

Landlord 101 Guide



Health and Safety

Mold: Make sure to check for signs of mold and moisture around your rental, especially in places like bathrooms, windows and exterior walls. The [Minnesota Department of Health's website](#) has more about how to find and prevent mold build-up.

Conditions: According to [Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 504B](#), landlords are responsible for making sure their rental units are fit to live in, in reasonable repair and in compliance with state and local health and safety laws.

Heat minimum: As of Jan. 1, 2024, a new minimum heat law requires landlords to "supply or furnish heat at a minimum temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit from Oct. 1 through April 30, unless a utility company requires and instructs heat to be reduced." [More information.](#)

Public nuisance: Make sure you understand what constitutes a public nuisance in city code. Below are a few important items that are considered public nuisances.

- [Ordinance 845.010\(4\)](#) - Storing or keeping old machinery, junk furniture, appliances or other debris outside
- [Ordinance 845.010\(6\)](#) - Accumulation of brush, trash or debris
- [Ordinance 845.020\(3b\)](#) - No outside storage of personal property is allowed, except as otherwise permitted by this section 845 and except items to be used in conjunction with normal outdoor residential activities on the property, such as outdoor furniture and cooking equipment, recreational equipment, and construction and landscaping material and equipment that is used or intended to be used on the property in a period no longer than three months or in connection with a building permit on the property

Stay updated on essential items that may impact you this year.

Planning

If you are planning updates to a rental property, call the City of Minnetonka to discuss your plans. Many changes could require a building permit or land use application.

- Call 952-939-8290

Parking

No parking is allowed on any city street from 2 to 6 a.m.; no overnight street parking. Refer to the [city's parking ordinance](#).

Single-family and ADUs

Each should have a minimum of two off-street parking spaces per unit.

Sustainability

Multi-Family Building Efficiency Program (MFBE)

A great first step for building managers to learn about their building's energy use and cost saving opportunities.

This program provides:

- A free, whole-building energy efficiency audit
- Energy report with return on investment timelines
- No-cost installation of energy saving equipment (common areas and residential units)
- Rebates application assistance and bonus incentives

More information:

- [Website](#)
- [FAQs](#)

Hennepin County recycling and organics grants and resources

Hennepin County has annual grant opportunities. Sign up for its recycling newsletter to make sure you don't miss out on any opportunities.

- [Website](#)
- [Free education materials, labels and signs, translated items](#)

Fire Safety

For ALL properties (single-family to four-plexes to large multifamily buildings)

Questions a landlord should ask about its units:

- Do the living units have the required smoke and carbon monoxide detection?
- Is the required smoke/carbon monoxide detection being routinely tested for functionality and is the detection new enough?
- Can occupants escape in an emergency both through their doors and windows? Are the windows working properly?
- Can the fire department find your building when you need help?
- Are address numbers obviously visible from the roadway, in both directions of travel, throughout the year?
- Does snow, landscaping or vegetation obscure visibility depending on the season?
- Do you know who, landlord or tenant, is responsible for what in the rental unit?

Make sure you understand the state statutes to help determine your answers to the questions above.

For properties with more than four units

Building owners and/or their authorized agents are ultimately responsible for fire code compliance even if there are no written correction orders from the fire department.

Common fire code violations:

- Ensure all fire protection systems are inspected annually by a licensed contractor and repaired or replaced where found to be defective – fire alarm systems, fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers and private fire hydrants.
- If the property has private fire hydrants, they must be inspected and maintained annually. An interactive hydrant map and more info is online at minnetonkamn.gov/hydrants.
- Test all exit lights and emergency lights monthly to ensure proper functionality. Pushing the test button on each device for at least 30 seconds is sufficient for monthly testing. Each device shall have primary and back-up power and shall remain illuminated for no less than 30 minutes if running on back-up power.

- All exits shall be continuously free from obstructions or impediments and must remain readily available for full instant use at all times. This includes corridors, stairways, vestibules, sidewalks, etc. No combustible storage, including occupant's personal property, is allowed in the building's means of egress. Snow and ice shall be immediately removed from all exit discharges to the public way (parking lot or roadway) even if a sidewalk doesn't exist.
- All fire doors must self-close AND latch from any position. Routine adjustments are often necessary throughout the year as temperatures and humidity changes.

See more state fire code information at the end of this guide.

