



# Don't Rent Trouble

## Advice on checking out apartments

Finding a decent place to rent requires thorough inspections of apartments and the strength to keep looking when apartments don't pan out. We recommend you take along a:

- flashlight
- light bulb
- hairdryer
- pen or pencil
- this checklist

These will be your inspection tools. Use the following list to check for problems.

### Electrical

- Turn on each switch to see if it works.
- If there is no bulb in the socket, use yours.
- Check every outlet by plugging in your hair dryer. Obviously, there are problems if a fuse blows out or the dryer won't go on.
- If outlets or sockets don't work, there could be dan-

gerous defects in the electrical system that could cause a fire.

### Plumbing

- Turn on the sink and bathtub faucets to see if they work or leak.
- Flush the toilet to see if it operates properly or leaks.
- Do the drains operate properly?

### Look up

- Are ceilings water stained or cracked?
- Are walls water stained or cracked?
- These may indicate a leaking roof, defective rain gutters, or defective plumbing upstairs. Water damage could cause the ceiling or walls to collapse.

### Safety

- Are there smoke detectors in the building?

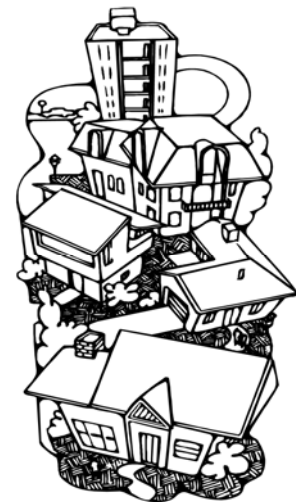
- Are there deadbolt locks on the apartment doors and the exterior doors?

### Windows

- Are there storms and screens?
- Very gently push on the windows to see if they are secure or loose in the frame.

### Rodents and roaches

- Open cabinets and immediately shine in flashlight



to detect roaches. Look for roach eggs.

- Look for rat and mouse holes and droppings in the back of cabinets and closets.

## **Basement**

- Be sure to go into the basement to check on the condition of the furnace. (Make sure there is a furnace.)
- Even in summer, push the thermostat up to see if the furnace actually works.

- Look at the water heater to see if it is leaking.

- If you notice any serious problems, think carefully about the chance you'll be taking with your family's health and safety if you rent the apartment.

- Ask the landlord to put promised repairs in writing. But ask yourself: "If he didn't make these repairs for the last tenant, why should I believe he'll make the repairs for me?"

If your landlord doesn't make promised repairs, call your

local building inspection department to request an inspection.

For more information, or to file a complaint, contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at:

**(800) 422-7128**

**FAX: (608) 224-4939**

**TTY: (608) 224-5058**

**E-MAIL:**

**[datcphottline@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:datcphottline@datcp.state.wi.us)**

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