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MAYOR
Adrian M. Fenty



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Title 14 - Housing

Chapter 5 Housing Code: Heating, Lighting, and Ventilation

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500 GENERAL PROVISIONS

500.1 The owner of a building used for residential purposes shall provide that building with adequate facilities for heating, ventilating, and lighting.

500.2 Each facility provided and maintained to comply with this section shall be properly and safely installed, and shall be maintained in a safe and good working condition.

AUTHORITY: Unless otherwise noted, the authority for this chapter is contained in paragraphs 28 and 46 of section 7 of An Act Making appropriations to provide for the expenses of the government of the District of Columbia for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and three, and for other purposes (“Act of 1902”), Public, No. 218, 32 Stat. 590, approved July 1, 1902, as amended by: An Act approved July 1, 1932 to amend section 7 [of the Act of 1902], Public, No. 237, 47 Stat. 550; and An Act approved July 22,

1947, Public Law 215, 61 Stat. 402.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR §§ 1201 and 2401, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955).

501 HEATING OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

501.1 Adequate heating facilities shall mean the provision and maintenance in good repair of one of the following:

- (a) A central heating facility;
- (b) A non-portable, flue-connected heating facility; or
- (c) An electric heating facility which may or may not be flue-connected.

501.2 The heating facility shall be capable of maintaining a minimum temperature of seventy degrees Fahrenheit (70° F.) in buildings or parts of buildings used for habitation.

501.3 Each heating facility shall be designed and installed to permit the control of the temperature resulting from the use of that facility in such manner that the maximum resulting temperature in the premises heated by such facility will not exceed the maximum temperature in the "Comfort Chart" contained in the 1951 Guide of the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers.

501.4 Whenever the heating facilities of any habitation or bathroom are not under control of an occupant of the habitation, it shall be the responsibility of the owner or licensee to supply sufficient heat to maintain the following minimum temperatures for every occupied habitation and bathroom:

- (a) A minimum temperature of sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit (68° F.) between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.; and
- (b) A minimum temperature of sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit (65° F.) between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m.

501.5 The temperatures referred to in this section shall be measured with all usually-closed outside openings closed in a normal manner.

501.6 The owner of a single-family dwelling, occupied in whole or in part by a tenant or tenants in which one (1) or more housing violation notices were issued because of a defective heating system under the control of the owner, shall cause the furnace, boiler, or other central heating or hot water system to be inspected by a qualified person in the period between March 1st and September 1st subsequent to the issuance of the violation notices.

501.7 In addition to testing the efficiency and adequacy of the heating and hot water systems, the flues, vents, and dampers shall be inspected for escape of carbon monoxide gas.

501.8 The findings on inspections shall be recorded on forms approved by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs ("Department") within fifteen (15) days following the inspection and shall be delivered to the owner, who shall file a copy with the Department within seven (7) days of the receipt of the findings.

501.9 The owner shall correct all defects as found upon the inspection before October 1st of that year and shall certify to the Department that the corrections have been made.

501.10 The owner of a multiple dwelling, containing two (2) or more units, shall cause the

furnace, boiler, or other central heating systems to be inspected by a qualified person between March 1st and September 1st of each year. Subsections 501.7 through 501.9 shall also apply to this subsection.

501.11 For purposes of §§ 501.6 through 501.10, the term “qualified person” means a master plumber and gas fitter, heating and air conditioning contractor, master mechanic, licensed by the District, or a certified employee of a public utility.

501.12 The certifications required by §§ 501.6 through 501.10 shall be in writing and shall be signed by the owner and by a “qualified person.”

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR §§ 1201 and 2401, Commissioners’ Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955), as amended by: paragraph 1 of Council Regulation 72-28, approved November 30, 1972; and section 2 of the Self-Inspection of Heating and Hot-Water Systems Act of 1986, D.C. Law 6-158, 33DCR 6008, incorporating by reference the text of D.C. Act 6-201, 33 DCR 4936 (August 15, 1986).

