



**PLUMB INC**

CA LICENSE C-36 #1095692

PROPERTY MANAGER RESOURCE — FREE DOWNLOAD

# The LA Property Manager's Annual Plumbing Inspection Checklist

Stay Code-Compliant & Avoid Costly Emergency Calls

A reactive plumbing strategy costs 4–10× more than a preventive one. This checklist gives you everything you need to run annual plumbing inspections across your units — stay DWP-compliant, catch problems early, and protect your NOI.

**1** Per-unit walkthrough checklist + common area inspection

**2** LA DWP compliance notes: lead pipes & water heater requirements

**3** Water heater inspection checklist with age/condition scoring

**4** Signs of aging sewer lines in LA's older building stock

**5** Repair vs. replace decision matrix for major plumbing systems

**6** Annual, quarterly & monthly maintenance scheduling template

**Plumb Inc** · Commercial & Multi-Unit Plumbing Specialists

CA License C-36 #1095692 · Licensed · Bonded · Insured

Serving West LA + San Fernando Valley · Available 24/7

**100+**  
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Emergency Coverage

## Section 1 — Per-Unit Inspection Checklist

Complete for each residential unit during annual walkthrough. Check boxes as you inspect. Flag any item for follow-up with a circled F.

### KITCHEN

- Under-sink supply lines** — inspect for corrosion, bulging, or moisture staining on cabinet floor. Check shut-off valve operation.
- Faucet & aerator** — check for drips at base and spout. Remove aerator, check for scale buildup from LA hard water. Replace if blocked.
- Dishwasher connection** — inspect drain hose for kinks; check for leaks at the standpipe connection. Verify air gap is installed if required.
- Garbage disposal** — test operation; check for leaks at mount and drain flange. Note age (replace if 10+ years).
- Drain flow rate** **TEST** — run water for 30 sec; slow drainage indicates grease buildup. Document for scheduling hydro-jet service.

### BATHROOM(S) — REPEAT PER BATH

- Toilet flush & fill** — flush and observe: should complete within 60 sec. Lift tank lid; check flapper, float, fill valve. Listen for running after fill.
- Toilet base** **REQUIRED** — check for soft flooring, staining, or caulking gaps. These indicate a failed wax ring causing hidden subfloor damage.
- Shower/tub caulking** — inspect all grout lines and caulk joints for cracking or mold. Failed caulk = water intrusion into walls and subfloor.
- Shower drain** — test drainage speed; remove cover and inspect for hair/scale buildup. Check visible trap for corrosion.
- Vanity supply lines** — check flexible supply lines for stiffness, cracking, or bulging. Lines older than 8 years should be replaced proactively.
- Exhaust fan operation** — test for proper operation. Inadequate ventilation = moisture = mold in wall cavities. Note if missing.

### LAUNDRY AREA (IF IN-UNIT)

- Washing machine hoses** **PRIORITY** — rubber hoses are a top cause of catastrophic unit flooding. Replace with steel-braided hoses every 5 years.
- Drain standpipe** — check that standpipe is 18–30" tall and not sealed (causes backflow). Inspect for slow drainage.

- Lint trap & dryer vent** — inspect for blockage. A blocked dryer vent is a fire hazard. Clean annually; more often for high-use units.

## Section 2 — Common Area Inspection

### MECHANICAL ROOM / UTILITY AREAS

- Main water shut-off valve** — test operation (should operate smoothly). Label clearly. Ensure all staff know its location.
- Water meter area** **TEST** — check meter read with all water off. Any movement indicates a leak in the supply lines or common areas.
- Pressure reducing valve (PRV)** — test outlet pressure (should be 50–80 PSI). High pressure accelerates fixture wear across all units.
- Common-area clean-outs** — verify access is clear (not blocked by storage). Required for sewer cleaning access.
- Sewer clean-out caps** **REQUIRED** — all clean-out caps must be present and sealed. Open clean-outs release sewer gas (methane hazard).



#### Documentation Best Practice

Photograph any flagged item during inspection. Create a timestamped record for each unit. This documentation protects you in disputes and demonstrates due diligence for insurance claims.

## Section 3 — LA DWP Compliance Notes



### Lead Service Lines — California AB 2106 Compliance

California law requires landlords to disclose known lead service lines to tenants. Properties built before 1986 may have lead supply lines or lead solder in copper joints. The LA DWP Lead Service Line Replacement Program may cover replacement costs — contact DWP directly to check eligibility.

### Water Heater Age Requirements

LA LAMC §94.1102 requires commercial water heaters (serving 3+ units) to have annual inspection of the T&P relief valve and anode rod. Water heaters must be seismically strapped per LAMC §94.1102.0.

### Backflow Prevention

LA DWP requires backflow prevention devices on all commercial connections (4+ units). Annual testing is required by a certified tester. File your test report with DWP by the due date on your device tag.

