



Prince William County Government
Board of County Supervisors



How Property Code Enforcement helps Preserve Neighborhoods

*Dedicated to Improving the Quality of
Life for Our Citizens*

Our Mission



Our mission is to provide a safe, clean and healthy community through education, community support and property code enforcement.

- Property Codes help maintain the health, safety and quality of life in our communities
- Property Code Enforcement staff works to ensure our communities are properly maintained by educating Citizens and through the enforcement of County, Commonwealth, and International Codes & Standards



Who We Are



Property Code Enforcement is a function of the Neighborhood Services Division of Public Works:

- Division Chief
- Administration
 - Intake
- Inspections Chiefs
 - 15 Inspectors
- Neighborhood Coordinator
 - Field Supervisor
 - Neighborhood Specialist
 - 3 – 3man Litter Crews



Chief Inspectors



- Review cases and work with Inspectors to ensure best practices are employed on each case
- Provide support and oversight on multi-faceted cases
- Use management tools and resources to work with HOA Board members and Community Leaders to address ongoing PCE concerns in a community



Inspectors



- Respond to reports of Property Code concerns
- Provide education and tools to help homeowners correct violations
- Investigate calls for concern & Initiate cases when appropriate
- Work with HOA Board members and Community Leaders to identify solutions to prevent future cases



Investigation Process



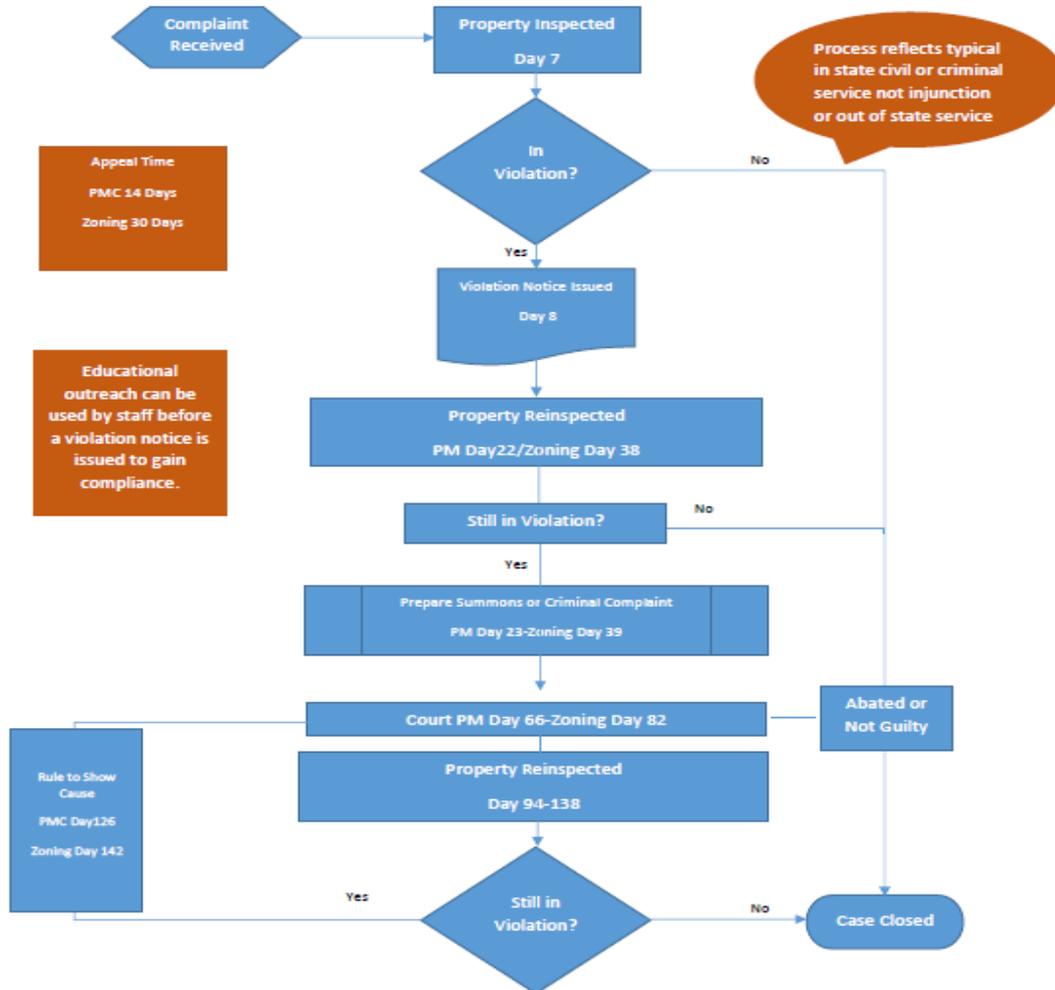
- Investigate complaint 1 to 5 Days
- Issue Violation Notice 5 to 30 days
- Appeal time
- Reinspection/ Court Action 30 to 45 days
- Court Hearing 70 to 90 Days
- Abatement Order 30 days after Court Hearing
- Noncompliance requires Second Court Action



