



# CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS

## DEPARTMENT OF CODES COMPLIANCE

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[www.nngov.com/codes-compliance](http://www.nngov.com/codes-compliance)

# PROPERTY MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES FOR THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS

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This document has been prepared to promote a better understanding of the property maintenance codes enforced by the Newport News Department of Codes Compliance and illustrates many of the most common property maintenance violations found within the City. These guidelines address the basics of property maintenance code enforcement and are meant to inform property owners, tenants and neighborhood residents of the minimum maintenance standards that apply to properties located within our City. These guidelines are an excerpt of the City Code and are not inclusive of the entire Property Maintenance Code enforced by the Department of Codes Compliance.

The Code of the City of Newport News, Section 13-23, adopts Part III of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) as the Newport News Property Maintenance Code. This portion of the USBC, known as The Virginia Maintenance Code, provides administrative guidelines for the enforcement of maintenance standards outlined in the International Property Maintenance Code. The standards contained in the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and the Newport News Municipal Code are applied to all structures and properties except those owned by the State or Federal government, regardless of use, occupancy or location within the City of Newport News.

The Property Maintenance Division of the Department of Codes Compliance enforces the Newport News Property Maintenance Code. The information contained herein addresses many areas that inspectors encounter when performing inspections. Property inspections are conducted to protect the inhabitants of a structure, and the general public, by ensuring that minimum safety standards are met. Occasionally, a structure may be vacated or prevented from being occupied due to unsafe or unfit conditions. These conditions may include a lack of required utilities, alterations or conditions that affect the structural integrity of the building, improper or inoperable fire detection, suppression and/or alarm systems, inadequate fire separation between different occupancies and improper use or occupancy which creates an unsafe condition. All occupied structures must have proper electrical utilities, hot and cold running water, proper toilet facilities and heat during certain months of the year. Failure to meet these requirements could cause a building to be condemned for being unsafe or unfit for human habitation. The term condemnation, used in connection with Property Maintenance Code enforcement, means that a building has been vacated or prevented from being occupied due to some unsafe condition. In serious cases where there is an imminent safety threat, either the unsafe condition must be immediately corrected or the occupants of the building must be vacated for their own safety.

## OUTSIDE STORAGE

*Section 45-521 of the Newport News Municipal Code*



Exterior property areas should be kept in a clean, safe and sanitary condition so as not to pose a threat to public health, safety or welfare.

## PORTABLE STORAGE CONTAINERS

*Section 45-529 of the Newport News Municipal Code*



Portable storage containers shall only be permitted on a temporary basis. Various rules apply to their proper use, location and duration. Be sure to review City Code Section 45-529 and consult with Codes Compliance prior to placement.

## ARTICLE VII ACCUMULATION OF WEEDS

*Section 13-150(A) of the Newport News Municipal Code*



Tall grass and weeds are unsightly and deemed detrimental to health due to their attraction of vermin. Except in agricultural areas, grass and weeds within 150 feet of a building must be maintained below ten inches in height.

## REMOVAL OF DEBRIS, LITTER AND RUBBISH

*Section 13-180 of the Newport News Municipal Code*



Accumulation and improper storage of garbage and rubbish is unsightly and unhealthy. These code violations degrade neighborhood appearance and quality by attracting vermin and producing noxious odors.

## INOPERATIVE VEHICLES PROHIBITED

*Section 13-186 of the Newport News Municipal Code*



Inoperative vehicles are required to be stored in an enclosed building. An inoperable vehicle is one that displays neither a valid inspection decal nor a valid license plate and/or is in such a condition that it is prohibited from operating on public roadways.

## VACANT STRUCTURES AND LAND

*Section 301.3 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Vacant structures are to be maintained in a safe and secure condition. Vacant structures are not exempt from exterior maintenance requirements.

## ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

*Section 302.7 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Accessory structures such as detached garages, utility sheds, fences, and retaining walls should be structurally sound and maintained in good repair.

## SWIMMING POOLS

*Section 303.1 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Swimming pools should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition to prevent harboring mosquitoes. In addition, required gates, fences and their associated closing and locking hardware, must be maintained to prevent unauthorized entry.

## STRUCTURAL MEMBERS

*Section 304.4 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Structural members shall be maintained in good repair and capable of supporting the imposed loads that they were designed for.

## FOUNDATION WALLS

*Section 304.5 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Foundation walls should be plumb and free from open cracks and breaks. Large cracks, missing bricks and deteriorated mortar must be repaired or replaced.

## EXTERIOR WALLS

*Section 304.6 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Exterior walls and trim should be free from holes and breaks, loose, missing and rotting materials, and properly surface coated to be weatherproof and prevent deterioration.

## ROOFS AND DRAINAGE

*Section 304.7 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Roofs, flashing and gutters should be sound and weathertight to keep the interior of the structure dry and prevent deterioration.

## STAIRWAYS, DECKS, PORCHES AND BALCONIES

*Section 304.10 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Porches, stairs and decks should be maintained so that they are properly anchored, structurally sound, in good repair and capable of supporting imposed loads.

## CHIMNEYS AND TOWERS

*Section 304.11 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Chimneys should be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.

## WINDOW, SKYLIGHT AND DOORFRAMES

*Section 304.13 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Windows should be kept in sound condition, good repair and not admit rain or wind. All windows, except fixed ones, should open easily, contain insect screens from April to December and be capable of remaining open using their accompanying window hardware.

