

What is the scope of a Kirkwood Occupancy Inspection?

The inspection is a minimum property maintenance inspection made exclusively for the use of the City in determining the premises' compliance with the City's Property Maintenance Code for occupancy. The inspection is limited to observations readily visible without moving or removing any item. Confined spaces such as attics and crawl spaces are not inspected. Furnishings are not moved. Concealed, internal, or hidden damage or defects may not be observed.

The condition and operation of the heating, air conditioning, and water heater systems are not checked.

The overall condition of the roof and roofing materials is not inspected.

The electrical service panel cover is not removed, and electrical circuits are not checked.

What do Kirkwood Housing Inspectors look for?

The Inspector performs a visual inspection of the premises based on the Kirkwood Property Maintenance Code. The Building Commissioner's Office then issues a report detailing code violations, which require correction prior to the issuance of a new occupancy permit. The following is a **partial list** of the more common items which are included in the inspection:

Exterior Premises

- General Sanitation - No accumulation of rubbish, garbage, tree limbs or yard waste
- Drainage - No stagnant water or blocking of drainage course
- Driveways/Sidewalks - Good repair
- Weeds/Dead Trees/Dead & Dangerous Limbs - Cut or remove
- Rat Infestation - Remove
- Exhaust Vents to Outside - Good repair
- Sheds, Garages, Fences, Retaining Walls, Swimming Pools - Good repair, safe condition
- Unlicensed Motor Vehicles/Trailers - License or remove
- Sidewalks - Good repair

Exterior Structure

- Exterior Structure - Good repair, structurally sound, sanitary
- Exterior Painting - no peeling, flaking, or chipped paint
- Street Numbers - If missing or new, must be 4" high. Existing must be easily visible
- Foundation Walls - Plumb, fill, or repair cracks and breaks
- Exterior Walls - No holes, breaks, loose or rotting material; weather proofed and properly coated
- Roof - Tight, sound, does not admit rain, clear of limbs, branches
- Decorative Features - Good repair/safe condition
- Overhangs (canopies, awnings, etc.) - Good repair, safe condition
- Chimneys - Good repair, safe condition
- Handrails - Firmly fastened, good condition
- Window and Door Frames - Good repair, weather tight glazing, crack and hole free, operable windows capable of holding in open position with provided hardware
- Insect Screens - Properly maintained
- Doors and Hardware - Good repair, operable

Interior Structure

- Interior Structure - Good repair, structurally sound, sanitary condition
- Structural Integrity - All structural members

- Interior Surfaces - Good, clean, sanitary condition, no peeling paint, cracked or loose plaster, damaged wood, etc.
- Stairs and Railings - Good repair
- Handrails and Guardrails - Good repair
- Rubbish and Garbage - No accumulation
- Insect and Rat Infestation – Extermination required if found
- Bathroom Ventilation - All bathrooms shall have openable windows or a mechanical ventilation system.

Plumbing

- Plumbing Fixtures, Pipes, and System - Working order, free from leaks or defects, maintained as safe, sanitary and functional; properly installed and maintained (properly trapped, vented)
- Backflow Preventer & Vacuum Breaker - Required for lawn sprinkler systems and swimming pool hose bibs

Electrical and Mechanical

- Heat Supply - Required in good repair, safe condition
- Mechanical Equipment and Fireplaces - Properly installed, safe condition
- Fuel Burning Equipment - Good repair, safe condition, properly installed, properly connected to chimney or vent
- Garage installations require proper fire protection and adequate combustion air
- Mechanical Safety Controls -
 - Working Condition
 - Gas shut-off adjacent to appliances
- Minimum Electrical Service - 60 amp, 3 wire
- Electrical Service and Systems - Hazardous conditions must be corrected such as:
 - Low hanging electrical wires - when grade has been elevated or structure (fence, pool, shed) is under wire, then wire must be raised or relocated
 - Improper wiring or installation
- Deterioration or damage to wiring, fuses, panel, etc.
- Flush or semi-flush mounted floor receptacle outlets, unless provided with an approved listed cover
- Extension cords for other than short term, temporary use
- Lamp cord used as permanent wiring
- Conductor supported pendant switches or conductor supported pendant lighting fixtures
- Loose or hanging wires
- Frayed or bare wires
- Open terminal fixtures are prohibited
- Outlets used by washing machines, dryers, sump pumps must be on a grounded three-wire circuit within four feet of the appliance (No extension cords or plug adaptors)
- Grounded-type receptacles which are improperly or inadequately grounded.
- Garage door openers must have receptacle within three feet, (No extension cords or plug adaptors) or properly hard wire
- Minimum of two electrical outlets required in each habitable room
- Minimum of one electrical outlet required in every bathroom
- Light fixture required in halls, stairways, water closets, bathrooms, laundry rooms, and furnace rooms
- GFI required on all receptacles within six feet of water source, in garage, on exterior, and in unfinished basement, except those for dedicated appliances.

