The Belleville Beat*. With more and more residences being built in the city, this month, September 2005, we will give you guidelines on the City of Belleville's housing code. Anyone that purchases a single or multi-family residence in the city limits must have a housing inspection prior to anyone moving into the apartment or house. This is the same for private residences and for rental property. If the property is rental and there are already tenants, there must still be an inspection of the rental units. You must schedule an inspection by calling 233-6817. A housing inspector will come to the property and will give a visual inspection.

The following list is a guide of what the inspector is checking. It is only a guide. The inspection may be more intense, and the inspector may see the need to call for special inspections i.e. electrical, plumbing, structural, etc.

EXTERIOR

1. Yards:

- * Garbage containers -- leak proof containers with tight fitting lids (minimum of one container per dwelling unit).
- * Standing water -- grading and drainage problem from structure and property.
- * Trees, weeds and grass -- properly maintained.

2. Building numbers:

- * Must be 2.5 inches tall and readable and visible from the street.

EXTERIOR and INTERIOR

1. Structural Outside:

Foundation:

- * Wall cracks.
- * Loose and missing blocks, bricks.

- * Visible exterior repairs, inspect interior of foundation.
- * Rotted and damaged sill plates.

Walls:

- * Loose and damaged missing siding -- deteriorated or requires painting.
- * Soffit and fascia damage.

Roofs and chimneys:

- * Badly needed tuckpointing -- mortar is missing or deteriorated.
- * Sagging of rafters which could create other problems.
- * Loose and missing chimney bricks.
- * Gutters and downspouts loose or missing.

Stairs, porches and railings:

- * Uniform or deteriorated treads and risers.
- * Handrails secured properly on any step having more than four risers.
- * Guardrails necessary and secured properly (landing/balcony over 30" high).
- * Structural stability.

Doors and windows:

- * One window per room (with screen) must be operable.
- * Broken or missing glass.
- * Fire-rated doors between garage and living area.

Accessory structures:

- * Garages -- same requirements as residences.

2. Structural Inside:

Walls and ceilings:

- * Loose and missing plaster.
- * Evidence of roof leaks.
- * Loose paint. Lead based paint of more than 0.5 not permitted.
- * Ceilings in garage below habitable area must be fire rated.

Floors:

- * Bathroom and kitchen should be impervious to water.
- * Loose, damaged and missing flooring materials.
- * Joist and columns for structural support.
- * Carpet secure and not torn.

Stairs:

- * Same requirements as exterior.

Ventilation:

- * Kitchen ventilation.
- * Bathroom window and/or exhaust fan (wireless exhaust fan available).

Space and occupancy:

- * Basement bedrooms must have ventilation and two approved means of egress.

Sanitation for kitchen:

- * Should have sink, cabinets, shelves, counter, stove and refrigerator.

Sanitation for bathroom:

- * Water closet (private) leaking water and drain pipes.
- * Lavatory leaking water and drain pipes.
- * Bathtub/shower leaking water and drain pipes.
- * Every bathroom shall contain at least one receptacle GFI protected.

3. Plumbing:

Supply system:

- * Connections (for leaks).
- * Fixtures broken and not operating.
- * Hot water not provided.

Drainage system:

- * Leaching of septic system.

Hot water heaters:

- * Drip tube within six inches of floor (hard pipe or hard copper).
- * Temperature and proper pressure relief valve is required.
- * Venting (draft diverter; pitch of vent pipe; connection at chimney).
- * Vent secured with screws at each joint and sealed into chimney.
- * Dirt leg on gas line, gas shut-off upstream of union.
- * If in garage, must be elevated 18 inches above floor. (Fire rated wall 18 inches around water heater is all right.)

4. Heating and Mechanical:

Equipment:

- * Heat run connections.
- * Cold air returns required outside of furnace room.
- * Belleville Switch/stack control switch on all gas-fired furnaces.

Clearance:

- * Minimum clearances from combustible material according to system installed.

Venting:

- * Pitch of vent pipe (1/4 inch in 1 foot).
- * Connection at chimney.
- * Excessive length of vent pipes.
- * Use of elbows in vent pipes.
- * Condition of vent pipes.

Space heaters:

- * Proper controls B-switch (if adaptable).
- * Gas shut-off.
- * Dirt leg on gas line.
- * All fuel-fired space heaters must be vented.
- * Clearances from combustible materials.

5. Electrical:

- * All wiring beneath the floor, including crawlspace and basement or wiring that is not concealed in the walls, must be run in thinwall conduit.
- * All wiring enclosed in walls and ceilings, may be in Romex (with minimum size #12 wire).
- * Not more than four outlets per circuit permitted in kitchen and dining areas. All others up to eight outlets per circuit.
- * All receptacles in bathrooms, garages, basements, outside receptacles or any receptacle within six feet of kitchen must be on a ground-fault breaker GFI.
- * All motor driven appliances must be on a separate circuit.
- * No junction boxes permitted in attics or in concealed places.
- * Wiring must be stapled to studs and ceiling rafters within eight to ten inches from receptacle or outlet box and then every three to four feet.
- * A maximum of three non-metallic sheathed cables will be permitted in any drilled hole.
- * Only grounding type outlets shall be installed as required by the National Electrical Code, current edition.
- * The enclosures of dishwasher, clothes dryer, range, freezer, sump pump, power tool, dehumidifier, air conditioner and the like shall be grounded in an approved manner.
- * Service equipment, panel board and switch boards shall not be located in bathrooms, shower rooms, clothes closets nor above washer and plumbed in fixtures.
- * All conduit run on the exterior of a building must be ridged galvanized conduit.

6. Fire safety and hazard abatement:

Means of egress:

- * Safe and continuous means of egress.

Accumulation and storage:

- * Storage of flammable materials.
- * No accumulations in means of egress.

Fire protection system:

- * Smoke detectors on every level including basements. Exception is unfinished attic, smoke detector is not required.
- * Improper security screens or grille on windows.

Please remember this is only a partial listing of the inspection from the Belleville Housing inspectors. If you have any questions about what is needed for your property, please call the inspectors' office at 233-6817. These inspections are to help make Belleville homes and housing safer and better places for our residents.