

# Are you a Renter or Landlord in Creston?

## Get to know the Rental Standards



As part of the Town of Creston's efforts to improve rental housing and support renters in a limited market, a new bylaw was adopted by Council outlining a minimum standard of rental housing in Creston.

The Rental Standards of Maintenance Bylaw includes regulations to ensure the quality, safety, and livability of rental units. The bylaw addresses standards related to water leaks or damage, provision of heat, fire safety, functionality of doors and windows, pests, and mould.

The bylaw, which is only applicable within the municipal boundaries, provides detail on minimum standards

for heating systems, hot water, infestations, exterior walls, roofing, elevators, fire escapes, etc. If a landlord refuses to make certain repairs, then a Bylaw Complaint can be made to the Town of Creston.

Upon complaint, the Public Safety Compliance Officer may inspect the rental property and work with the landlord to correct identified issues.

This may lead the Public Safety Compliance Officer to issue warnings and fines to a landlord, or otherwise enforce the bylaw. Further, the bylaw could be used as evidence for a repair order at a Residential Tenancy Branch dispute resolution hearing.





# Rental Property Standard of Maintenance

## Bylaw Summary

The Rental Property Standard of Maintenance bylaw sets out minimum standards for rental housing to ensure the quality, safety, and livability of rental units. The bylaw applies to all residential rental properties including rental apartments, rented condo units, secondary suites, garden suites, and unauthorized suites. Below is an overview of some of the key items in the bylaw.

### Plumbing and Water

- Fixtures and pipes free from leaks
- Hot water available
- Drinkable water provided
- Areas damaged by water due to plumbing leaks must be repaired or replaced

### Flooring

- Floors shall be maintained in a clean condition, reasonably smooth, level, and free of loose, warped or decayed boards, depressions, protrusions, mould, deterioration, or other defects which may create health, fire or accident hazards
- Bathroom floors shall be covered with smooth moisture resistant floors finishes

### Maintenance of Services & Utilities

- Utilities should not be shut off without proper notice and only for a reasonable period of time as needed for repair or replacement

### Exterior

- Exterior walls, awnings, ventilating systems, and other outdoor attachments/ extensions are maintained, safe, and protected

### Heating Systems

- Heat systems in place and maintained (no portable heaters for main heating source)
- Heat must be turned on when tenants request

### Door, Windows and Ventilation

- Exterior doors and windows are maintained, weather tight, and capable of being securely closed and locked
- Every room has ventilation, either mechanical or natural

### Electrical Systems and Lighting

- Electrical wiring and lighting equipment maintained in good order
- Lighting in each room and common area

### Sanitary Facilities

- Every unit shall have access to a hand basin, toilet and bathtub or shower that are in good working order
- At least one hand basin and one toilet shall be provided and maintained in good working order for every 5 sleeping units



## Appliances and Other Facilities

- Appliances and other facilities and services supplied by the landlord are maintained in good working order

## Mould

If a tenant reports mould to the landlord, the landlord must respond in a timely way and take all reasonable steps to eliminate the mould from all structures and surfaces of a residential property

## Elevators

- Elevators are maintained in a safe, clean, and operational condition
- If an elevator is out of service, the landlord must notify each tenant, in writing, as soon as possible and provide regular updates on repairs
- Landlord must ask tenants to make their needs known and the landlord and tenant will create a plan to meet those needs within 48 hours

## Fire Safety and Exits

- Closures (i.e., walls and roof), sprinkler systems, fire alarm and detection systems are maintained in accordance with the current BC Building and Fire Codes
- Each rental unit shall have a working smoke alarm in accordance with the current BC Fire Code
- Exits are maintained and free of obstructions

## Structural Integrity

Structural elements (i.e. roofs, stairs, railings, porches, deck joists, rafters, beams, columns, foundations, floors, walls, and ceilings) are maintained in good order and provide structural integrity

## Parking or Storage Garages

- No machinery, boats, vehicles, trailers or parts of them that are abandoned or inoperative, or rubbish or discarded furniture shall be kept in a parking garage or parking area as per BC Fire Code

## Pest Control

- Tenants and landlords should take steps to avoid infestations and eliminate them if they occur (i.e., through sanitation, removing waste, or moving and treating belongings for a pest infestation)

## Other areas addressed in bylaw

- Foundations
- Gas systems
- Cooking facilities
- Basements
- Laundry facilities

**Please note:** This bylaw compliments and aligns with existing resources provided by the Province, under the Residential Tenancy Act. It provides expectations to landlords and assists the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) with a framework to measure compliance in Creston.



