**HOW TO INSPECT A RENTAL**

---

**Leaks:** Check for signs of water damage on ceilings, walls, baseboards, under sinks, and in closets.

**Heat:** A dwelling is required to have heating facilities conforming to the code that was current at the time the house was built. Turn the heat on. Does it work? Is it adequate? Space heaters as the only source of heat are not ok.

**Phone jacks:** The landlord is required by law to provide one operable telephone jack and wiring per dwelling.

**Deadbolts:** The landlord is required to provide a deadbolt lock on each main swinging door.

**Electrical:** There should be at least two outlets per room. Use a surge protected power strip if you need extra outlets, never extension cords.

**Bathroom:** There must be either a window that opens or a fan for ventilation. Make sure the toilet flushes adequately and does not “run.”

**Mildew/Mold:** Signs of mildew may suggest a leak or that the house is chronically damp. Remember mildew will increase during the winter season. Some people are allergic to mold, and mold can be difficult to remove and control.

**Stove and Oven:** Turn on each burner and the oven to verify that they work properly and that there are no gas leaks.

**Water:** There should be hot and cold running water from each faucet. Does the water heater have an insulation blanket on it? This is not required by law but can help reduce utility costs. Is the water pressure adequate?

**Garbage:** The landlord must provide one outside garbage can with a lid if your garbage service does not provide one.

**Safety:** Are there smoke alarms on each floor and in each bedroom? Are there carbon monoxide alarms on each floor? Were the locks changed after the previous tenants moved out? Is there adequate outside lighting?

**Neighborhood:** Drive or walk through the neighborhood at different times of day and night, especially the times when you are likely to be coming and going. Is the street well lit? Does the neighborhood feel safe to you? Check the [Santa Cruz Police Department crime maps](http://www.santacruzpdc.com/crime-maps) for information if in the city of Santa Cruz, and [Santa Cruz County Sheriff crime maps](http://www.santacruzsheriff.org/crime) if outside the city.

**Animals/Vermin:** There should be no signs of mice or other rodents. Check around the house to see that there are no open entrances under the house or vents where skunks, possums, or raccoons could live or mice enter.