

**San Francisco Department of Public Health Environmental Health
Vector Control and Healthy Housing Program Fee
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Does the San Francisco Department of Public Health Environmental Health have the right to charge me and other apartment owners an annual fee? Yes. Effective September 1, 2008, the San Francisco Health Code authorizes the Department of Public Health to collect an annual fee to defray costs necessary to implement a program to ensure that apartment buildings are in compliance with vector (pest) control, sanitation and health standards.

What does it pay for? Beginning in January 2009 Environmental Health staff inspect portions of apartment buildings with three or more occupied rental units to ensure that minimum levels of sanitation are being maintained by the property owners. More specifically, trained technicians look at common areas, yards, garbage storage areas and lobbies for signs of infestations from disease-causing vectors such as rodents, mosquitoes, flies, cockroaches and wild birds, as well as readily identified lead and asbestos hazards or other health code violations. Staff will provide advice on pest prevention, as well as printed materials on a variety of healthy housing topics.

The Healthy Homes Program's goal is to inspect each building once every 3 years. The fee also covers the costs of complaint investigation visits plus one re-inspection visit per year which would otherwise be charged at a rate of \$163 / hour for the first hour and \$81 / hour after that.

How will I be notified of an upcoming inspection? The owners of record will receive a letter from the Healthy Homes program staff at least 10 days prior to an inspection, allowing for confirmation or re-scheduling to a mutually convenient time. Inspections of common areas may also be performed as part of a complaint investigation visit

What determines the amount of the fee charged? The fee is based on the number of rental units. "Rental unit" means a dwelling unit, as that term is defined by Section 401 of the San Francisco Building Code, which is rented or offered for rental at any time during the year, whether rent is paid in money, goods, or services.

What is the Healthy Housing Program Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 09-10?

Number of Rental Apartment Units	Annual Fee 2010
3 units	\$55
4-6 units	\$69
7-10 units	\$93
11-15 units	\$111
16-20 units	\$155
21-30 units	\$181
Over 30 units	\$228

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Why have license fees increased?

Fees initially assessed during fiscal year 2008-09 did not reflect the full cost of the rental apartment inspection program. Thus, the increase in fees assessed for fiscal year 2009-10 reflects the phase-in of the license fees over the initial two years of program development.

Fee increases for some owners are expected for fiscal year 2010-11, primarily due to a re-evaluation of inventory. Fees will also be adjusted to ensure all owners are paying a relatively equivalent share of fee per rental unit.

What if my bill has the wrong number of rental units? Or other incorrect information?

If the information regarding the number of rental units is incorrect on your bill, indicate the correct number of units and pay the appropriate fee based on that number. DPH staff will verify the information at a later date. If only 2 units are being rented, your property is exempt from this ordinance and from any fees. ***You must sign and date the certification statement at the bottom of the bill page and return it to us.***

Why do I have to sign the form every time?

Circumstances change and your signature certifies that the information we have on file for the property is still correct, or, should be updated to reflect the new information that you provide.

What happens if I don't pay the fee?

The Department is authorized to collect unpaid fees by placing a LIEN on the property for the amount owed plus late fees and interest at the rate of one and one half percent (1-1/2%) per month. You will be notified before any lien is placed on your property as required by law.

Are there penalties for paying late?

Yes. Check your invoice. The time between the date of the mailing of the invoice and the date that the payment becomes late will always be at least **45 days**.

- If you pay the fee **after 30 days of the due date**, you must include a **late-payment penalty of \$10**.
- If you pay the fee **after 60 days of the due date**, you must include an **additional late-payment penalty of \$20, (a total of \$30.)**

HEALTH CODE COMPLIANCE

What do I need to know about being in compliance with the Health Code?

See our other document, ***Frequently Asked Questions about Residential Property Owner Responsibilities for Pest Prevention (Vector Control)*** for tips on preparing your property to pass inspection and stay in compliance with SF and CA Health codes.