Compliance Times for Abatement Vary:



Property Code Enforcement Complaint Process



Sources of Complaints



- Citizens
- Board of Supervisors
- State Agencies
- PWC Agencies
- Inspector Initiated
- “Sweeps”



Researching Complaints



- Real Estate Records
- Court Records
- “MAGIC” Search
- DMV
- Virginia SCC
- Virginia-DPOR
- Knock and Talk
- Internet Search



Concentrated Complaints



- “Sweeps” have been used in the past on a request basis when an increase in nuisance violations have occurred.
- An entire neighborhood to include hundreds of properties would be inspected for visible violations.
- Very time consuming and the potential to draw resources from other areas.



Concentrated Complaints



Large area would be canvassed and cases would be immediately opened on violations found.



Concentrated Complaints



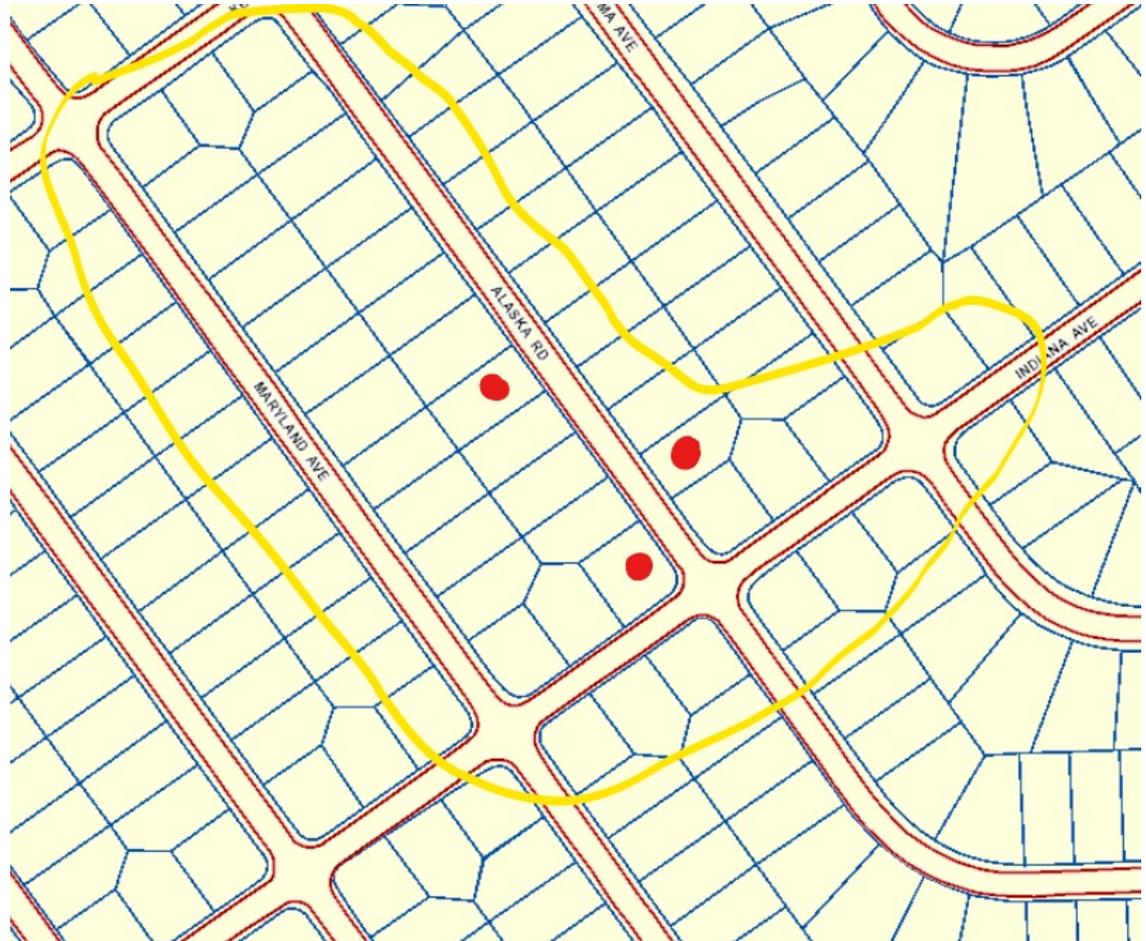
- More recently, response to complaints have been reduced to 1-3 streets close to the area of concern.
- Distribution of a handout advising of the presence of violations at specific location.
- 50% of property owners respond to handout preventing the opening of a case, saving time and manpower.



