

rental properties is the first step, but creating an inspection program is another. Historically, most municipal governments are reluctant to enter into an inspection agreement for a number of reasons, including but not limited to:

- No funding
- No legal department
- Liability issues
- No administrative support
- No capacity to manage a program
- Inability to find qualified people

Next Steps

Conservatively, there are currently an estimated 10,000+ rentals, but the fact is, we simply do not have an accurate number. Rentals can be advertised on-line, in the paper, on social media, by word of mouth, with signs on the side of the road and surely other ways. On average, an inspector conducts 300-400 building inspections a year thus a range of 33-44 inspectors would be required to complete the inspections. These numbers represent a basic characterization but, as you can see this type of initiative is not possible.

The Division of Fire Safety is committed to protecting Vermonters and those who visit our state. The following items will be completed in short order to assist in making rental homes safer:

- Develop a self-inspection checklist which we can distributed to all stakeholder groups
- Provide safety information on our web page specific to short term rentals
- Sponsor safety workshops to owners, real-estate agents, contractors, and attorneys
- Public Service Announcements

Public Health Education

From a public health protection perspective, the Department of does not see health sanitation inspections as necessary or appropriate at this time, particularly given the significant resources that would be needed, something in the order of 10-15 more inspectors. This is consistent with the approach taken by other states and municipalities, none of which have mandated sanitation inspections in short-term rentals. As the Department highlighted in the Act 157 legislative report, it is important to ensure that the consumer is informed that short-term rentals who do not fall under the licensing and inspection jurisdiction of the Food and Lodging Program and should provide posted notice in some form to guests alerting them to the fact that the unit has not had a health inspection. Along with the consumer, the short-term rentals owners should be aware of health and safety issues and the Department plans to assist The Division of Fire Safety with educational materials.

Tourism Partnerships

The tourism industry continues to utilize technology and internet-based platforms to provide travelers with simplified options to book rooms, book airline tickets, rent cars or create travel itineraries. The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing is committed to working with the Vermont Department of Taxes, the Vermont Department of Public Safety, the Vermont Department of Health and Vermont tourism business stakeholders to find the most logical and fair solutions to new challenges that will inevitably face this industry. The Department of Tourism also recommends collaboration with commercial insurance carriers in the state to conduct training and outreach to the short-term rental community.