Visit [creston.ca](http://creston.ca) to view the entire Rental Standards of Maintenance Bylaw No. 1951

# Tenant Responsibilities

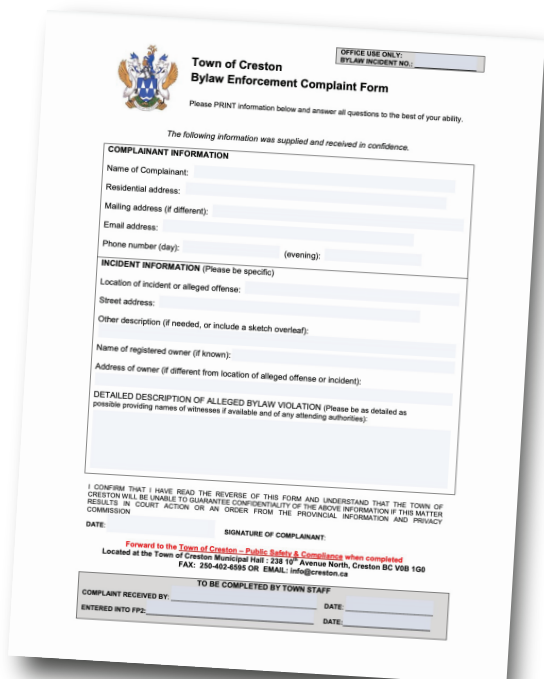
According to section 32(2) of the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA), you have a legal responsibility to maintain reasonable health, cleanliness, and sanitary standards in your rental unit. Tenants are generally responsible for the following repair and maintenance issues:

- Reasonable maintenance of carpets during the tenancy;
  - Steam cleaning or shampooing the carpets at the end of tenancies lasting one year or longer;
  - Steam cleaning or shampooing the carpets at the end of tenancies of any length involving pets or smoking;
  - Cleaning marks on the walls;
  - Removal of garbage from the rental unit;
  - Replacing light bulbs;
  - Routine yard maintenance, such as cutting grass and clearing snow (if you have exclusive use of the yard)
  - Minor mould issues
  - Repairing excessive damage from nail holes
- See your tenancy agreement and RTB Policy Guideline 1 for more information.

Improving your rental unit: If you want to make changes to your rental unit, such as painting the walls, ask your landlord for written consent. Making changes without permission could result in you owing your landlord some money, or having to restore the unit back to its original condition before moving out.

Wear and tear: Even the most well-behaved and respectful tenants can live in rental units that start falling apart due to old age. According to section 32(4) of the RTA, you are not responsible for wear and tear that results from reasonable use of your rental unit. However, there is a difference between “reasonable wear and tear” and “damage”. Reasonable wear and tear refers to deterioration due to aging or other natural forces. If you, your guests, or your pets cause damage beyond wear and tear, such as a broken window, you are responsible for that damage. Contact your landlord and work out a solution for how the repair will be completed. In most cases, your landlord will ask for money to hire a qualified professional. See RTB Policy Guideline 1 for more information.

## Bylaw Complaint Process



The form is titled "Town of Creston Bylaw Enforcement Complaint Form". It includes a header with the town logo and contact information. The form is divided into several sections: "COMPLAINANT INFORMATION" (Name, Residential address, Mailing address, Email address, Phone number), "INCIDENT INFORMATION" (Location, Street address, Other description, Name of registered owner, Address of owner), and "DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED BYLAW VIOLATION". There is also a section for the complainant's signature and date, and a section for town staff to record the complaint received.

If you have a concern regarding compliance with the Rental Standards of Maintenance Bylaw, the Bylaw Compliance Department requires you to fill out a written Bylaw Complaint form with your name, address, and phone number as well as a detailed description of the alleged bylaw violation.

**A Bylaw Complaint form can be obtained online at [letstalk.creston.ca/bylaw-complaints](http://letstalk.creston.ca/bylaw-complaints) or at Town Hall.**

Forms may be received in various ways:

- In person at the Town Office
- By email - [info@creston.ca](mailto:info@creston.ca)
- By fax at (250) 428-9164

**CRESTON VALLEY**  
TOWN of CRESTON