502 LIGHTING IN HABITABLE ROOMS

502.1 Each habitable room shall have a glass area transmitting natural light equivalent to that which would be transmitted by a clear glass area at least equal to one tenth (1/10) of the floor area served, consisting of one or more of the following:

- (a) Windows;
- (b) Glazed doors;
- (c) Glazed doors with either or both side lights or transoms; or
- (d) Other glass construction facing directly to the outside.

502.2 Rooms opening on enclosed porches and meeting the lighting requirements of Article 501-01-e of the 1941 Building Code, as amended (Title 12, DCMR) and rooms lighted through sunporches and meeting the lighting requirements of § 3-515 of the 1961 Building Code, as amended, shall be deemed to have adequate natural light.

502.3 The sash area of openable windows, side lights, or transoms, the horizontal projection of the glass area of skylights, and in all other instances the gross glass area, shall be used in computing the required glass area.

502.4 Any portion of any glass area facing directly on any wall, portion of a structure, or other light obstruction less than three feet (3 ft.) from that glass area, shall not be included as contributing to the required natural light.

502.5 At least fifty percent (50%) of the required glass area shall be a window, glazed door, side light, or transom, each glazed with clear glass.

502.6 Obscure glass, glass blocks, or other approved translucent material may be used to transmit up to fifty percent (50%) of the required natural light.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2202, Commissioners’ Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955); as amended by Commissioners’ Order 62-1493 (August 21, 1962).

503 OBSTRUCTIONS TO LIGHT

503.1 If a habitation is located on the ground floor of a residential building, the yard of that building which lies immediately outside the habitation shall be maintained clear of any obstruction to light for a distance of at least three feet (3 ft.) from the exterior wall of the building, or for such further distance as may be required by any other law or regulation.

503.2 A reasonable amount of trees or shrubbery shall not be considered to be in violation of this section.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2308, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955).

504 LIGHTING OF BATHROOMS

504.1 Each bathroom shall be naturally or artificially lighted at least equivalent to the requirements of this section.

504.2 A naturally lighted bathroom shall have a glass area consisting of one or more of the following:

- (a) Windows;
- (b) Skylights;
- (c) Transoms; or
- (d) Other glass construction, except glazed doors.

504.3 The glass area shall face directly to the outside, and shall transmit natural light equivalent to that which would be transmitted by a clear glass area at least equal to one tenth (1/10) of the floor area served.

504.4 No glass area shall contain less than four square feet (4 ft.²).

504.5 Obscure glass, glass blocks, or other approved translucent material may be used to transmit up to fifty percent (50%) of the required natural light.

504.6 The sash area of openable windows or transoms, the horizontal projection of the glass area of skylights, and in all other instances the gross glass area, shall be used in computing the required glass area.

504.7 Any portion of any glass area facing directly on any wall, portion of a structure, or other light obstruction less than three feet (3 ft.) from that glass area, shall not be included as contributing to the required natural light.

504.8 Artificially lighted bathrooms shall be illuminated with a minimum of ten (10) foot candles measured at floor level at any point on the open floor space.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2309, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955).

505 LIGHTING OF HALLWAYS, STAIRWAYS, AND OTHER COMMON SPACE

505.1 Hallways, stairways, and other common space used in common by the occupants of more than one habitation shall have adequate lighting facilities, which shall be kept in good condition at all times.

505.2 The artificial illumination of stairs and hallways in each housing business licensed under this subtitle shall be arranged and maintained to provide illumination from sunset to sunrise and at other times when daylight does not provide illumination of an intensity of at least six-foot candles (6 ft.) at the tread and floor level.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2409, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955).

506 VENTILATION OF HABITABLE ROOMS

506.1 Each habitable room shall have either natural or mechanical ventilation at least equal to the requirements of this section.

506.2 Natural ventilation shall be provided by an opening directly to the outside, the area of which is at least equal to five percent (5%) of the floor area of the room served, except as otherwise provided in this section.

506.3 Rooms opening on enclosed porches and meeting the ventilation requirements of Article 501-01-e of the 1941 Building Code, as amended, and rooms ventilated through sunporches and meeting the ventilation requirements of § 3-515 of the 1961 Building Code, as amended, shall be deemed to have adequate natural ventilation.

