

OVERCROWDING & ILLEGAL OCCUPANCY

Purpose

- Public Safety
- Overcrowding and Illegal Occupancy increases the possibility of injuries and death in the event of a fire
- Adverse impact on quality of life in neighborhood. For example: parking, trash, noise, and accelerated wear and tear on housing stock



Definitions

- **Overcrowding:** When dwelling units are occupied by more occupants than permitted by the city code.

250 square feet is required for the first occupant and 200 additional square feet for each additional occupant

Occupancy in Approved Sleeping Areas is Determined by Square Footage

- An approved sleeping area must have at least 70 sq. ft.
- If the sleeping area is occupied by more than one person, a total of 50 sq. ft. per occupant is required (i.e., two occupants = 100 sq. ft., 3 occupants = 150 sq. ft.).

- A single family detached home on Summit Hall Road is approximately 2,400 square feet. The maximum occupancy would be 11 occupants.
- A town home in Foxwood has approximately 1,600 square feet. The maximum occupancy would be 7 occupants.

- Occupancy can be restricted further by the number of approved sleeping areas in the dwelling and relationships of occupants

- **Illegal Occupancy:** The use or occupancy of a building or portion thereof in an unapproved manner.
- Ex: Utilizing rooms for sleeping purposes that don't have the required means of emergency escape
- Ex: Installing a second stove









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- All bedrooms must have two means of emergency escape one being a door or approved window that exits directly to the outside.

Window Requirements

- Must have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet
- Minimum opening height is 24 inches
- Minimum opening width is 20 inches
- Window sill height must not be more than 44 inches above the finished floor grade

Non-approved Egress Window



Approved Egress Window



*Sleeping Rooms also Must
Meet Additional Code:*

Smoke Detectors

Emergency Escape

Lighting

Ventilation

Ceiling Height

Room Width

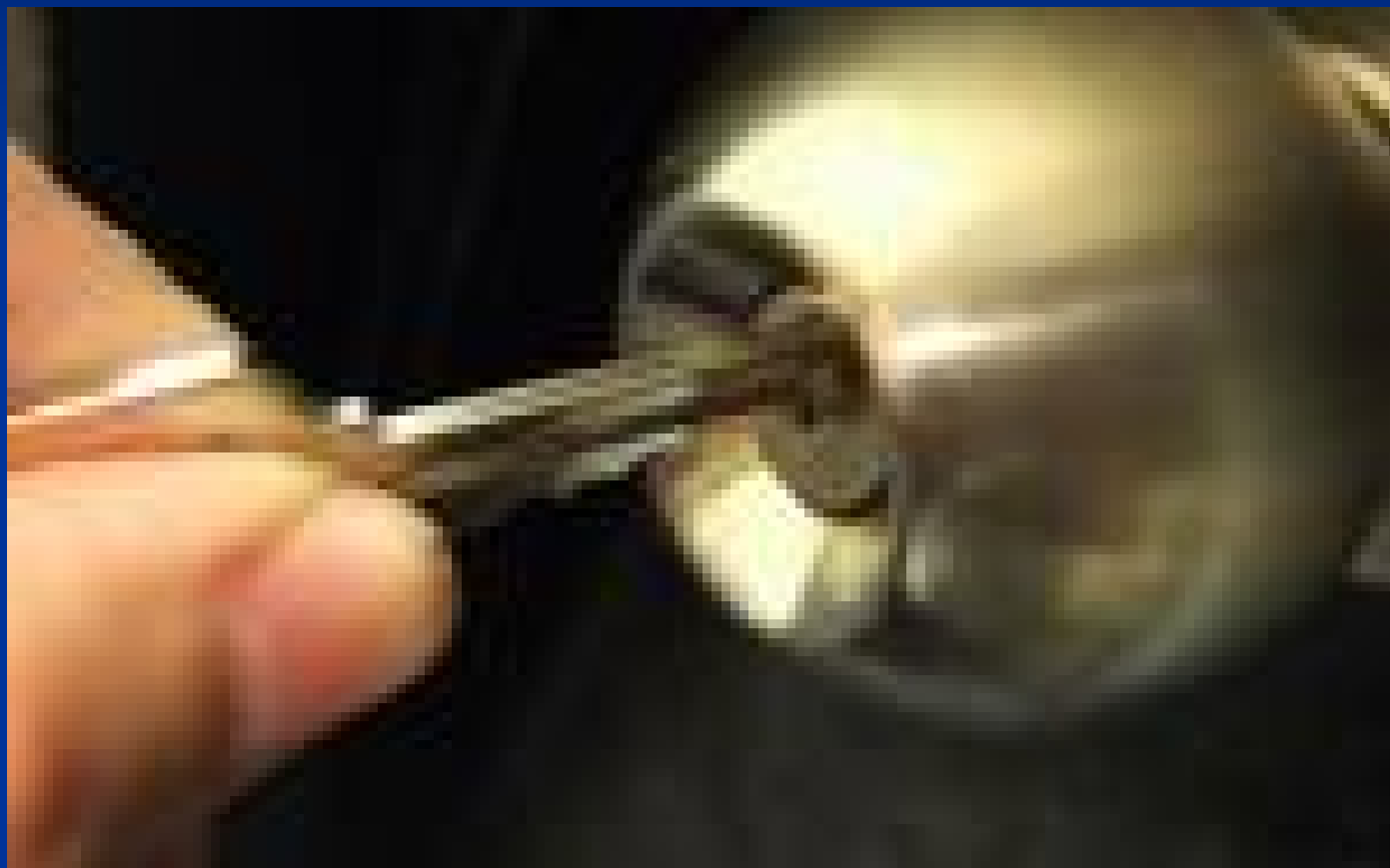
Electrical Receptacles

Heating Facilities

Indicators

- While not always indicative of a violation, some combination of these are often found at homes that are overcrowded or illegally occupied.

Keyed Locks on Bedroom Doors



Several Satellite Dishes



Numerous Adult Bicycles



Large Amounts of Household Garbage



Numerous Vehicles



Walkway to Rear Entrance



Recent Construction or Additions



To report a concern

- 301-258-6340
- Overcrowding@gaitthersburgmd.gov
 - KRoman@gaitthersburgmd.gov
 - SMarquina@gaitthersburgmd.gov
- Neighborhoods@gaitthersburgmd.gov
- Complainants can remain anonymous