1	H.229
2	Introduced by Representative Stevens of Waterbury
3	Date:
4	Subject: Commerce and trade; residential rental agreements; minimum
5	habitability standards
6	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish
7	minimum habitability standards for rental housing.
8	An act relating to rental housing
9	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
10	Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. chapter 137, §§ 4451–4469a are designated as:
11	Subchapter 1. Rental Agreements
12	Sec. 2. 9 V.S.A. chapter 137, subchapter 2 is added to read:
13	Subchapter 2. Minimum Habitability Standards
14	§ 4469b. RENTAL HOUSING; MINIMUM HABITABILITY
15	STANDARDS; GENERAL PROVISIONS
16	(a) The purpose of these standards is to protect the health, safety, and
17	well-being of the occupants of rental housing by establishing minimum
18	habitability standards for all residential rental housing in Vermont.
19	(b) Each rental property in the State must comply with all applicable
20	housing laws and codes, including the laws relating to lead poisoning in

1	18 V.S.A. §§ 1759–1760, the rental housing health code adopted by the
2	Department of Health, the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code adopted by
3	the Department of Public Safety, and regulations regarding potable water and
4	septic systems adopted by the Agency of Natural Resources.
5	(c) For purposes of this subchapter, "dwelling unit" includes all rental
6	dwellings, dwelling units, rooming houses, rooming units, and mobile home
7	lots used as regular residences.
8	(d) The minimum habitability standards described in this subchapter apply
9	to all dwelling units in the State. The standards do not apply to transient
10	occupancy in a hotel, motel, or other lodging licensed by the Department of
11	Health during the time the occupancy is subject to a tax levied under 32 V.S.A.
12	chapter 225.
13	§ 4469c. SANITATION FACILITIES
14	(a) Every dwelling unit shall:
15	(1) Contain the unit space to store, prepare, and serve foods in a sanitary
16	manner.
17	(2) Contain within the unit a flush toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower.
18	(3) Be connected to, and every rental mobile home lot shall have access
19	to, a supply of potable water sufficient in quantity and pressure to meet the
20	ordinary needs of the occupants.

1	(4) Be equipped so that each kitchen sink, lavatory sink, shower, and tub
2	is connected with water-heating facilities capable of safely heating an adequate
3	yield of water.
4	(5) Be connected to, and every rented mobile home lot shall have access
5	to, a public sewage system, if available, or to a properly operating subsurface
6	wastewater disposal system.
7	(b) The owner of any dwelling unit shall provide and maintain appropriate
8	receptacles for the removal of garbage and rubbish and shall ensure that
9	arrangements are made for the removal of garbage and rubbish.
10	(c) The owner of a dwelling unit shall ensure that all common spaces are
11	free from rodent and insect infestation and shall be responsible for the
12	extermination of rodent and insect infestation in all common spaces and in
13	each infested dwelling unit if infestation exists in two or more dwelling units.
14	§ 4469d. BUILDING SYSTEMS
15	(a) Heating facilities in all dwelling units shall be able to maintain a room
16	temperature of at least 65 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms when the
17	outside temperature is less than 55 degrees Fahrenheit.
18	(b) Every habitable room in a dwelling unit shall have ventilation to the
19	outdoors, including at least one window or door that can be opened to the
20	outdoors without tools, and every bathroom shall have ventilation to the
21	outdoors.

1	(c) Every habitable room in a dwelling unit shall contain at least two
2	duplex electrical outlets or one duplex electrical outlet and a light fixture, and
3	each bathroom and entrance shall be adequately lit.
4	§ 4469e. STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS
5	Every dwelling unit shall be weather-tight, waterproof, rodent-proof, and in
6	good repair.
7	§ 4469f. LEAD PAINT
8	(a) Owners of rental housing built before 1978 shall ensure that essential
9	maintenance practices (EMP) are performed by a person certified to do so,
10	shall file an EMP compliance statement annually with the Department of
11	Health, the owner's insurance carrier, and an adult tenant in each rented unit of
12	the property, and shall comply with the provisions of 18 V.S.A. chapter 38.
13	(b) No person shall disturb more than one square foot of lead paint using
14	unsafe work practices in any rental housing unit unless authorized to do so by
15	the Department of Health.
16	§ 4469g. LIFE SAFETY
17	(a) Every dwelling unit shall have smoke alarms which shall be directly
18	wired to the unit's electrical system, and the smoke alarms shall have battery
19	backup. Smoke alarms installed after June 15, 2009 shall be the
20	photoelectric type.

§ 4451. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter subchapter:

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1	(b) Every dwelling unit shall have carbon monoxide alarms which shall be
2	directly wired to the unit's electrical system, and the carbon monoxide alarms
3	shall have battery backup.
4	(c) The exits and means of escape from a dwelling unit or building shall be
5	of sufficient size to allow escape and shall be kept clear and unobstructed.
6	(d) All fuel-burning heating appliances shall be inspected and vented to the
7	outside of the building.
8	§ 4469h. MOBILE HOMES ON A RENTED LOT
9	Every mobile home lot shall provide a connection to electrical services,
10	water supply, and sewage disposal.
11	§ 4469i. MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES; ENFORCEMENT
12	(a) Nothing in this subchapter shall prevent a municipality from adopting
13	habitability standards for rental housing that are more stringent than the
14	requirements of this subchapter.
15	(b) The provisions of this subchapter may be enforced by local health
16	officers as described in 18 V.S.A. chapter 11 and by municipal enforcing
17	officers as described in 24 V.S.A. chapter 123.
18	Sec. 3. 9 V.S.A. § 4451 is amended to read:

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1	Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 4152 is amended to read:
2	§ 4152. —CONTENTS
3	(a) When completed, the grand list of a town shall be in such form as the
4	director Director prescribes and shall contain such information as the director
5	<u>Director</u> prescribes, including:
6	* * *
7	(9) Separate columns which will show the listed valuations of
8	homesteads as defined in subdivision 5401(7) of this title and housesites as
9	defined under subdivision 6061(11) of this title;
10	(10) A notation whether a taxpayer's real property includes residential
11	rental housing with more than a single dwelling unit.
12	* * *
13	Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.