



City of Grass Valley City Council Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Inspection of Multiple Unit Buildings intended for Human Occupancy Policy

CEQA: Not a project

Recommendation: That the City Council approve the Policy for Inspection of Multiple-Unit Buildings Intended for Human Occupancy, establishing procedures for the inspection and enforcement of health and safety standards in multi-unit buildings, in compliance with applicable California Health & Safety Code sections.

Prepared by: Taylor Whittingslow, Deputy City Manager

Council Meeting Date: 10/22/2024

Date Prepared: 10/17/2024

Agenda: Consent

Background Information: Multiple-unit buildings are critical to housing in the City of Grass Valley, and it is essential to ensure that these buildings meet health and safety standards. State law, particularly the California Health & Safety Code sections 17920.3 and 17920.10, outlines specific standards regarding substandard housing conditions and lead hazards in residential buildings. This proposed policy aims to address the inspection of such buildings and the handling of violations.

The proposed policy will provide clear procedures for building inspectors and code enforcement officers to follow when investigating complaints, inspecting units, and addressing any substandard or hazardous conditions that could affect other units in a building. The policy will also ensure compliance with state regulations while promoting tenant safety and landlord accountability.

The policy outlines a step-by-step procedure for inspectors to follow when they receive a complaint about a possible violation in a multiple-unit building. The key points of the policy are summarized below:

1. Respond to Initial Complaint: When a complaint is received regarding a potential violation, inspectors must:
 - a. Inspect the specific unit or portion of the building that is in question.
 - b. Document any violations found, including substandard conditions under Health & Safety Code section 17920.3 or lead hazards under section 17920.10.
 - c. Advise the property owner or operator of necessary corrective actions and schedule a reinspection.
2. Consider Other Units: If a violation is found in one unit, inspectors must evaluate whether it is likely that the violation could affect additional units in the building

based on professional judgment and specific factors, including the building type, age, and history of violations.

3. Determine Scope of Additional Inspections: Inspectors should make reasonable attempts to inspect adjacent units and others as warranted by the scope of the issue. If widespread violations are suspected, a larger percentage of the units should be inspected. If severe building-wide conditions are detected, all units may be subject to inspection.
4. Contact the Property Owner: Upon determining that additional inspections are needed, inspectors must notify the property owner or landlord, explaining the inspection process and providing a notice of violation or order to abate where necessary.
5. Schedule Reinspection: Reinspection will be scheduled to ensure compliance after corrective actions are advised—the policy guides scheduling and coordinating these inspections, especially in multiple-unit cases.
6. Address Non-Responses or Refusals: If residents do not respond or refuse access to their units, alternate units may be inspected. If unsafe conditions are suspected, the City may seek an inspection warrant to ensure the health and safety of residents.
7. Free Reports on Request: Complaining tenants or occupants must be provided with free copies of inspection reports and citations. If the inspection reveals conditions affecting multiple units, reports must also be provided to all potentially affected tenants.
8. Fees: The City may impose fees if a material violation of health and safety standards is found, but the policy prohibits inspection fees unless a violation is confirmed. The City may, however, charge fees to support a rental property inspection program.

The proposed Policy for Inspection of Multiple-Unit Buildings Intended for Human Occupancy promotes safe living environments by establishing a clear and consistent inspection process. It ensures that violations in one unit are properly assessed for their potential impact on other units, supports tenant safety, and holds property owners accountable for maintaining their buildings in compliance with health and safety standards.

Council Goals/Objectives: The execution of this action attempts to achieve the following Strategic Goals: Goal #6 - Safe Place to Live, Work and Play

Fiscal Impact: None **Funds Available:** N/A **Account #:** N/A

Reviewed by: City Manager

Attachments:

1. Policy for Inspection of Multiple-Unit Buildings Intended for Human Occupancy
2. Sample Health & Safety Code Violations Inspection Report