506.4 At least fifty percent (50%) of the required ventilation shall be furnished by an openable window, louvres located in the upper fifty percent (50%) of the room, side light, transom, glazed door, or door of the horizontally divided (dutch) or vertically divided (french) type.

506.5 For buildings erected, altered, or converted under permits issued prior to July 1, 1961, mechanical ventilation where used shall provide habitable rooms, other than kitchens, with at least three (3) air changes per hour.

506.6 Kitchens shall be provided with at least four (4) air changes per hour.

506.7 Openable area directly to the outside at least equal to three percent (3%) of the floor area of the habitable space served shall be available for use in case of temporary failure of mechanical ventilation, except as provided in § 506.8.

506.8 Interior kitchens which are not daylighted as required by § 502 may be artificially lighted and mechanically ventilated if they comply with the following:

(a) Total floor area shall not exceed one hundred square feet (100 ft.²);

(b) Unobstructed floor space (after the installation of kitchen cabinets and equipment including space reserved for the installation of stove and refrigerator) shall not exceed fifty square feet (50 ft.²);

(c) Mechanical ventilation shall be centrally controlled and operated and shall provide a minimum of eight (8) changes of air per hour through an independent duct system; and

(d) The interior kitchen is not to be counted as a habitable room.

506.9 Not more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the air supplied by mechanical ventilation shall be recirculated air.

506.10 The recirculation of air from kitchens, bathrooms, furnace rooms, laundry rooms, and garages is prohibited.

506.11 No air supplied to habitable rooms shall be drawn from a plenum or system fed with air returned from habitable rooms occupied by other families, common space, or commercial or industrial establishments.

506.12 For buildings erected, altered, or converted under permits issued after June 30, 1961, the requirements for mechanical ventilation shall be in accordance with the applicable provisions of sections 3-527 through 3-533, inclusive, of the 1961 D.C. Building Code, as amended.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2203, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955), as amended by Commissioners' Order 62-1493 (August 21, 1962).

507 VENTILATION OF BATHROOMS

507.1 Each bathroom shall be naturally or mechanically ventilated, at least equivalent to the requirements of this section.

507.2 Natural ventilation shall be provided by openings, other than a door, directly to the outside, the openable area of which is at least equal to five percent (5%) of the floor area of the room served.

507.3 No opening for ventilation of a bathroom shall contain less than two square feet (2 ft.²).

507.4 If mechanical ventilation is used, it shall provide for each bathroom with a single water closet outside air in a minimum quantity of one and one half cubic feet per minute per square foot of floor area (1½ ft.³/min./ft.²), with no recirculation permitted.

507.5 A bathroom having more than one water closet shall be provided with a minimum outside air quantity of two and one half cubic feet per minute per square foot of floor area (2½ ft.³/min./ft.²), with no recirculation permitted.

507.6 A mechanically ventilated bathroom shall not serve or open into any area that opens on, or is served by, a bathroom that is not similarly ventilated.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR §§ 2309, 2309.6, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955); as amended by Commissioners' Order 66-314 (March 8, 1966).

508 CONTROL AND MAINTENANCE OF MECHANICAL VENTILATION

508.1 If mechanical ventilation is provided for any residential building by the owner or licensee, the owner or licensee shall maintain that system in safe and good working condition.

508.2 If the mechanical ventilation system is not under the control of the occupant of any habitation, the owner or licensee of the residential building shall keep that equipment in constant and continuous operation.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2408, Commissioners' Order 55-1503, (August 11, 1955).

509 OBSTRUCTIONS TO VENTILATION

509.1 If a habitation is located on the ground floor of a residential building, the yard of the building which lies immediately outside the habitation shall be maintained clear of any obstruction to ventilation for a distance of at least three feet (3 ft.) from the exterior wall of the building, or such further distance as may be required by any other law or regulation.

509.2 A reasonable amount of trees or shrubbery shall not be considered to be a violation of this section.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 2308, Commissioners' Order 55-1503, (August 11, 1955).

