

Falls Township

188 Lincoln Highway, Suite 100, Fairless Hills, PA 19030
(215) 949-9000



USE AND OCCUPANCY FACT SHEET

A Certificate of Occupancy shall be required for any of the following reasons:

1. Occupancy and use of any building or portion thereof hereafter erected or altered
2. Change in use of an existing building or a use of a different classification.
3. Occupancy and Use of vacant land or change in the use of land to a use of a different classification.
4. Any change in use or extension or a non-conforming use.
5. Home Occupations, including rental of homes.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED

PLEASE ALLOW 30 DAYS TO PROCESS APPLICATION AND CERTIFICATIONS.

Video files and documents must be sent using the following directions. If they are received in any other format, your application may not be processed in a timely manner or rejected. Please obtain a current copy of the Use and Occupancy application before submitting any applications. This document is available on the Township website under FORMS. Scroll to (Use and Occupancy) and click on Application for Certificate of Occupancy and Use.

***Note:** Direct submission of documents or video by your plumber will **not** be accepted.

1. **Documents:** Documents must be sent via email in pdf format. Email must include the following. 1. Application for Certificate of Occupancy and Use (must be signed or Docu-Signed) before submission. 2. A certificate for sewer, heater, and level 2 chimney inspection.

2. **Video:** Video must be submitted via Drop Box. You may need to sign up for a free account at (<http://dropbox.com>). The video file must be in (.mp4) format, and you must submit an actual video file. Links to files may not work and will delay processing of your application. If you are having a problem getting the video file to us, we can send you an email with a link to upload the file. (Please allow up to 24 hours for the email to be sent to you. If you do not receive it, please check your junk folder before contacting us). **Note:** This one-time link can only be used by the person to whom it was sent.

3. Once the Application for Certificate of Use and Occupancy is submitted, we will contact you to process payment which can be made via Visa or Mastercard. If you pay by mail or check, please allow an additional time for delivery and processing. Applications need to be reviewed, inspected and approved by multiple people, so please allow up to 30 days for your completed application to be processed. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will need to be resubmitted.

If you have a technical issue or problem that cannot be resolved through the code department clerks, you may email ittech@fallstwp.com. You will get a response within 24 hours from a code enforcement clerk. Note: IT staff will not contact you directly nor can we answer questions concerning your property.

(Falls Township's Technology Department is working with the Code Enforcement Department to better help and process your documents in an effort to make your experience with us stress free and efficient. With that being said, we have made a few changes to the instructions for submitting documents and videos. Listed are the new instructions. If these instructions change, we will notify you of the changes. Please follow and use these instructions only when submitting. If you run into a technical problem sending your documents, the IT staff can help. Please note: IT staff does not have updates on your property.)

THREE TYPES OF CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

Heating system certification. To be done by an outside contractor licensed in the State of Pennsylvania. A sample letter is attached with this packet. (If there is electric heat, no certification is required). Certifications must be dated within six months of the settlement date.

Heating and fireplace flues/chimneys/vents: To be done by an outside contractor licensed in the State of Pennsylvania. NFPA 211 Level II inspection required, and certification letter must state this. Checklists are no longer required – just a letter. The letter should name what type of flue was inspected and certified. Certifications must be dated within six months of the settlement date.

Sewer Lateral Inspection Certification: To be done by an outside master plumber licensed in the State of Pennsylvania. All videos must be submitted in mp4 format. All sewer applications must be filled in completely by both the plumber and the applicant. Certifications must be dated within six months of the settlement date.

HOUSING RESALE INSPECTIONS REQUIREMENTS

All Use and Occupancy, Electrical, and Housing Inspections will be scheduled by the Code Enforcement Department clerks. All Township inspectors will arrive on the scheduled inspection day, but not necessarily at the same time. Inspections will occur within the morning hours of 9:00 am and 12:00 pm. No guarantee of specific times can be given.

Apartment Housing inspections may be scheduled any weekday for either morning or afternoon hours.

Inspections can be scheduled and performed without having the sewer, heater and chimney certifications submitted in advance. However, the Use & Occupancy Certificate will not be released until all certifications are submitted.

Commercial and Industrial Use and Occupancies do not require heater and chimney certifications. A Letter of Intent should be submitted for any resale or change of occupancy for commercial properties.

Home Occupation inspections will take place in the area(s) of the proposed business location only.

In the event that there are any open and or outstanding permits, the permits must be finalized before the Use and Occupancy Certificate is obtained.

EXTERIOR HOUSING INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Sidewalks, driveway, and driveway apron should be free from tripping hazards.

If grass is over ten inches, it must be cut.

Foundation shall be free of major and structural cracks.

Porches and patios shall be free of structural defects, holes, and cracks.

Gutters and down spouts must be properly connected and free of holes.

All siding, brick or stone facing must be solid and free of defects.

Sheds and fences must be free of rat harborages, mice or insect nests.

All trash and rubbish must be removed from the lot.

All junk cars must be removed from the lot.

Retaining walls must be stable and sound.

Roof must be in good condition.

Skirting on mobile homes must be removed to access heat tape plug and receptacle and have tie down anchors.

Connection to public water and sewer will be required if the building is within 150 feet of public water and sewer mains per Falls Code 184-4.

House numbers must be four inches high, posted on the house and easily visible to emergency personnel.

Dryer ducts must be constructed of metal and terminate to the outside unless manufactures specifications indicate otherwise

INTERIOR HOUSING INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Interior walls throughout the house must be sound and free of large cracks, breaks or holes.

Floors must be level and free of holes.

All kitchens are to have a sink, with both hot and cold running water, be free from defects and connected to an approved sewer system without risks.

