



## **Tuolumne County Fire Department**

In Cooperation with **CAL FIRE**

*Proudly serving the County of Tuolumne, Groveland, Jamestown, Columbia, and Columbia College*

Nick Casci, County Fire Chief  
Andrew Murphy, Assistant County Fire Chief

18440 Striker Ct. • Sonora, CA 95370  
Tel: (209) 533-5118 • Fax: (209) 533-5103

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**January 29, 2024**

### **Short-Term Rentals Require Fire and Life Safety Inspection**

*Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors approved Ordinance Code Chapter 8.70 related to Fire and Life Safety Inspections for Short-Term rentals in the unincorporated areas of Tuolumne County.*

To keep all Tuolumne County residents and visitors safer, effective January 19, 2024, it is unlawful to maintain, operate, or use a short-term rental in the unincorporated areas of Tuolumne County without a Tuolumne County Fire Department (TCFD) Fire and Life Safety Inspection. All inspections shall be renewed every two (2) years. During the implementation period of the new Ordinance, you may continue to operate your short-term rental. You will not be deemed in violation as long as you contact our office to schedule your inspection (s) 45 days after receiving your Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) return (s). TOT returns for short-term rentals will be mailed quarterly starting March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Owners shall have an agent authorized to represent the short-term rental on their behalf, including but not limited to, a property management company, and/or a local contact person year-round.

A short-term rental, also known as a peer-to-peer rental, can be a commercially solicited rental, single-family dwelling, a secondary dwelling unit, multifamily dwelling unit, studio, condominium, townhouse, duplex, guesthouse, bedroom within an existing residential unit, tiny home, cabin, multi-person dwelling, yurt or similar structure, rented for the purpose of overnight lodging for a period of not less than one night and not more than thirty (30) days.

#### **The Ordinance requires the following:**

Interior Posting- of a local contact person and emergency evacuation information.

Smoke Alarms- in each bedroom and at least one alarm on every level including basements and habitable attics.



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Carbon Monoxide Alarms- where there are fuel-fired appliances or fireplaces and shall be installed outside each bedroom on every level of the unit, including basements and habitable attics.

Fire Extinguisher- one five-pound type 2-A:10-B:C installed at a readily available location near the kitchen. If more than one level, an extinguisher must be mounted within each level and inspected annually by a certified professional.

Visible Address- Each short-term rental is to have an address identification following Tuolumne County Ordinance Code 12.12.080

Defensible Space- shall meet all the requirements of California Public Resource Code 4291 and Tuolumne County's Hazardous Vegetation Ordinance 8.14, which can be found on the web at [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org) and [www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/165/Tuolumne-County-Ordinance-Code](http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/165/Tuolumne-County-Ordinance-Code)

Short-term rental Ordinance 8.70 can be found on the web at [www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/165/Tuolumne-County-Ordinance-Code](http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/165/Tuolumne-County-Ordinance-Code)

Please contact the Tuolumne County Fire Prevention Division at, 209-533-5502, or email [fireprevention@co.tuolumne.ca.us](mailto:fireprevention@co.tuolumne.ca.us) after receiving your TOT returns, to schedule your Fire and Life Safety Inspection today.

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## Fire Safety at Your Home Away from Home

Peer-to-peer hospitality services, such as Airbnb, Vacation Rentals by Owner and other types of vacation rentals are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Act as your own safety advocate and know before you go. Be sure the following safety measures are addressed.

### SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ Working smoke alarms are in every sleeping room. They are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home.
- ✓ Working smoke alarms are interconnected, if possible. When one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ✓ Portable fire extinguishers are in the home and are easy to reach.
- ✓ Working carbon monoxide alarms are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home and in other locations as required by laws, codes, or standards.
- ✓ The owner has posted a floor plan. It notes all escape routes and exits and provides emergency contact information.
- ✓ Everyone knows the address of the home.
- ✓ Everyone staying in the home has identified two ways out of every room and how to escape in an emergency.
- ✓ All doors and windows that lead outside are able to be opened.
- ✓ An outside meeting place has been chosen. It is a safe distance away from the home.
- ✓ Everyone knows how to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from a cell phone from outside.
- ✓ If smoking is allowed, a smoking area has been designated and is well away from the structure. Deep, sturdy ashtrays have been provided.
- ✓ All pathways are free and clear of tripping hazards.
- ✓ Electrical outlets are free from multiple cords and adaptors.
- ✓ The stovetop is clear. Anything that can catch fire is not near the stovetop, such as curtains and towels.

### WINDOW AND DOOR ALERT!

Be on the lookout for rooms with tiny windows. These are too small to serve as a means of escape.

Security bars on doors and windows can trap people in a fire. Make sure any security bars have quick-release devices. Tools, keys, or special efforts should not be needed to open them.

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Peer-to-peer hospitality services are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Do your homework before making a reservation. Check online to see your travel destination's regulations for rental properties. Ask your host if the property meets the regulations. Discuss other safety concerns you may have.

Check the forecast in case of storms that could cause power outages; assure the property has equipment (batteries, lanterns, etc.) in the event of a power outage.



**NATIONAL FIRE  
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**  
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on fire, electrical and related hazards



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