

# **Dangerous Buildings and the Town Health officer**

**The VT Town Health Officer  
Rental Housing Inspection Checklist  
includes the question below:**

**Is the building structurally sound with no obvious signs of structural deficiencies or unsafe conditions (such as holes in walls, buckling/bulging in floors/ceilings)?**

If the answer is “No”, immediately contact your regional DPS office.

## **Department of Public Safety (DPS)**

**Phone number to call varies based on property region:**

- **Region #1 – Williston Office: 1-800-366-8325**
- **Region #2 – Barre Office: 1-888-870-7888**
- **Region #3 – Rutland Office: 1-888-370-4834**
- **Region #4 – Springfield Office: 866-404-8883**

# Questions to answer

1. What is “Structurally sound”?
2. What are “signs of structural deficiencies”
3. What are “unsafe conditions”?

# Structurally sound -

A visual examination of the physical condition of all visible elements of the building may show there are signs of structural distress or deterioration.

- Document what you see
- Photographs are recommended to support your observations



Document what you observe and make recommendations based on your training and experience but use professionals to make official determinations!\*

\*Remember you are a Town Health officer and not a structural engineer

# What are some signs of structural deficiencies?

- holes in walls,
- buckling/bulging in floors or ceilings
- Rotten or
- decayed materials



- What are “unsafe conditions”?



Burlington City Ordinance Chapter 8 - ARTICLE III  
ABATEMENT AND REHABILITATION OF VACANT  
BUILDINGS AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURES

- ❖ Structures that become dangerous and unsafe must promptly be made safe and secure to protect the public safety.

Burlington Definition:

- Dangerous building or structure means a building or structure or part thereof declared structurally unsafe or hazardous by any duly constituted authority, whether it is occupied, unoccupied, or vacant.

## **Is it safe for Police and Fire Department to enter once you leave this structure?**

- Notification should be made to First responders regarding the condition of the property.

# Summary

- **Follow guidelines provided by the VT Department of Health**
  - Goal should be to make the building safe and secure
- **Immediately contact your regional DPS office if the building does not appear structurally sound**
- **Local Fire Department/Fire Marshal is an excellent resource**
- **Local Building official/Building inspector is an excellent resource**
- **Be sure to notify property owner**

Questions?