## DOORS

*Section 304.15 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Exterior doors and hardware should be maintained in good condition. Doors should close tightly and hardware should latch securely, and lock and unlock easily from the inside.

## INTERIOR STRUCTURE

### Section 305 of the International Property Maintenance Code



The interior of a building and the equipment located within it should be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and maintained in a sanitary condition. All interior surfaces should be clean and sanitary. Peeling and chipping paint should be repaired, removed or properly covered. Cracked and loose plaster or other defective surface conditions should be corrected.

## STAIRS AND WALKING SURFACES

### Section 305.4 of the International Property Maintenance Code



Stairs, ramps, landings, balconies, porches, decks and their handrails and/or guards should be maintained in a sound condition and be capable of supporting normally imposed loads.

## OCCUPANCY LIMITATIONS

### Section 404 of the International Property Maintenance Code

Habitable spaces, hallways, laundry areas and bathrooms must have a minimum clear ceiling height of 7 feet.

Living rooms and bedrooms must contain at least 120 square feet and 70 square feet, respectively. Every bedroom which houses more than one person must have an additional 50 square feet for each occupant.

Bedrooms must not provide the only means of access to other bedrooms or habitable spaces and must not serve as the only means of egress from other habitable spaces.

Bedrooms must have access to at least one toilet and sink without passing through another bedroom.

### TABLE 404.5 MINIMUM AREA REQUIREMENTS

SPACE	1-2 OCCUPANTS	3-5 OCCUPANTS	6 OR MORE OCCUPANTS
Living Room	120	120 Square Feet	150 Square Feet
Dining Room	No Requirements	80 Square Feet	100 Square Feet

SPACE	1 OCCUPANT	EACH ADDITIONAL OCCUPANT
Bedrooms	70 Square Feet	50 Square Feet

Bedrooms must comply with all requirements of the International Property Maintenance Code

## PLUMBING FIXTURES AND FIXTURE REQUIREMENTS

### Chapter 5 of the International Property Maintenance Code



Property owners must provide and maintain plumbing facilities and fixtures in accordance with Chapter 5 of the International Property Maintenance Code. Buildings that fail to comply with these requirements are prohibited from being occupied.

Plumbing and sewer systems must operate as designed with all bathtubs/showers, sinks and toilets supplied with hot and cold water with enough volume and pressure for the fixture to operate properly. Drains should operate freely and not leak water or sewer gases.

In rooming houses, at least one full bathroom (toilet, sink, tub and/or shower) must be provided for every four rooming units.

## CHAPTER 6

### MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE

Property owners must provide and maintain mechanical and electrical facilities and equipment in accordance with Chapter 6 of the International Property Maintenance Code. Buildings that fail to comply with these requirements are prohibited from being occupied.

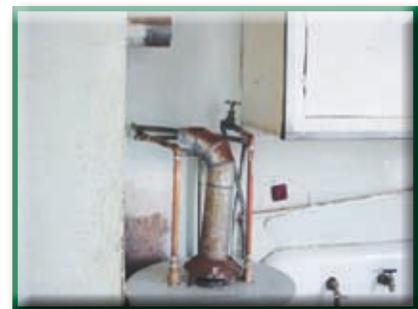
Property owners and operators who rent dwelling units are required to provide units that are capable of supplying heat to maintain a minimum room temperature of 65 degrees from October 15<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Unvented room heaters may not be used as the primary source of heat.

Property owners and operators of apartments, boarding houses and dormitories are required to provide cooling to dwelling units sufficient to cool habitable spaces to a maximum temperature of 80 degrees during the period from May 15<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

## MECHANICAL APPLIANCES

### Section 603.1 of the International Property Maintenance Code



Mechanical equipment such as fireplaces and solid fuel-burning, cooking and water heating appliances must be properly installed, maintained in a safe working condition and be capable of performing their intended function.

## ELECTRICAL SYSTEM HAZARDS

*Section 604.3 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Electrical systems must be properly designed and installed, and maintained in a safe and appropriate manner. Circuits must not be overloaded and all safety devices must function properly.

## CHAPTER 7

### FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE

Property owners must provide and maintain fire safety facilities and equipment in accordance with Chapter 7 of the International Property Maintenance Code. Buildings that fail to comply with these requirements are prohibited from being occupied.

A safe, continuous and unobstructed path of travel must be provided from any point in a building to the public way.

All fire protection, fire detection and fire suppression systems must be maintained at all times in an operable condition.



*Required emergency escape openings must be operational from the interior without special keys, tools or knowledge.*

## SMOKE ALARMS

*Section 704.2 of the International Property Maintenance Code*



Smoke detectors must be properly installed and operable. When required, these devices must be located on every floor level, including basements, and in the area immediately adjacent to bedrooms.

## CONCLUSION

We in the Department of Codes Compliance appreciate your interest in building safety and maintaining a safe and attractive community. We hope that you find these guidelines informative and useful. Several code references are provided below for additional information. To report a suspected code violation or schedule a property maintenance inspection, please contact the Property Maintenance Division of Codes Compliance at: [propmt@nngov.com](mailto:propmt@nngov.com) or call 757-933-2311.

### REFERENCES:

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and its adopted standards can be found online at:

[www.dhcd.virginia.gov](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov)

The International Property Maintenance Code is available through the International Code Council at:

[www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org)

The Municipal Code of the City of Newport News can be found online at: [www.municode.com](http://www.municode.com)

Information concerning the Department of Codes Compliance can be found on the Department's website located at:

[www.nngov.com/codes-compliance](http://www.nngov.com/codes-compliance)



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