

TENANT RESPONSIBILITY

City of Cortland Code Enforcement

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Housing laws in New York can be very complicated, and many tenants are unaware that they have certain responsibilities as a tenant. This guide is to inform tenants of their basic responsibilities:

1. Batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, within an apartment, must be maintained by the person residing in the apartment.
2. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors shall not be removed, damaged, or disabled in any way.
3. The landlord and the Code Enforcement Office shall be contacted if at any time there is not smoke detector in the sleeping area of a residence.
4. Unapproved and unlisted electrical extension cords shall not be used in place of permanent wiring, shall not cross any paths, shall not be placed under rugs and shall not be a tripping hazard.
5. Self-closing doors shall not be removed or shall they be blocked in the open position.
6. Sprinkler systems shall not be tampered with, nor shall sprinkler heads or piping be used to hang anything from.
7. Exit lights and signs shall not be tampered with.
8. Fire extinguishers are not to be used for any purpose other than that for which they were designed.
9. Electrical light fixtures and other heat generating appliances shall not be covered with fabric or other combustible materials.
10. Christmas lights shall not be hung by nails or tacks so as to create a fire hazard.
11. Never leave candles unattended and only burn candles on a non-combustible surface.
12. Hasp and pad lock devices shall not be installed on any doors, which must be opened, in order to exit from any room, apartment or building. Installed locks shall be readily operable from egress side.
13. Barbeques shall not be used on, in or within 10 feet of any residential building.

14. Portable un-vented heaters are prohibited.
15. Doors, walls and ceilings must be kept in decent condition.
16. Occupants may not store or place anything in such a way that it might block or prevent the use of a means of exiting a room, apartment, or building.
17. Storage of flammables is prohibited, other storage shall be neat, orderly, kept to a minimum and in designated locations.
18. Windows shall not be broken or covered with plastic and shall be maintained open-able at all times. Screens shall not be torn.
19. Garbage shall be temporarily stored in a designated appropriate container, out of public view, and placed at the curb no sooner than 5 pm on the previous designated collection day.
20. Cooking and refrigeration appliances, kitchens and bathrooms must be kept in a working and sanitary condition.
21. Interior furniture shall not be stored or left outdoors, including the porch.
22. The exterior of the premises shall be free of litter and objectionable waste.
23. Vehicles which are not road worthy, uninspected, and unregistered shall not be stored openly on the premises.
24. Parking in front yards or other unapproved locations is prohibited.

In Summary....

The landlord is responsible for providing a safe, clean dwelling. The tenant is responsible to maintain their space in a safe and clean manner. Should you feel that your dwelling does not meet minimum standards, you should file a complaint with the Code Enforcement Office to assist with habitability issues. You can contact our office via phone at 607-753-1741, visit us at 25 Court Street, or visit our website at www.cortland.org/city/fire.

Websites of Interest:

City of Cortland: www.cortland.org

Cortland County: www.cortland-co.org

Attorney General: www.oag.state.ny.us

NYS Division of Human Rights:

www.dhr.state.ny.us

US Dept of Housing and Urban Development:

www.hud.gov

Legal Services of Central NY: www.lscny.org