

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. In the City of Milwaukee, call 278-3646.

Also file a complaint with the Regional Offices of the Consumer Protection Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection:

Milwaukee (414) 266-1231
Madison (608) 224-4960
Green Bay (414) 448-5110
Eau Claire (715) 839-3848

Or call the Department's tollfree hotline:
800/422-7128.

Department of Agriculture,
Trade & Consumer Protection
Consumer Protection Bureau
PO Box 8911
Madison WI 53708-8911

**DON'T
RENT
TROUBLE!**

advice on
**checking out
apartments**

from the
Wisconsin Department of
Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection

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:

- X flashlight
- X lightbulb
- X hairdryer

These will be your inspection tools.

Electrical

- X Turn on each switch to see if it works.
- X If there is no bulb in the socket, use yours.
- X 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.
- X If outlets or sockets don't work there could be dangerous defects in the electrical system that could cause a fire.

Plumbing

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

Look up

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

Safety

- X Are there smoke detectors in the building?
- X Are there deadbolt locks on the apartment doors and the exterior doors?

Windows

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

Rodents and roaches

- X Open cabinets and immediately shine in flashlight to detect roaches. Look for roach eggs.
- X Look for rat and mouse holes and droppings in the back of cabinets and closets.

Basement

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