

Borough of Bellmawr

Construction/Code Enforcement Office

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Home C.O. Inspection Checklist – Requirement Explanation & Details

EXTERIOR:

1. **Visible 911 ID** – A house number located on the dwelling visible from the street so emergency services can locate promptly (minimum of 4" in height)
2. **Steps** –
 - A. **Concrete** – No cracks that could potentially cause a tripping hazard with an event, inconsistent, finish throughout – all risers and treads equal.
 - B. **Wood** – Same as above - & all risers closed so that a 4" diameter ball will not penetrate.
3. **Walkways** – (public sidewalks & service walkways to house entrance ways) – cracked blocks where there is a change in elevation at the crack must be replaced.
4. **Ramps** – Handicapped ramps are required to comply with the 2006 International Residential Code, New Jersey Edition.
5. **Guard Rails** – Required when the height of a porch, landing, or set of stairs exceeds 30" to the grade below. The height of guardrail shall be not less than 36" and no opening shall allow a 4" ball to pass through.
6. **Handrails** – Any set of steps with 3 or more risers must have a graspable handrail on a minimum of 1 side. The handrail diameter must be a minimum of 1-1/4" and maximum of 2-5/8. The height must be between 30 & 38" (measured from the nosing of the steps.)
7. **Obstruction/Hazards** – The property must be free and clear of debris and unsafe conditions that could cause injury. While this is a grey area, some examples would be: damaged fencing, illegal extension cords to a shed, etc.
8. **Grass/Weeds/Debris** – The property must be free of high grass, weeds, overgrowth, dead trees, animal excrement; along with miscellaneous trash/debris.
9. **Perimeter Grading** – All water flow must be away from foundation walls to eliminate potential infiltration to basement or crawl areas. Minimum pitch for grading is 1/8" per foot without depressions to create puddling along the foundation wall.
10. **Gutter & Spouts** – Gutter and spouts need to be securely attached to dwelling and free & clear of debris. Gutters need to be an all facia areas shedding water.
11. **Splash Blocks** – Ends of down spouts need to have a diverter at the end of a leader to carry water away from the dwelling and diffuse the flow so not to create an erosion situation.
12. **Basement or crawl spaces** –
 - A. **Foundation Openings** –for basements, windows need to be secure – no broken glass, and sealed against infiltration of weather & insects. For crawl spaces, vents need to be secure, operable, free and clear of debris & sealed from infiltration of weather & infestation.
 - B. **Access secure & weather proof** – for basement exterior entries such as Bilco doors, they need to be operable & dry. For crawl spaces, the access needs to be secured to the dwelling, weather proof, & sealed against infiltration of insects or rodents.
13. **Sump Pump** – If a crotch exists, a pump must be present. (Otherwise a pump is not required.) If significant water is present in the crawl space or basement, a pump and perimeter drain COULD be required.

- A. **Electrical Connection** – if NEW, it must be GFI protected. The receptacle needs to be in the immediate vicinity of the pump for direct plug in. **No extension cords are allowed!**
- B. **Backflow Preventer** – An in line check valve is required to keep water from returning to the crock and reactivation the float switch.
- C. **Discharge** – Must not be connected to the sanitary sewer as it is not allowed by law. It is to be discharged outside the foundation wall, no closer than 10 ft. of an adjoining property, and cannot use a nuisance to either a neighbor or the general public. If at all possible, it should be connected to a storm collector pipe.
- D. **Vapor Barrier in tact** – if no concrete floor exists, at a minimum, the entire floor area must be covered with an approved material to eliminate moisture from the ground affecting the frame and foundation of the dwelling. Six millimeter plastic in one piece if possible, covering the complete floor area is compliant.

INTERIOR:

1. **Infestation** – Visible sign of pests (insects, rodents, &/or critters) would require a certification from a licensed pest control operator. The certification would acknowledge treatment and eradication.
2. **Handrails & Guardrails** - *Same criteria listed on exterior*
3. **Bathroom Venting** – Each bathroom/powder room requires an operable window or exhaust venting to the outside.
4. **GFI Receptacles** – Requires at all of the following locations:
 - Any receptacle located in a bathroom/powder room
 - Any receptacle located on the exterior of the dwelling or a garage
 - Any receptacle above a kitchen countertop or mounted on the exterior of a kitchen cabinet
 - Any receptacle inside a garage below 80” above the floor

***While receptacles are required in all of these locations for new construction, they are not required if they do not exist already. No new receptacles need to be installed, but existing receptacles do need to be GFI protected.

