

Albany Housing Authority Building Inspection

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An inspection of three Albany Housing building units was conducted by three Cornell Cooperative Extension employees: Thomas Gallagher, Senior Resource Educator; Chuck Schmitt, Senior Resource Educator; and Steffen Sarnacki, Environmental Educator. The inspections were conducted at Creighton Storey Homes, Ezra Prentice Homes and Capital Woods in January 2014.

Creighton Storey Homes, 158 Third Ave, Albany, NY

This complex has 128 living units. There was evidence of moles tunneling under mulch around the main office building (158). Removal of some of the mulch in the spring was recommended. All garbage collection areas at the site were clean, well-kept and under a roof. Building 166 had openings around air conditioning units and the drain covers in the boiler rooms were missing which could be an area for insects and mice to enter. Building 164 and 168 had dryer and furnace vents that had no screening covers. Building 168 in the boiler room had several problems including wrapping around pipes had signs of mice boring, the heater vent had grates missing and vents to the outside had pieces missing. There was evidence of a sewage leak which was cleaned up while we were on site. Building 156 main drainpipe has a large hole around the pipe. Building 158 boiler room door needs a new sweep.

Based on Pest Management reports left on site by Northeast Pest Control, building 152 has had the most problems with mice and roaches. The mice have been baited with sealed bait stations and glue traps have been used. Roaches have been treated with a baseboard treatment and empty apartments have been fogged. Our outdoor inspection revealed holes around vent pipes, air conditioner grates with holes and molding missing on the outside of the building. There was no access to any apartments but by the number of roach complaints from tenants, there probably is a sanitation issue in some apartments.

As an inspection team we would recommend that all of the minor structural repairs be made as soon as possible and that a fact sheet on sanitation be distributed to renters in building 152. Overall this building complex was well maintained with limited pest problems.



Ezra Prentice Homes, 625 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY

This complex is made up of 16 buildings and 179 living units. Rehabilitation at this site has been ongoing with the latest being completed in 2006. Building 627 had foam to fill old vent holes which allows mice and insects to enter easily. Wire mesh or steel wool was recommended to replace the foam. Building 629 had a sewage smell in the boiler room and many first floor vents to the outside do not have covers to adequately keep out pests. We were able to enter apartment 631C which was vacant at the time. The apartment did not show any signs of a pest problem with the kitchen and bathroom clean and dry. The inside door had good sweeps to keep out pests. There was an outside vent cover which had been bent in half allowing access to mice in the apartment next door. Building 638 had a hole in a roof vent caused by squirrels. Here we recommended the hole be covered or the vent replaced to keep the squirrels out of the attic. Building 633 and 637 had mouse problems, probably because of vents not properly covered. Northeast pest Control is using traps and bait stations to bring the problem under control. All holes around pipes should be filled and vent covers installed where missing or not adequately covered. Individual recycle bins were seen outside of many apartments, which could attract rodents. None of these bins appeared to have covers. We would recommend that the bins be dumped daily or covers be provided.

Currently all apartments are sprayed for ants, mites and roaches when vacant. We recommend that sticky traps be used to determine the level of infestation before random spraying of every apartment.



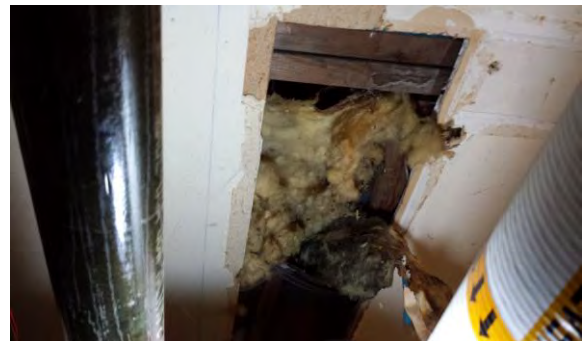
Capital Woods, 200 Lark Drive, Albany NY

In 1998 Albany Housing Authority took title to this property which was previously privately owned and located in the Arbor Hill section of Albany. Following the acquisition of the property, 120 units were demolished and 145 units were rehabilitated. A new community building was added during the renovation phase.

As we began our inspection of the site, we noted the outside of the building was in excellent shape with vinyl siding sealed at the bottom, window air conditioners removed or properly installed and vent pipes properly installed and covered.

We were allowed to enter former basement apartments in buildings 80, 20, 50, 150 and 100. It appeared that all of the former basement apartments had had water damage and the bottom 1/3 of each wall had all sheet rock removed. There were large holes in the basement floor with soil at the bottom of each hole. Ceilings and floors of first floor apartment had been removed to access plumbing in the first floor apartments. Some outside block walls had insulation on them and appeared to be wet. Walls between the former apartments had large holes as did ceilings as you first walked in the door allowing rodents and insects to move freely from apartment to apartment. In almost every case glue traps and snap traps were found in these basement apartments with dead mice in most traps. Sticky traps revealed evidence of a minor roach problem in the building.

Our inspection team would recommend the following: First, each basement should be cleaned, removing any dead pests, old traps and pieces of ceiling or sheetrock. Holes in the floor and ceiling to first floor apartments below the bathtub area should be covered to eliminate the movement of mice from the basement. New sticky traps should be placed in each basement and monitored by Northeast Pest Control. Poor sweeps to any of the basement apartments should be checked and replaced where needed. It appears that all vent pipes going to the basement are properly sealed.





Based on our visits to all of these complexes, it is obvious that much work has been done to eliminate pest problems. Staff on site are very willing to respond to any pest problem reported and willing to make the necessary repairs. We do want to emphasize that any pesticide application inside an apartment or outside an apartment needs to be made by a NYS Commercially Certified Pesticide Applicator using pesticides registered in New York State.

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