Police Safety

Sign up for the crime prevention mailing list to:

- Receive monthly reports of the calls for service that have occurred at your property
- Receive crime prevention tip flyers every other month.
- Have a point of contact with the Minnetonka police for requesting police reports, street parking permission and miscellaneous assistance.

How to sign up your rental property:

- Call 952-939-8500 or contact Community Service Officer DeeAnn Bloom at 952-939-7650 or dbloom@minnetonkamn.gov.

Crime Free Multi-Housing Seminar, hosted by the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association

The crime free multi-housing phase 1 training is an eight-hour management class sponsored by a law enforcement agency focusing on topics related to:

- Crime prevention and working with police
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Lease agreements and evictions
- Applicant screening and Fair Housing
- Terrorism awareness and prevention

This training is offered by different agencies throughout the Twin Cities several times a year. There is no need to attend additional phases.

Contact [Bloom](#) or visit the [crime prevention association website](#) for more information.

Minnetonka Police community engagement

The Minnetonka Police Department prioritizes outreach and engagement with residents by making Minnetonka officers and police staff available to:

- Give presentations to the community.
- Attend special events (e.g., Coffee with a Cop, Juneteenth celebrations, Night to Unite events, etc.)
- Attend events at housing complexes that are dealing with on-going issues to help mitigate the problem.

Animal control: Pet information for properties

In Minnetonka, you cannot have more than the following number of animals without a permit:

- Two dogs
- Five cats
- Five dogs and cats combined (one or two dogs and the remainder cats)

These are Minnetonka's limits; a landlord can set lower limits but not higher.

A resident can obtain a [Multiple Animal Location application](#) on the city website. Permits are not granted for any residence with adjoining walls—apartments, townhomes, duplexes, etc.

Please review the [animal control information on the city's website](#) for more specific information regarding leash laws, excessive noise, pet tags, chickens/fowl guidelines and lost or found pets.

Call 911 or 952-939-8500 (police non-emergency) for immediate issues:

- Dog bites
- Dogs running loose
- Barking problems
- Sick/injured wildlife
- Other issues that shouldn't wait over a weekend

Call 952-939-7650 for chronic, ongoing issues that may be more involved or can wait over the weekend:

- Dogs routinely running out into the street at people (not occurring now)
- Neighbor not picking up after their pet promptly
- Multiple animal location permit issues

Minnesota Multi Housing Association (MHA)

MHA can provide resources and training information for members of all sizes of properties.

- [Website](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Education and Training](#)
- Phone: 952-854-8500

Secretary of State and Attorney General

The Attorney General's Office has an [in-depth handbook](#) detailing the rights and responsibilities of renters and landlords. It is an essential resource to have available when there are disagreements between landlords and renters, as it provides advice for both parties. Ensure you keep the handbook bookmarked and provide the information to your renters, so they know their rights and responsibilities.

- Eviction
- Discrimination
- Utility shut-offs
- Cold Weather Rule

Additional Information

Metro Transit programs

For large multi-family buildings with 10 or more units, Metro Transit has an opportunity to participate in the [Residential Pass program](#). This program provides deeply discounted, unlimited use transit passes for residents.



**Find more information
and resources on
minnetonkamn.gov.**

State Fire Code Information

State Statute 299F.362 SMOKE DETECTOR; INSTALLATION; RULES; PENALTY.

Subd. 3. Smoke detector for any dwelling. **Every dwelling unit within a dwelling must be provided with a smoke detector meeting the requirements of the State Fire Code.** The detector must be mounted in accordance with the rules regarding smoke detector location adopted under subdivision 2. When actuated, the detector must provide an alarm in the dwelling unit.

Subd. 5. Maintenance responsibilities. For all occupancies covered by this section where the occupant is not the owner of the dwelling unit or the guest room, **the owner is responsible for maintenance of the smoke detectors.** An owner may file inspection and maintenance reports with the local fire marshal for establishing evidence of inspection and maintenance of smoke detectors.

Subd. 5a. Inform owner; no added liability. **The occupant of a dwelling unit must inform the owner of the dwelling unit of a nonfunctioning smoke detector within 24 hours of discovering that the smoke detector in the dwelling unit is not functioning.** If the occupant fails to inform the owner under this subdivision, the occupant's liability for damages is not greater than it otherwise would be.

Subd. 6. Penalties.

(a) Any person who violates any provision of this section shall be subject to the same penalty and the enforcement mechanism that is provided for violation of the State Fire Code, as specified in Section 299F.011, subdivision 6.