510 AIR CONDITIONING

510.1 The owner of a rental habitation, who provides air conditioning as a service either through individual air conditioning units or a central air conditioning system, shall maintain such unit or system in safe and good working condition so that it provides an inside temperature at least fifteen degrees Fahrenheit (15° F.) less than the outside temperature.

510.2 The owner shall also have the individual units or central system inspected each year, between September 1st and May 1st, by a master refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic or master refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic limited, licensed by the District of Columbia to ensure compliance with this section and with the Fire Prevention Code (12D DCMR F101.6(5)).

510.3 The findings on inspection shall be recorded on forms approved by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs ("Department") within fifteen (15) days following inspection and shall be delivered to the owner, who shall file a copy with the Department within seven (7) days of receipt of the findings.

510.4 The owner shall correct all defects as found upon the inspection by June 1st of each year, and shall submit written certification to the Department that the corrections have been made.

510.5 The written certification shall be signed by the owner and by a master refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic, or master refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic limited, licensed by the District of Columbia.

SOURCE: The Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia, 5G DCRR § 1201, Commissioners' Order 55-1503 (August 11, 1955); as amended by section 2 of the Air Conditioning Maintenance Amendment Act of 1986, D.C. Law 6-161, 33 DCR 6011, incorporating by reference the text of D.C. Act 6-206, 33 DCR 5114 (August 22, 1986).

511 REFRIGERATION AND AIR CONDITIONING PERMIT FEES

511.1 For purposes of the fee schedule, refrigeration systems shall be classified according to the net refrigeration effect in British thermal units (B.T.U.) per hour developed by the system as certified by the manufacturer. The following schedule of fees shall apply to refrigeration and air conditioning permits:

(a) Class A - system developing a net refrigeration effect of two million four hundred thousand (2,400,000) B.T.U. per hour or more \$225.00;

(b) Class B - system developing a net effect of one million two hundred thousand (1,200,000) or more B.T.U. per hour but less than two million four hundred thousand (2,440,000) B.T.U. per hour

\$139.00;

(c) Class C - system developing a net refrigeration effect of six hundred thousand (600,000) or more B.T.U. per hour but less than one million two hundred thousand (1,200,000) B.T.U. per hour
\$105.00;

(d) Class D - system developing a net refrigeration effect of one hundred twenty thousand (120,000) or more B.T.U. per hour \$42.00;

and

(e) Class E - system developing a net refrigeration effect of less than one hundred twenty thousand (120,000) B.T.U. per hour \$22.00.

511.2 A refund of permit fees shall be made as follows:

(a) When no work has been done under authority of permit, the fee in excess of the cost of inspection to verify no work having been done, based on thirteen dollars per inspector hour (\$13.00/hr), the cost of any engineering examination time previously devoted to approval of plans, based on twenty dollars per hour (\$20.00/hr.), plus nineteen dollars (\$19.00) administrative costs of "issuance and refund," shall be refunded at nineteen dollars (\$19.00) per hour;

(b) When work authorized by permit has been only partially done and when the District is satisfied that no more work will be done under the permit, the fee in excess of the cost of any engineering plans examination based on twenty dollars per hour (\$20.00/hr.), plus nineteen dollars (\$19.00) administrative costs of "issuance and refund," shall be refunded at nineteen dollars (\$19.00) per hour; or

(c) If a request for refund is made within six (6) months from date of issuance and the permit and receipt are returned to the Permit Branch.

511.3 The penalty for a permit to abate notice of doing work without a permit shall be fifty percent (50%) of the fee.

511.4 No permit fee shall be charged when supported by evidence indicating that the applicant is under contract or subcontract to perform the following:

- (a) Work done exclusively for the District;
- (b) Work done under contract for the District; or
- (c) Work done exclusively for agencies of the United States Government.

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 27 DCR 3326, 3329 (August 1, 1980).

599 DEFINITIONS

599.1 The definitions and provisions of section 199 of chapter 1 of this title shall be applicable to this chapter.

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