

Tel. 781-391-1424

House Check List

Fax. 781-396-8316

D & A Construction, Corp.

**P. O. Box 114
Medford, MA 02155**

**November 15, 2002
October 24, 2003**

Hello

After the meeting of ILG the other day, I thought that a starters list for streamlining house operations would be helpful. Please review the short list of items below.

This list does not include items pertaining to Victual codes or food preparation; however your kitchens are treated like commercial kitchens and are inspected periodically by the health inspector.

Remember it is illegal for unlicensed people to:

- Do electrical work
- Set or reset fire alarms or smoke detectors
- Touch the sprinklers or sprinkler systems
- Perform plumbing work
- Perform structural work

It can be dangerous for persons without experience to adjust or work on boilers, flues to boilers and safety devices that control boilers.

The table below is probably not a complete list. Each house is a little different. You may have potential hazards that can be added to the list below. I have been associated with MIT and the Independent Living Groups for almost fifteen years. This list was generated from my experience. It is intended as a starter list that you can build on.

You should have professionals that are versed in The Mass. Building Code 780 CMR, The Mass. Plumbing Code 248 CMR, The Mass. Electrical Code 527 CMR, Pertinent sections of The Mass Fire Code 105 CMR, State Sanitary Code 105CMR and 101 Life Safety. Also note that the Boston Fire has their own Code in addition to the State Code. This is not a complete list, but these cover most of the issues the houses have to deal with. For instance the Elevator Code 524 CMR only applies to a very few buildings and The Americans with Disabilities ACT is Federally enforced.

It is also dangerous and illegal for any one to:

- Chalk a fire or smoke door open.
- Remove bulbs from emergency lights
- Use the fire alarm phone for personal calls.
- Place obstructions to passage or reduce the width of any egress corridor or exit way.
- Leave combustible material in stair well that are used for exit-way access.



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Item	Task/Inspection	When	Who, How	Notes
Egresses In Your room	Make sure there is nothing to trip on from your bed to your bedroom door. If your bedroom is on an exit-way access corridor, make sure it is closed when you are sleeping.	Every night	Each person.	
From Your Room	Make sure that there is nothing on the floor or in the way of free travel from your bedroom door to the stairwell to the ground level.	Every night	Each person.	When you leave your room, there should be visible and working exit signs. Emergency lights should light the exit-way.
From Your Room	Make sure that your window can open in case you can not get out of your room. If you have a fire escape, don't put furniture or planters in the way.	Every night	Each person.	



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In the Stairwell	Make sure that there are no stair well doors being held open by any door stops. Make sure that there is nothing in the way of free passage to the escape level. Make sure that there are no combustibles in the stairwell.	Every night	Each person.	There should be lights working in the stairwell. There should be emergency lights located in the stairwell and lighting the exit route. There should be lighted exit sign(s) at the escape level(s).
From Stairwell to Exit.	Make sure that you have clear and free passage from the stairwell exit door to the building exist door.	Every night	Each person.	There should be lights working from the stairwell to the exit. There should be emergency lights located outside of the stairwell and lighting the way to the exit. There should be lighted exit signs at the exit.
Life Safety Devices				
Fire Alarm Panel	Trouble on panel	Daily	?	Call Alarm Company and contractor
Pull Stations	Pulled	Quarterly	Alarm Company	
Smoke detectors	Blinking	Daily	Alarm Company	
Fire Pumps	Run unit	6 months	Sprinkler Contractor	
Emergency lights	Push test button	Beginning & End of each semester and before holiday breaks.	Student or Professional	
Exist signs	Push test button	Beginning & End of each semester and before holiday breaks.	tenant or Professional	
Fire Escapes	City & State	Annually	Architect/Engineer	Re-certification is required every five years.



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Boiler Plant	Review operation in spring after heating season.	Continuous Fall	Professional	Any problems that came up during heating season that could not be addressed without jeopardizing the house should be evaluated and quantified
Common area heat	Unit Heaters Baseboard Radiation Fan coil units	Fall, unless the unit stops during the winter.	Professional	
Rooms	Check Zone Valves & T stats	Fall	Tenant/Professional	
General Safety Issues				
Housekeeping	Keep chemicals out of kitchen where they could mix with food and out of boiler room where they may be combustible	Daily	Tenant	
Boiler room	Keep anything that burns out of the boiler room.	Daily	Tenant	
Kitchen, Grease Trap	Check to see if it needs to be emptied	Monthly	Cook, Person who is charge of cleaning the kitchen	Grease traps must be cleaned professionally and the contents disposed of.
Corridors	Keep litter and furniture out of the corridors.	Daily	Tenant	
Dishwasher	Make sure that water temperature of rinse cycle is 180 degrees F	Semester start	Tenant	



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Stove Hood	Make sure that fan works	Each Semester	Professional	A professional must visit and certify that unit is working
Fire Extinguishers	Dial must be in the safe green area	Each semester	Professional	A professional must visit and certify that unit is working
Space heaters	Keep away from combustibles	Daily	Tenant	
Halogen lamps	Keep away from combustibles	Daily	Tenant	Caused many fires
Incandescent lamps	Keep away from combustibles	Daily	Tenant	Electrical code no longer allows installation in closets.
Extension Cords	If cord is hot throw it away and make sure what you have plugged in is not the problem.	Daily	Tenant	

Recommendations:

1. Find a firm that can provide you with all of the capabilities above, one stop shopping. Set up a rapport with them. You do not need a service contract. If they are smart they will know two things. One that their best interests are yours and two that with no service agreement their replacement is one phone call away.
2. Make sure that the Contractor has plans of the building and becomes familiar with the building and its systems. Have them submit a preliminary report with any large problems that they may see. You should not have to pay for this. If your house is typical then this first list will make it worth the contractor's time. Remember if the contractor is smart and honest he/she will not recommend anything that is not needed and should not try to band-aid anything to impress you. Once you get past a beginning flurry of work you will find that the contractor is seldom needed for large problems. Some house that we cover only need an occasional visit for a clogged drain, a stuck valve, broken light ... etc.
3. Have an alumni contact and several undergraduate contacts. The single largest source of problems in the houses is the lapses that occur because of turnover in the houses.
4. Discuss semester breaks and how to best insure that the house security and systems can be maintained. Some times work needed to be done can be scheduled during semester breaks. This means you get a house sitter for free. That is why you need an honest and safe contractor.
5. Make sure that contractor sends workers with company identification. That they understand that if they show up to work and do not have proper company ID, they don't get in and can not bill for the time.
6. Information from the company should be free. If an alumni or undergraduate calls and asks about the existing systems or want advice for future plans,



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- he or she should get an informed answer. We get calls all the time like which bulb do I use in the exit sign. We look up which exit signs we put in ten years ago and call them back or E-mail the answer. Your contractor should give the house the option of doing any work that can be done without permits, licenses ... etc like painting. Labor for skilled professionals is expensive any time you can paint your own closet or clean-up a trash pile to your dumpster you save money.
7. The company should keep a record of every piece of equipment, fixture and hardware change/replacement/installation that they do, for later reference.
 8. You may want to try to have a representative at the house when the annual inspections occur with ISD.
 9. You should forward violations immediately to your contractor. If they have a rapport with ISD they can sometimes soften the city's requirements.

There are many more things you can do to make these houses safe and secure. The first thing you need is a team spirit. The Alumni must be involved, the undergraduates must be willing to work with the alumni and the contractor must have patients with both. The alumni are volunteers that can not always be there. The undergraduates are there for school first and the contractor must make some money and feel secure if he is going to be able to keep every one happy.

Thank You

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