(b) **An occupant who willfully disables a smoke detector or causes it to be nonfunctioning, resulting in damage or injury to persons or property, is guilty of a misdemeanor.**

2020 MN State Fire Code 1103.8 Single- and multiple-station smoke alarms.

Single and multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in existing Group I-1 and R occupancies in accordance with Table 1103.8.

2020 MN State Fire Code 1103.8.1 Replacement of smoke alarms.

Single and multiple station smoke alarms shall be replaced when:

1. **They fail to respond to operability tests.**
2. **They exceed ten years from the date of manufacture.** Smoke alarms shall be replaced with smoke alarms having the same type of power supply.

**TABLE 1103.8
SMOKE ALARM REQUIREMENTS**

CONDITION	LOCATION	POWER SUPPLY	INTERCONNECTION REQUIRED
Existing buildings that do not have any smoke alarms (same as new).	In hallways outside sleeping rooms. In sleeping rooms. On each level of the building and in basements. On ceiling or wall (less than 12 inches below ceiling). On center of ceiling above stairways.	If constructed on or after 8/1/1989, smoke alarms are required to be hard-wired (120 volt). If constructed before 8/1/1989, smoke alarms can be battery-powered.	No interconnection is required for battery-powered alarms.
Existing buildings (constructed on or after 8/1/1989).	In hallways outside sleeping rooms. On each level and in basements. On ceiling or wall (less than 12 inches below ceiling).	Smoke alarms are required to be hard-wired (120 volt).	No interconnection is required.
Existing buildings (constructed before 8/1/1989).	In hallways outside sleeping rooms. On each level and in basements. On ceiling or wall (less than 12 inches below ceiling).	Smoke alarms can be battery-powered.	No interconnection is required.
Replacement of smoke alarms in existing buildings.	Smoke alarms must be installed in same locations as originally installed.	Power supply must be the same as the smoke alarms being replaced.	Interconnection must be provided if the smoke alarms being replaced were interconnected.

State Statute 299F.51 REQUIREMENTS FOR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS.

Subdivision 1. Generally. **Every single family dwelling and every dwelling unit in a multifamily dwelling must have an approved and operational carbon monoxide alarm installed within ten feet of each room lawfully used for sleeping purposes.**

Subd. 2. **Owner's duties.** The owner of a multifamily dwelling unit which is required to be equipped with one or more approved carbon monoxide alarms must:

(1) provide and install one approved and operational carbon monoxide alarm within ten feet of each room lawfully used for sleeping; and

(2) replace any required carbon monoxide alarm that has been stolen, removed, found missing, or rendered inoperable during a prior occupancy of the dwelling unit and which has not been replaced by the prior occupant prior to the commencement of a new occupancy of a dwelling unit.

Subd. 3. **Occupant's duties.** The occupant of each dwelling unit in a multifamily dwelling in which an approved and operational carbon monoxide alarm has been provided and installed by the owner must:

(1) keep and maintain the device in good repair; and

(2) replace any device that is stolen, removed, missing, or rendered inoperable during the occupancy of the dwelling unit.

Subd. 4. Battery removal prohibited. **No person shall remove batteries from, or in any way render inoperable, a required carbon monoxide alarm.**

2020 MN State Fire Code 915.2.1 Dwelling units.

Carbon monoxide detection shall be installed in dwelling units outside of each separate sleeping area within 10 feet of the bedrooms. Where a fuel-burning appliance is located in a bedroom or its attached bathroom, carbon monoxide detection shall be installed within the bedroom.

2020 MN State Fire Code 1104.26

Escape windows. In Group R and Group I-1 occupancies, escape windows shall be provided, installed, and maintained in rooms used for sleeping below the fourth story.

2020 MN State Fire Code 1031.7

Emergency escape and rescue openings. Required emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools. Bars, grilles, grates or similar devices are allowed to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with this code and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

Exception: Window fall protection required by the building code.

2020 MN State Fire Code 505.1 Address identification.

New and existing buildings shall be provided with *approved* address identification. The address identification shall be legible and placed in a position that is visible from the street or road fronting the property. Address identification characters shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical letters. Numbers shall not be spelled out. Each character shall be not less than 4 inches high with a minimum stroke width of 1/2 inch. Where required by the *fire code official*, address identification shall be provided in additional *approved* locations to facilitate emergency response. Where access is by means of a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the *public way*, a monument, pole or other sign or means shall be used to identify the structure. Address identification shall be maintained.