

Occupant Maintenance Responsibilities According to the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code (aka Housing Code)

The Massachusetts State Sanitary Code's primary purpose is to **protect the health, safety and well-being of the occupants of housing** and of the general public. You, the occupant play a vital role in this protection outlined in the Code concerning maintenance of and access to and from your housing unit. Listed below are your responsibilities:

Maintenance

If you install any appliances (like refrigerators, clothes washing machines and dryers, dishwashers, stoves, garbage grinders and electrical fixtures), make sure they are free from leaks, barriers and other defects (Section A of CMR 410.352).

Make sure that all toilets, wash basins, sinks, showers, bathtubs, stoves, refrigerators and dishwashers are in a clean and sanitary condition and are maintained (Sections B of CMR 410.352).



***Quick Tip* Stoves should be free of food and grease as they attract pests and grease is a fire hazard.**

Cleaning & Reasonable Care

Try as much as you can to care for the floors, walls, doors, windows, ceilings, roof, staircases, porches, chimneys, and other structural elements of your unit (CMR 410.505).



Pest Infestation

If your building only has one unit, **you** must keep it free from all infestations (rodents, skunks, cockroaches and insect) and are responsible for extermination. The owner must maintain any screen, fence or other structural element necessary to keep rodents and skunks from entering (Section A of CMR410.550).

FYI

- 1) If your building has one unit, or if you rent a condominium unit, you must keep it pest free.
- 2) If the owner is responsible for pest elimination, occupants must provide access and are expected to cooperate with pest control efforts and that includes preparing the unit for pest control treatment.



***Quick Tip* If you have pets, make sure their food and water is not left out after feeding, is properly stored and that any cages, litter boxes or bedding are properly cleaned.**



Garbage

Keep your unit free of garbage, rubbish, other filth or causes of sickness (Section B of CMR 410.602).

Occupants must place trash in receptacles in the designated storage area.

If your building contains less than three dwelling units, **you** must keep the stairways leading to the unit and the next landing unless someone occupies that unit and can clean it themselves (Section C of CMR 410.602).



Egress

Make sure all exits or passageways are not blocked (CMR 410.451).

Reasonable Access

As long as there is notice, if possible by appointment, you must give the owner of your unit or his representatives access to your unit to make necessary repairs or alterations (CMR 410.810).



The entirety of the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code for Housing can be found on the City of Boston's website: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/sanitary.asp>