All Bathrooms are to have a sink, tub or shower, and toilet without defects or leaks and connected to an approved sewer system.

All bathroom sinks and tubs must have both hot and cold water.

Ceilings throughout the house must be free from structural defects.

Windows must not be cracked or broken.

Heating facilities must be maintained in safe and good working condition and certified by a qualified service technician.

Hallways leading to bedrooms must be well lit.

Smoke detectors must be installed in the following location: each bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms and on each additional story of the dwelling units that have attached garages.

Carbon Monoxide alarms must be installed outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms, in dwelling units within which fuel-fired appliances are installed and in dwelling units that have attached garages.

Handrails must be installed on all stairways including basement stairways. Stairs that are on more than four risers should have guards, and the guards should be no more than four inches apart.

All stairways shall be structurally sound and free from defects. Houses with a fireplace, pellet or wood burning stove must have their chimneys approved by a certified chimneysweep. (Level 2 inspection required)

Double cylinder dead bolts requiring a key operation on both sides are prohibited on required means of egress. All doors (exterior and interior) must be in operating condition and complete with hardware.

An Anti-tip device must be installed on the oven.

Screens must be on every door, window, and other outside opening. (Between April 1st and November 1st)

ELECTRICAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following items will be checked for compliance during the Electrical Use & Occupancy Inspection:

Service cable covering shall not be deteriorated or cracked. (You must obtain a permit if you are putting in a new service cable.)

Electrical panel size properly for service entrance cable conductor.

No more than one conductor at each breaker terminal.

Grounded receptacles shall only be permitted on circuits having grounding conductors.

All wiring must be terminated properly.

All junction boxes shall be secured properly.

All junction boxes shall be properly covered.

Ground Fault protection shall be provided on all receptacles along kitchen countertops, on all bathroom receptacles and all receptacles installed outdoors, storage areas, garages, and unfinished basements.

All swimming pools shall be in good working condition.

All electrical devices shall be in good working condition.

All appliances and motors shall have a means of disconnect.

Ampacities for conductors shall be in accordance with the current National Electric Code.

Service entrance cable at mobile homes shall be installed in electrical conduit.

All services must be properly grounded.

Please Note: The above guidelines are for informational purposes only. These are the major sources of electrical problems in the resale of properties but are not to be used as a complete checklist.

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SEWER LATERAL INFORMATION FOR REALES

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has mandated the Township collect inspection reports for its sewer customers prior to the transfer of any residential or commercial property. On December 17, 2019 Falls Township adopted Ordinance No. 2019-4 to meet this mandate.

Accordingly, an inspection of the private sewer service lateral servicing the residential or commercial property must receive an inspection by a registered master plumber. Said inspections shall also require a video inspection of the sanitary sewer service lateral from the property to the main connection.

It is recommended that this procedure is begun as early as possible, but certainly when an agreement of sale is executed. No occupancy certificates will be issued WITHOUT the sewer inspection checklist completed by a registered master plumber and submitted to the Township.

The applicant shall provide a copy of the sewer scope video along with the completed sewer lateral inspection application to the attention of: Mary Stockton at m.stockton@fallstwp.com. All Use and Occupancy applications must be submitted before the Township can accept the sewer lateral inspection applications.

If an inspection reveals deficiencies in the lateral and it must be replaced, a plumbing permit shall be submitted and approved prior to any repairs. Repairs to the sewer lateral shall be completed before occupancy of the property.

The transfer of the property may take place prior to repairs, but no occupancy will be permitted. In such a circumstance, the Township would issue a Temporary Certificate of Access.

The sewer lateral inspection is good for 6 months. If a property transfers ownership within that time frame, another inspection is not required.

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SEWER LATERAL INSPECTION CERTIFICATE

ADDRESS: _____ SETTLEMENT DATE: _____

TAX PARCEL NO: _____

SELLER: _____ Phone # _____

Email: _____

BUYER: _____ Phone # _____

Email: _____

LATERAL TELEVISED INSPECTION (Completed by a registered master plumber)

COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS: _____ PA Lic # _____

_____ Master Plumber # _____

Phone No. _____ PASSED _____

_____ I have checked and videoed the sewer lateral of the subject property to the public system connection and have found no inflow and/or infiltration into the private sewer service lateral nor any illegal connections. The clean-out is capped and not damaged. NOTE: All mushroom caps shall be a minimum of 6" above grade. Type of Cap: _____ (open slotted caps not permitted) Height Above Grade: _____

Signature of Master Plumber: _____ Date: _____

APPROVAL BY TOWNSHIP

BASED ON THE SEWER LATERAL RESULTS PROVIDED BY THE ABOVE PLUMBER AND MY REVIEW OF THE VIDEO, I HEREBY ISSUE THIS SEWER INSPECTION CERTIFICATE AS PER FALLS TWP. ORDINANCE #2017-6.

Inspector Date: _____

Director Date: _____

SAMPLE HEATER LETTER

NOT A FORM

Sample Wording for Use & Occupancy Heater Evaluation On Company
Letterhead

Pa. License# _____

(Heater Company Name) (Address)

(Date)

(Address of Inspection) (Date of Inspection)

On DATE we inspected a (*name and type of heater*) at the above address. The flue pipe was solid and intact.

The above visual evaluation of the heater and its installation found all required devices and safeguards are in place and in a proper operating condition

At this time, the heater would qualify for a maintenance contract. To keep the heater in a safe and proper operating condition it should be cleaned and inspected according to manufacturer's specifications.

This evaluation implies no guarantee or warranties. Thank You

SIGNED BY TECHNICIAN

DATE