Concentrated Complaints



- Smaller area to include 1 to 3 streets will be inspected.



Concentrated Complaints



- Flyer hand delivered or posted at property with visible violation.
- Inspector Returns in 10 days to reinspect.



Prince William County Government
Department of Public Works
Neighborhood Services Division
Property Code Enforcement
703-792-7018



Dear Resident,

During a recent visit, it was noted that one or more of the following items may be in violation. Please be advised that a Property Code Enforcement inspector will be re-inspecting this property in approximately 10 days and you may receive an official violation notice if you have not abated any of the following conditions on your property.

- ❑ **Inoperable vehicles** – this means any vehicle that does not have current license plates (tags) or a current inspection sticker parked on private property.
- ❑ **Vehicles parked on the grass** – no vehicles can be parked on grass or gravel. Parking is only permitted on an improved surface such as asphalt or concrete. Pavers are not permitted. Due to the age of your neighborhood, you may be eligible for a Non-Conforming Use permit (NCU) to keep your driveway gravel for a two-year period. Please call 703-792-6830 for details.
- ❑ **Driveway Expansion** – driveways can only be enlarged with zoning approval. If your driveway has been expanded and you do not have zoning approval, please call 703-792-6830 to find out how to get this approved.
- ❑ **All sheds, storage buildings, fences or other structures require zoning approval** even if no building permit is required. You can call the Planning Office at 703-792-6830 to check if you have zoning approval for all structures on your property. There is no such thing as a grandfathered structure. All structures require zoning approval.
- ❑ **Outside Storage** – items are not permitted to be stored outside, such as building materials, tires, equipment, furniture, etc.
- ❑ **Trash** – trash cannot be stored outdoors. All trash must be placed in a container with a lid and removed from the property. The landfill on Dumfries Road is free to all Prince William County residents with proof of residency.
- ❑ **Building Maintenance-** _____

If you have any of the above conditions on your property, we urge you to resolve them NOW.

You may contact our office or the inspector listed below should you have questions regarding these violations and your property. Please feel free to leave a name and phone number on our voice mail so the inspector may return your call.