5. **Flooring** – Bathrooms, kitchens, and any laundry rooms (potential wet areas) require moisture resistant flooring. The flooring is required to be in fair condition absent of tears, missing tiles, etc. Moisture resistant is considered: linoleum, vinyl tile, etc.
6. **Switch/receptacle cover** – All switches, receptacles, & junction boxes are required to have secure covers that are intact with no voids exposed at the wall.
7. **Electrical fixtures** – All fixtures must be securely attached with the appropriate globe, or cover lenses. No open bulbs except as permitted in basements, attics, crawls, or garages where they are permitted by code for utility purposes.
8. **Panel Box** – Service cable to box must be securely fastened to dwelling in good condition. Frayed, worn, or detached cables need to be replaced. The cover to the panel box must be secure. All breaker slots must be filled or blanked off. In addition, all breakers must be properly labeled.
9. **A/C Disconnect** – All central air conditioning units need a disconnect switch for the 220V line adjacent to the unit on the outside of the dwelling.
10. **Window Glass** – All windows must be intact and free of broken panes of glass.
11. **Egress Windows Operational** – All bedroom windows must easily open & close for emergency escape or entry by emergency personnel. In the event of a room (being utilized as a den) could potentially be used as a bedroom, it will be inspected as a bedroom.
12. **DKD (Double Key Deadbolt)** –REMOVE! **Must** be keyless egress.

13. **Window Guards - (Only required for rental properties)** – Any tenant with a child 10 years of age or younger that have windowsills 6” or higher, may request window guards to prevent a child from falling out of the windows. ***If requested, the landlord must install the approved window guards.
14. **Water Heaters** – Require the following:
 - **Chimney Connection** – all connections must be tight & secure. No voids are permitted where metal pipe connects to masonry. This can be accomplished by approved mortar/cement or fire rated caulk.
 - **Relief Valve** - The correct valve must be in place to prevent the buildup of pressure in the water heater & the potential for explosion.
 - **Floor Discharge** – A pipe from the relief valve terminating within 2” – 6” of the floor, to prevent physical harm in the event the valve releases pressure & hot water.
15. **Water Pipes & Drain Pipes** – NO LEAKS!
16. **Fixtures** – All faucets & fixtures operable, securely attached & sealed. No leaks, cracks or broken handles.
17. **Toilet Mounting** – Toilet securely attached to the floor. The base is required to be caulked to the floor.
18. **Hot Water Controls** – Operable, sealed, & securely attached on the LEFT hand side.
19. **Cold Water Controls** - Operable, sealed, & securely attached on the RIGHT hand side.
20. **Mold** – Special attention to areas of potential leakage like kitchens, baths, windows, basement & walls.
21. **Heating System** – Must be operable & in working order.
 - All Panels must be in place & attachable as designed.
 - Chimney connection requirements are the same as those for the hot water heater listed above.
22. **Smoke Detectors** – At a minimum, a battery operated detector is required on each floor – including basement.
23. **Carbon Monoxide Detectors** – If there is an oil or gas fired appliance in the building, carbon monoxide detectors are required in the vicinity of the bedrooms. If the bedrooms exist on multiple floor levels, then a detector would be required on each level.
24. **Fire Extinguisher** – The extinguisher should consist of an ABC type, rated no larger than 10lbs and be located within 10 feet of the kitchen area.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

In addition to the checklist, there are a few other aspects to the inspection that may or may not come into play.

- **Work completed without permits** – Many properties inspected to date have had work requiring a permit done without a permit and without the proper inspections. Work ranging from new furnaces, air conditioning, hot water heaters, decks, swimming pools, & even finished basements or attics and additions have been cited. Permits, just like the work that was done, are attached to the property – not the owner! Therefore, the current owner assumes responsibility for what they purchased; regardless of whether or not they did their due diligence prior to their purchase of the property.
- **Open Permits** – Any permits that have not had their final inspections or been issued either a CA (Certificate of Approval) or CO (Certificate of Occupancy) for the work done, need to close out the open permit. This can be accomplished by scheduling the required remaining inspections, receiving a “pass” for those inspections, and obtaining the appropriate certificate.

The above is an explanation developed to assist homeowners and real estate agents with our Borough Home Resale inspection requirements for Certificate of Occupancy. It is an attempt to explain the requirements in Layman's Terms as to what the inspector is looking for in the inspection. While it is intended to explain the checklist items, you are still encouraged to call the construction office if you have any questions about any of the listed items before your inspection.