

Housing Inspection Office

Frequently Asked Questions;

(Please contact Housing Inspection Office

if you need any other information)

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- What is a housing inspection and when & why do I have to have my home inspected?
The inspection is a basic visual health & safety inspection per the International Property Maintenance Code, of your home, that is required per township ordinance when you plan on selling your home or renting it. The inspection should be done at least (3) weeks before your settlement to allow for any repairs if necessary.
- What exactly is the inspector looking for?
The inspector is looking for health and safety issues such as smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, handrails, guards and sanitation to name a few (please see online housing inspection checklist).
- Where do I go to apply for an inspection and what is the cost?
The Housing Inspection Office is within the Construction office, located in the Municipal Building, at 523 Egg Harbor Road.
The cost for a resale inspection is \$70.00.
You have the option of downloading the application online and when your application is complete, submit it with the fee and the clerk will schedule an inspection day.

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- Do I have to submit the application or can my real estate agent handle it?
Yes, your agent can.
- Can I schedule my inspection for anytime?
The inspections are completed from about 9:30 am to 4pm, during normal business days not including summer hours which are from Memorial Day to Labor Day (Subject to administrative changes). When you schedule your inspection you will have the choice of having your inspection in the am or pm. You can contact the inspector the morning of your inspection between 8am & 9am and he will try and narrow the window of inspection time. Unfortunately the inspector cannot set a specific inspection time.
- Does anyone have to be home for the inspection?
No. The inspector can do the inspection without having anyone home, so long as he can gain access into the house. This can be achieved in a few ways; 1.) you can have a lockbox with the keys inside, but of course you must let the office know what the combination is. 2.) you can leave a key behind somewhere on the property.
****Note- The inspector will not enter a house with any pets running loose inside without anyone being home. This is for the safety of the inspector and pet(s).***
- What if work was done to my home without obtaining a permit?
All properties will be checked for any permits prior to doing inspection. If you suspect you did work at your house, without permits, you must call the construction office to rectify the matter. A Certificate of Continued Occupancy (C.O.) will not be issued if these issues are not complete, which could delay your settlement.
- How would I know if I passed my inspection?
The inspector will leave behind a copy of the inspection report, usually on the kitchen counter. If you did not pass, correct what has to be done and call for a reinspection.
****Note- Please leave behind the original copy of the report so the inspector can make notes when he does the reinspection.***
- Do I have to pay another fee for my reinspection?
No. There is no charge for your first reinspection. A fee of \$50.00 will be charged for any reinspection after that.

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- I failed for a tripping hazard, what's that?
A tripping hazard is a condition where one block of your sidewalk has raised higher than the block next to it. Usually this occurs where tree roots start to grow up out of the ground.
- The inspector noted on the inspection report that a truss was cut. What is a truss and why is that so important?
There are two ways a roof can be constructed; either by constructing it by hand which is called "stick building" or by installing truss'. A truss is a individual roof member that is built in a factory and designed by an engineer to deflect and carry certain loads, depending on the layout of your home, and installed sort of like an erector set. Because of the special design and installation, if any part of the truss is cut, drilled into or notched; it can compromise the integrity of the roof system which could lead to someone getting hurt. Normally a truss is cut to accommodate the installation of a pull-down attic ladder. A permit is required for the installation of this type of step. If you have a cut truss in your attic the procedure is to have a NJ registered architect or engineer look at the condition and he/she will determine if a repair is necessary. If repair is necessary the architect/engineer will make a drawing for submittal with a construction permit so that it can get inspected.
- I am a landlord and my unit failed for items that passed last year, how can that be?
You have to remember that your unit is being occupied, common wear & tear and used on a daily basis. Also consider that the code may change from time to time. You also have to consider that your tenants may be doing things that you are not aware of. For instance; 1.) Your tenants could be taking the batteries out of the carbon monoxide detector and using them for the tv or video game remote, this has happened. Or 2.) Your tenant may have kids and therefore create more wear and tear than usual on the unit's components such as steps, handrail, guards, walls & windows.
- I am a tenant and I am having a dispute with my landlord. Is that something your department can help me with?
Unfortunately, we are not an "advocacy type" housing office that deals with landlord/tenant disputes. If it involves the structure or health & safety of the occupants, then we may be of some assistance. Other than that we only perform inspections.

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- What is a T.C.O ?

T.C.O is an acronym for Temporary Certificate of Occupancy. A T.C.O. can be issued if the buyer of your property agrees to take responsibility for any or all repairs that have to be done to bring the dwelling into compliance (C.O). The buyer will have to complete, sign, have notarized and submit to my office an "Affadavit" which is available from our online forms. Once this process is complete, a T.C.O. can be issued so that settlement can be achieved

Housing Inspection Office
Helpful Hints

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Below you will read some helpful hints to make your inspection a smoother process which could result in saving some much needed time.

Please contact the Housing Inspection Office if you have any further questions, comments or concerns.

- When calling for an inspection, have a back-up date just in case that day is all booked up.
- Call at least three weeks in advance of your settlement date.
- Have a path to the important portions of your home such as the bedroom windows, heater, water heater, pull-down attic steps and the power (breaker) panel, so that they can be checked by the inspector. If these areas are blocked by furniture or moving boxes and the inspector cannot inspect them, then the inspection can fail. Also, do not install pictures or mirrors over the power panel.
- The proper way to test smoke detectors is with an approved aerosol spray. By pressing the button on a smoke detector, your only checking the button, not the smoke sensor. Therefore if you cannot access an approved aerosol, then you should replace the detector.
- To test your Carbon Monoxide (C.O.) detector, simply press the test button or check the manufacturer's specifications.
- The life of a Smoke Detector is approximately 5 to 7 years.

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- If pets are loose in the home or back yard and the homeowner is not there during inspection, the inspector will not enter the home for the safety of the inspector and pet, and the inspection will fail. All pets should be crated for inspection. Also, do not put the loose pet in a room where the inspector has to get in to inspect.
- If the first inspection fails, leave the original copy of the report so that the inspector can make notes letting you know if you passed or failed the re-inspection.
- See the diagram of the components of a step; the tread, riser, guard and handrail to better help you understand how they apply to the inspection.
- If you have a pool on your property, the pool must have been permitted and inspected by Washington Twp. Also, your property or the pool itself must be surrounded by a fence and gate that; **1.)** Is at least 4' high **2.)** In good condition **3.)** Cannot have an opening more than 2" **4.)** Pool gate must open away from pool, self-close & latch **5.)** Pool gate latch must be 54" high if located on the outside of the gate **or** 3" below top of gate if latch is located on the inside.