❑ Inspector (703) 792-XXXX

❑ Inspector (703) 792-XXXX



Common Complaints:



- ⦿ Overcrowding/ Occupancy
- ⦿ Trash Cans & Outside Storage
- ⦿ Building Maintenance Issues
- ⦿ Inoperable Vehicles, Commercial Vehicles
- ⦿ No Zoning Approval
- ⦿ Home Based Businesses
- ⦿ Illegal Signs
- ⦿ Graffiti



Other Complaints



- Site Plan Violations
- NCU Violations
- Land Disturbance
- Enforce complaints regarding development and land use violations.



Overcrowding/Occupancy



Overcrowding complaints are handled using both the Property Maintenance Code and the County Zoning Ordinance. Complaints are taken through our Intake staff and assigned to Inspectors. Both Codes are used to ensure ample living space as well as proper egress to the exterior of the structure.



Overcrowding-Property Maintenance



When occupancy exceeds square footage requirements it is a Code Violation. Spaces within the residence will be evaluated to determine the occupants have an ample amount of living space. This is done by using the Property Maintenance Code which is part of the Uniform Statewide Building Code of Virginia.



Overcrowding-Property Maintenance



Many times overcrowding can be corrected by relocating occupants within the dwelling to rooms with adequate space.



Overcrowding-Zoning Ordinance



When the maximum occupancy of a single family dwelling is reported to be overcrowded, Inspectors will try to determine the number of occupants.

For a dwelling with a total finished area	Number of adult occupants
of up to 1000 square feet	3
from 1001 to 1500 square feet	4
from 1501 to 2000 square feet	5
from 2001 to 2500 square feet	6
from 2501 to 3000 square feet	7
from 3001 to 3500 square feet	8
from 3501 to 4000 square feet	9
over 4000 square feet	10



Overcrowding



■ 32-300.13. - Limitation on occupancy of a dwelling unit.

1. A dwelling unit may be occupied by not more than one (1) of the following:
 - (a) One person or two or more persons related by blood or marriage with any number of offspring, foster children, stepchildren or adopted children subject to the maximum occupancy limitations in subsection (2) and not to exceed two roomers or boarders as permitted by section 32-300.02.18, "Accessory Uses - Boarders/Lodgers".
 - (b) Two single parents or guardians with their dependent children, including offspring, foster children, stepchildren, or adopted children, living and cooking together as a single housekeeping unit.
 - (c) A group of not more than three persons not necessarily related by blood or marriage living and cooking together as a single housekeeping unit; provided that the limitation on the number of unrelated persons shall not apply to residents in a housekeeping unit by persons having handicaps within the meaning of Section 3602 of the Fair Housing Act (43 USC 3601, et seq., as amended).
 - (d) Those groups identified in the Fair Housing Act, Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2291, or like groups licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services which otherwise meet the criteria of Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2291.



