

Key points on the Rental Registration and Inspection Ordinance

- This is not designed to punish landlords, especially those who have been responsible for the health and welfare of their tenants. Rather, it is an effort to ensure that tenants in Greenfield live in apartments that meet basic health and safety standards.
- This ordinance takes the responsibility for reporting housing health and safety issues off the shoulders of the tenants and shares it with the landlord. The annual housing health and safety review provides a time when landlord and tenant can deal with any issues with the unit. This is a general review.....e.g. no holes in the walls, electricity and water are okay, smoke detectors are in place, etc. It ensures that everything is adequate for the tenant's health and safety in the unit. It protects the landlord because the review is done annually and the landlord has annual documentation of the status of the unit. If an inspection is done in January that states that all is okay and in May there are major holes in the walls, the landlord can use that information in dealing with a problem tenant.
- Although several city departments have lists of rental properties, there is no overall list that includes all of them. Housing Greenfield learned this through our 2025 door to door study of key downtown areas. The lack of a central list means that fire fighters or police may not have correct information needed in an emergency and the city overall is not receiving taxes that it is due.
- The \$30 per unit per year registration fee funds the work of an additional inspector who will be able to deal with housing problems and assist landlords in understanding what their health and safety responsibilities are. This fee amounts to \$2.50 per month. We expect that this can be paid by most landlords as part of their cost of doing business and would not be tacked on as a rental increase to the tenants.
- In the development of this ordinance, we researched how other communities deal with this issue. We studied large cities like Boston and Los Angeles and communities near us like Amherst, Northampton and Hadley. The ordinance that we have developed takes what we believe are the best and most appropriate features of those ordinances and applies them to the realities of Greenfield.
- We have conferred with city officials about this ordinance, especially the Health Director and the Assessor to ensure that we were not overstepping our bounds or making work for them that their departments could not handle. We have been assured that the workload, the fees and the fines mentioned in the ordinance are appropriate for Greenfield.