



Vacation Rental Safety Checklist

A Beginner's Guide to Property & Guest Safety

Safety in Vacation Rental Properties

Safety has been an increasingly trending topic in the vacation rental industry, with operators paying more attention to physical safety features like smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers. Recent changes to the travel landscape have brought safety and property conditions front and center for managers, guests, owners, municipalities and staff and we anticipate this to increase in coming years as regulatory challenges rise. Recent surveys show that 87% of guests are concerned about safety as they consider booking travel accommodations. So it's no surprise that more than 84% of managers we surveyed are taking steps to improve their safety and maintenance procedures over the next year. Based on Breezeway's review of building code, insurance claims and reported incidents, alongside review of thousands of safety inspections completed on Breezeway's platform, we have compiled this guide for property and guest safety. Note, this checklist is meant to serve as a guide to help focus on the steps to ensure basic safety and assumes additional procedures will be followed to routinely inspect the quality of the property and comply with local regulations and code. For more detailed guidance on safety inspections and preventative maintenance, please contact us.

Value of Safe Vacation Rentals:

120K+

Safety Inspections Completed

60K+

Outdated Smoke Alarms Replaced



General Interior

- Install smoke alarms through the dwelling, including all sleeping areas. Interconnected alarms are best, but if this is not possible, choose wireless options. Dual-detection smoke alarms (ionization and Photoelectric sensors) offer the best protection for guests according to the US Fire Administration and Consumer Reports®.
- Replace any smoke alarms that are older than 10 years.
- Install CO Alarms in all sleeping areas. Avoid combo smoke/CO alarms. Independent CO alarms with digital displays offer the best protection for guests.
- Install heat detectors in all attached garages, attics and basements. Most heat detectors can be added to hard-wired smoke alarm systems.
- Confirm a basic first-aid kit is easily accessible to guests.
- Ensure that a card or flier containing crucial safety information, with the property address being the top priority, is prominently displayed. Consider posting the property address at each bedside as well. Guests may need this information to relay their location to the 911 operator.
- Make sure locks on all doors and windows are functional.
- Make sure any furniture that could tip is secured to the wall.
- Inspect fireplaces, stoves, chimneys and associated heating vents annually.
- Prominently display instructions by any heating appliance
- Remove all candles, as well as, fire starters that aren't child resistant.
- Store all chemicals, cleaning products and paints in a location not easily accessed by children.
- Look for any lighting issues or other hazardous items that could cause trips and falls.
- Run the domestic hot water from the kitchen faucet for 3 - 5 minutes and use a thermometer to confirm the temperature is 125°F or lower.
- Confirm all stair handrails and guardrails are secure.
- All stairs taller than 30" (about 3 to 4 treads high above the floor) should have a continuous handrail.

Kitchen

- Confirm there is at least one 5lb fire extinguisher, mounted in a bracket near the kitchen, within 30 feet of all cooking appliances.
- Ensure signage indicating the location of the fire extinguisher is prominently displayed.

Bedrooms/ Sleeping Area

- Each bedroom/sleeping area has two clear means of egress. (note: fire sprinkled bedrooms only require one egress point)
- Egress windows are at least 5.7 square feet in size and the bottom sill is at least 44" from the floor.
- Confirm nothing is blocking the egress windows.
- Confirm bedrooms/sleeping areas more than 20 feet above the ground offer folding escape ladders.
- Confirm bunk beds meet 2007 Federal Safety Guidelines.
- Remove ceiling fans from rooms with bunk beds.

General Exterior

- Confirm the property address marker is a minimum of 4" tall is visible during both day and night and is not obstructed by any foliage or objects.
- Make sure there are no hazardous elements in the walkway or driveway.
- Check for rough spots, loose asphalt/concrete, and step separation.
- Confirm there are no trees that could be a potential hazard to fall on the dwelling.
- Check for and fill any settled areas that trap water.
- Visit the property at night for a detailed review of the exterior lighting.
- Confirm all outdoor lights are working and projecting on walkways and driveways.
- Ensure all stairs are illuminated.

Deck

- Make sure the guardrails are up to local building codes.
- Ensure deck guardrails are 36" high (some local codes require 42"). Ensure guardrails don't have more than a 4" gap.
- Confirm handrails are located on at least one side of each staircase more than 30" above the ground.
- Confirm handrails are continuous from the top to the bottom tread.
- Check for rot or split spots.
- Confirm that deck furniture and hot tubs are placed away from railings.
- Have an engineer confirm the deck can hold the weight of a hot tub, if applicable.

Grill & Fire Pit

- Ensure wood-burning fire pits are positioned at least 20 feet from any combustibles with a source to extinguish them.
- Wood-burning fire pits require a minimum overhead clearance of 21 feet.
- Adhere strictly to the manufacturer's instructions and warnings when placing gas fire pits. They should only ignite as intended by the manufacturer, never with a remote lighter. Provide clear instructions for their proper usage right beside the fire pit.
- Confirm the shut-off valve is clearly marked, if hard-connected to a gas line.
- Ensure gas and charcoal grills are positioned at least 10 feet from any combustible structure.
- Confirm grills are not placed under a deck, balcony, or underneath an overhang.
- Check propane tanks for damaged or leaky o-rings.
- Confirm cleanliness and ensure the catch tray is free of grease build-up.
- A fire extinguisher must be mounted within 30 feet of any grill.

Pool & Hot Tub

- Ensure pools and hot tubs are up to electrical code.
- Safety notices are posted for the pool and/or hot tub (as you would see at a commercial pool).
- Access to the pool is restricted by gates, fences, alarmed-doors or covers.
- Make sure the hot tub cover can be secured to keep children out.
- Hot tub and pool chemicals should only be maintained by a certified professional. Lock up all chemicals.
- A life ring and safety hook are easily available for guests. It is essential to mount the safety hook in close proximity to the pool deck for quick and easy access during emergencies.
- Ensure pool depth markers that are at least 4" tall are installed and plainly marked

About Breezeway

Breezeway's operations and experience platform helps coordinate, communicate, and verify detailed work, and deliver the best service experience to clients.

Breezeway's software and mobile apps have facilitated over 30M property tasks across 80+ million square feet, and help hundreds of short-term rental operators and owners, long-term residential managers, service providers, and other hospitality professionals meet detailed service standards.

Started in 2017 by Jeremy Gall, who previously founded FlipKey (sold to TripAdvisor), the company is creating the tools that will power the future of property care and services.

Breezeway's Safety Program combines the trusted advisory of our Property Operations Platform in conjunction with industry leading expertise, insight to municipal regulations, insurance company partnerships, and years of experience. Through coaching and certification, professional managers and hosts can round out their business offering and maintain safe and high-quality rental properties all while preventing accidents, reducing liability, and providing best in class service to their guests.

Learn more at breezeway.io/safety