Safety Items

- Graspable Handrails - A flight of stairs with more than four risers shall have a graspable handrail on one side, 30" to 42" above tread (except in yard areas which are not part of the egress to a structure.)
- Guardrails - Stairs, landings, decks, balconies, or any walking surface over 30" above grade shall have guardrails with intermediates
- Swimming Pool Guards/Fences -
 - Fence and gate - Good repair and working order
 - Minimum 48" fence height
- Gates - Self-latching, self-closing, with latch 48" above ground or pool side at highest point on gate
- No electrical wires over pool or within 10' of outer edge unless 22.5' or more above water surface
- Doors - Lock must be operable from egress side without key or special knowledge
- Emergency Escape - Sleeping rooms must have openable window or exterior door; or two means of approved egress from room
- Fire Resistance Ratings - Must be maintained; no penetrations in fire rated walls unless penetration is fire rated
- Attached Garages -
 - Beneath dwelling - 5/8" gypsum board on garage side, on all ceilings, partitions, wall between house and garage, and structural members, no penetrations unless fire rated; 1-3/4" solid core door
 - Attached to Dwelling - 1/2" gypsum board on garage side between house and garage; 1-3/4" solid core door - No penetrations greater than 4" diameter and no more than 3 penetrations
- Smoke Detectors - In each bedroom; in the vicinity of the bedrooms, and on each level, including the basement.

What to expect during the inspection

- The typical inspection will take 30 minutes to 2 hours depending upon the size and condition of the property.
- Please confine your pet during the inspection.
- You are welcome to go with the inspector if you wish.
- The inspector will be happy to answer your questions, time permitting.
- A detailed verbal or written report cannot be issued at the time of the inspection. A written report will be mailed to the person requesting the inspection in a few days. Anyone can obtain a copy of the report at City Hall in the Building Commissioner's Office after the report is ready.

What if there are code deficiencies?

A few days after the inspection, the City will issue a report listing the results to the person who requested the inspection. In accordance with Missouri Law, the inspection report becomes a public record and will be provided to the public upon request. When the problems are remedied, you will need to contact the Building Commissioner's Office for a re-inspection at (314) 822-5823.

Some of the corrective work which is required as a result of the Property Maintenance Inspection may require building, electrical, mechanical, or plumbing permits. These are separate permits, and this work must be performed by Kirkwood Licensed Contractors. The Housing Inspector may not approve such corrective work until it is inspected and approved by the Building Inspector, Electrical or Mechanical Inspector, or the Plumbing Inspector, in accordance with the type of permit that was issued.

What about private inspectors?

It is recommended that home buyers have an inspection from a private inspection company. Private inspections can give the buyer a detailed report of the home's physical and operational condition, and can

help the buyer render an opinion on the condition of the house.

What number of occupants are allowed?

A residential dwelling is limited to the number of occupants by the following two conditions:

MINIMUM AREA REQUIREMENTS			
SPACE	MINIMUM AREA IN SQUARE FEET		
# of People	1-2 PEOPLE	3-5 PEOPLE	6 OR PEOPLE
Living Room (1)	No requirements	120	150
Dining Room (1)	No requirements	80	100
Kitchen	50	50	60
<i>(1) May be combined</i>			
FOR EACH SLEEPING ROOM*			
Area Of Room In Sq. Ft.	# Of Persons		
Less than 70 or any kitchen, hall, or public space	May not be used as a sleeping room		
70 to 99	1 Occupant		
100 to 149	2 Occupants		
150 to 199	3 Occupants		
200 & Above	4 Occupants plus 1 for each additional 50 sq. ft.		
<i>* Sleeping rooms must have proper emergency egress</i>			

Who can I call for more information?

Call the Building Commissioner’s Office at 822-5823, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.