## SECTION 4 — WATER HEATER INSPECTION CHECKLIST

- Age / manufacture date** — read serial number (first 4 digits = year/week of manufacture on most brands). Note: 10 yr = approaching end-of-life; 12+ yr = replacement recommended.
- T&P relief valve** **REQUIRED** — manually lift test lever briefly (hold a bucket below). Should release water, then reseal. A valve that won't open or won't reseal = replace immediately.
- Seismic strapping** **REQUIRED** — verify double-strap installation (upper 1/3 and lower 1/3 of tank). Non-strapped water heaters fail LA inspection and create liability.
- Anode rod** — commercial tanks: inspect every 3 years; replace if less than 6mm diameter or coated with calcium. Neglected anode rods cause early tank failure.
- Sediment flush** — drain 1–2 gallons from drain valve annually to remove calcium sediment (especially critical in LA hard water). Sediment cuts efficiency and accelerates corrosion.
- Gas connection (gas units)** — inspect flexible connector for corrosion; verify no yellow-tipped flame from burner (indicates incomplete combustion). No CO smell near unit.
- Expansion tank** **CODE** — buildings with a PRV must have an expansion tank on the water heater. Without it, thermal expansion causes T&P valve to discharge repeatedly.
- Drain pan** — all water heaters should have a drain pan connected to a drain line. Inspect pan for rust and standing water.

## Section 5 — Aging Sewer Line Warning Signs

Most LA apartment buildings constructed before 1970 have original cast iron or clay sewer laterals. These are reaching or past their 50–75 year lifespan.

### Root Intrusion

Ficus, magnolia, and palm trees are common in LA. Their roots seek water — and find it in aging clay pipe joints. Symptoms: recurring clogs, slow drains in multiple units simultaneously.

### Belly / Negative Grade

Soil settling over decades creates dips (bellies) where waste accumulates. Signs: frequent backups, gurgling drains, sewer odor inside units — especially on ground floor.

### Pipe Corrosion

Cast iron in contact with LA's mineral-rich soil corrodes from the outside in. If you have had a camera inspection showing 50%+ rust penetration — plan for replacement within 2–3 years.



### Camera Inspection: The Only Way to Know for Sure

Plumb Inc performs sewer camera inspections for multi-unit properties. You'll receive a recorded video and written report showing pipe condition, root intrusion, belly locations, and crack assessment — exactly what you need to plan ahead vs. react to emergencies.

## Section 6 — Repair vs. Replace Decision Matrix

Use this matrix when making capital planning decisions. "Repair" defers cost short-term; "Replace" protects long-term NOI and avoids emergency calls.

System	Age / Condition	Recommendation	Notes
<b>Water Heater</b>	Under 8 years, 1 issue	<b>Repair</b>	Single repair cost-effective if under 40% of replacement
<b>Water Heater</b>	8–12 years, recurring issues	<b>Evaluate</b>	Compare repair cost + risk vs. new unit efficiency gains
<b>Water Heater</b>	12+ years or leaking tank	<b>Replace</b>	Don't repair a leaking tank. Failure risk too high.
<b>Sewer Lateral</b>	<25% damage, clear root intrusion	<b>Repair + Root Foam</b>	Annual hydro-jet + root foaming extends life 3–5 years
<b>Sewer Lateral</b>	25–60% damage, belly or cracks	<b>Trenchless Lining</b>	CIPP lining restores full flow; 50-year rated liner
<b>Sewer Lateral</b>	60%+ damage, multiple failures	<b>Replace (Trenchless)</b>	Trenchless pipe bursting — no yard excavation required
<b>Copper Supply Lines</b>	Any age, pinhole leaks	<b>Repair + Monitor</b>	Multiple pinholes = acidic water or galvanic corrosion; repipe likely needed
<b>Galvanized Supply Lines</b>	30+ years	<b>Replace</b>	Corrosion inevitable. Plan repipe in capital budget.
<b>Flexible Supply Lines</b>	8+ years (rubber), any age (braided)	<b>Replace Proactively</b>	Rubber supply lines are a top flood cause in multi-unit buildings

## Section 7 — Maintenance Schedule Template

Annual	Quarterly	Monthly	After Each Turn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full per-unit inspection (this checklist)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common area drain flow check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review water bill for spike &gt;10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect under sinks for staining</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water heater flush + T&amp;P test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water meter leak test (all water off)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check common-area faucets for drips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test all faucets and toilets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backflow device testing (DWP required)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect irrigation system shut-offs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify clean-out caps are in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check supply line age</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sewer camera inspection (buildings 30+ yrs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review tenant maintenance requests</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photograph any concerns</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRV pressure test + adjustment</li> </ul>			

## Free First Inspection for 5+ Unit Properties

Plumb Inc offers a complimentary plumbing inspection for property managers with 5 or more units. We provide a written condition report, camera footage of your sewer lateral, and a maintenance contract proposal — no obligation.

[plumbinc.net/booking](https://plumbinc.net/booking)

Or call (888) 852-0055  
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