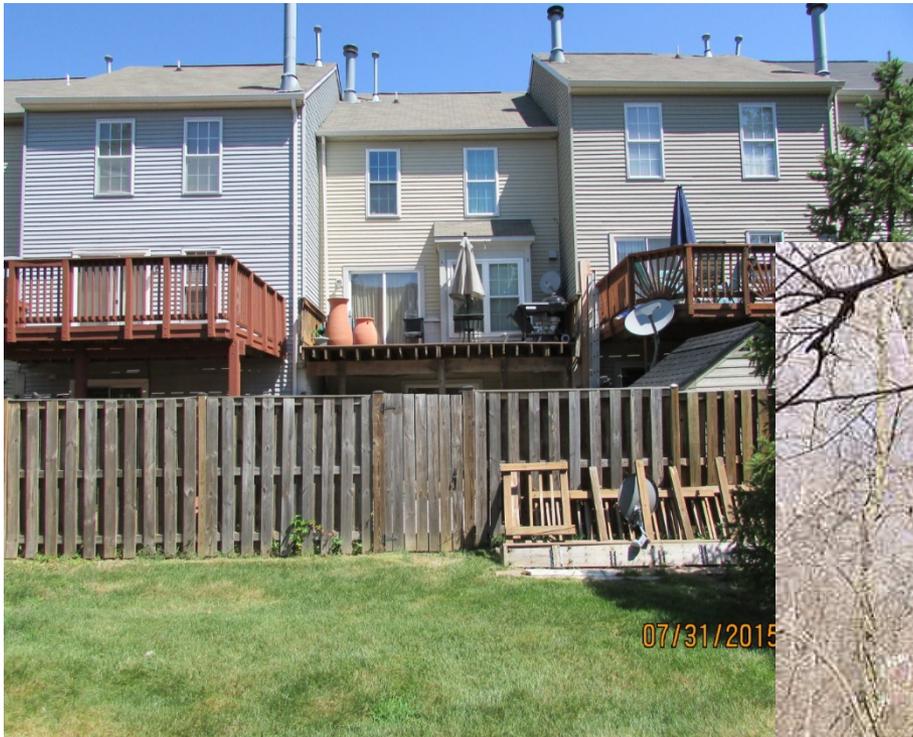
Trash and Outside Storage



Trash and Outside Storage



Building Maintenance Issues



Exterior Building Maintenance Issues



- Gutters and Downspouts
- Decorative Features (Shutters)
- Doors and Windows
- Decks and Handrails
- Exterior Walls and Foundations
- Hazardous Conditions



Building Maintenance Issues



Interior Building Maintenance Issues



- Doors and Windows
- Clearances
- Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical
- Interior Surfaces
- Clutter and excessive storage “Hoarding”



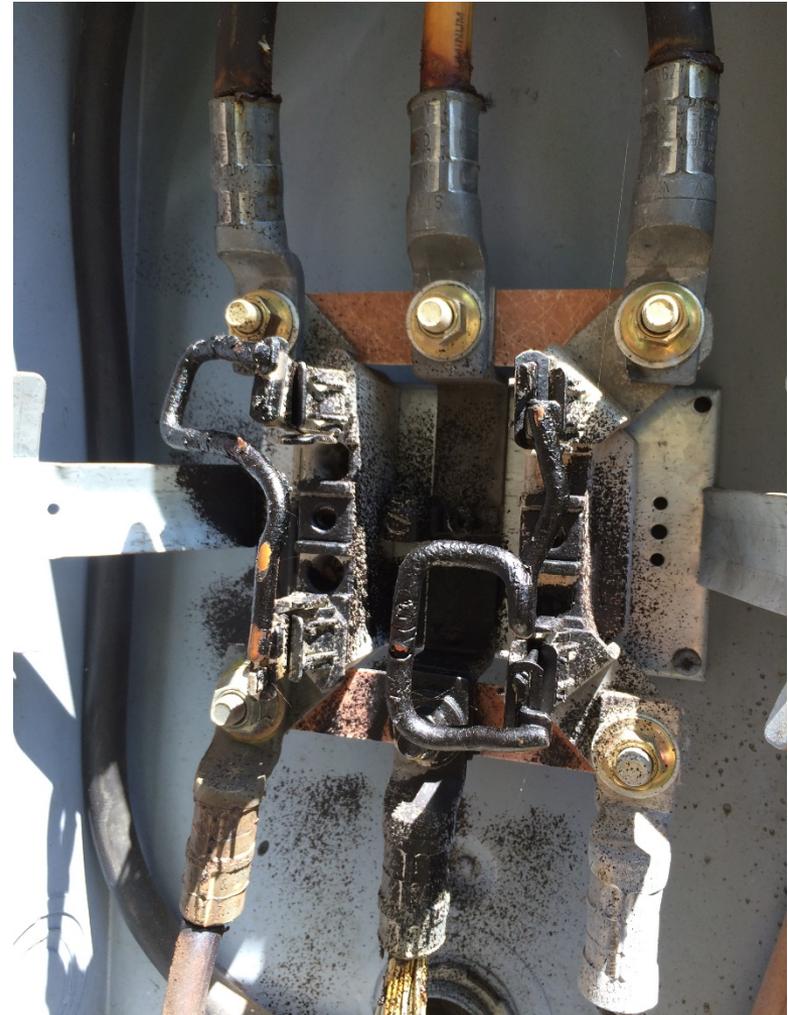
Pathways and Access "Clutter"



Interior Surfaces



Building Maintenance Issues



Installation-Work without Permits



Building Permits are Always Required For:



- Porches & Decks
- Additions
- Garages & Carports
- Finished Basements
- Sheds Greater than 256 sq. ft
- *Fences Greater than 6 ft. in height
- All retaining walls over 24 inches in height
- Swimming Pools & Spas
- Removing or changing structural supports
- Lawn irrigation systems
- Prefabricated fireplaces installation & woodstove inserts
- Installing doors or windows
- Replacing oil or gas furnaces or gas logs
- New appliances in new locations in the home
- Installing new electrical systems



Zoning Approval is Always Required For:



- Decks
- Additions
- Garages
- Carports
- Fences
- Swimming Pools
- Storage Sheds & Accessory Buildings
- Driveway Expansions
- Home Business



Parking Concerns



■ Inoperative Vehicles



Commercial Vehicles



Commercial vehicles including big rigs are not permitted to park in neighborhoods, though panel vans and vehicles with advertising may be allowed



Home Based Businesses



Approval is required, inspections and permits may be necessary.



Accessory use to Principle Residential Use



Home Based Businesses



Home Business

- Any commercial activity conducted entirely within the dwelling unit as an accessory use to the principle residential use.
- Subject to Special Use Permit.



Home Based Businesses (cont.)



Home Employment

- More intense than Home Occupation
- Allows Customers to come to the dwelling
- Property Restrictions(Sq. Ft. requirements, signage)
- Ex. Accountant, therapist, jewelry repair, pet grooming



Home Based Businesses (cont.)



Home Occupation

- Less intense than Home Employment
- No employees
- Usually for someone who needs to use their home as an address for business.
- Examples... Traveling Sales, Consultant, Government Contractor



Alternatives to Enforcement



- Coordinated Cleanups
- Referral to Community Agencies
- Volunteers



Educational Solutions for Your Community



NSD Solutions

- Contacting NSD with questions on cases
 - Having an Inspector attend a Community Meeting
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- NLG Meetings that help Community Leaders share info and best practices
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- Referrals to NSD Community Partners like PMAH, KPWB, or HFH
 - Dumpster Day Events
 - Contact info for SWD to facilitate trash drop off
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Peer to Peer Solutions

- Advisory Committees
 - Community Meetings
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- Meetings with your Property Manager (if applicable)
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- Organized clean ups
 - Dropping off bulk items at NSD-Organized Dumpster Day Events
 - Bulk Trash Collection Day with help of your Waste Hauler
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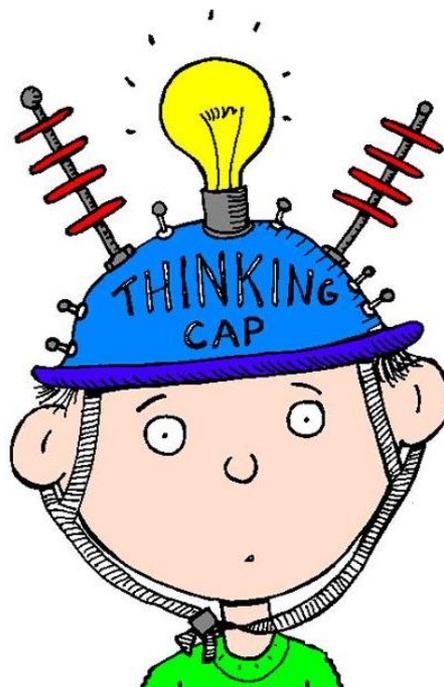


What do you think?



Are there Violations in my Neighborhood?

There is often a thin line between what is permissible (not a Violation of Codes and Ordinances) and what is Code Violation. If you have questions, call Neighborhood Services at 703-792-7018.



Questions

