

Common Code Enforcement Violations

Code Enforcement mission is to ensure that all properties follow all codes within the City of Pontiac and that they are maintained in a clean, safe, and attractive manner. Violations are issued by Code Enforcement Officers under several local and state laws and the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code. Nuisances are activities or conditions that cause blight or blighting factors upon any property in the City whether owned, leased, or occupied by such persons.

The City of Pontiac has a strong interest in maintenance and conservation of existing and future building stock. Early prevention with proactive inspections assures the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of Pontiac residents. As a part of this effort, the City requires Vacant Properties to be registered with the City and Residential Rental Properties to be inspected every three years. A Certificate of Compliance assures the occupant of a residential unit that the rental property is registered and meets the minimum standards for occupancy.

Property Maintenance Violations –

Tall Grass and Noxious Weeds – Uncut grass over eight (8”) tall must be cut. Any ornamental plants or grasses located within planting beds are exempt. The maintenance of lawns and grasses located in the parkway areas between the sidewalk and the street are the responsibility of the adjacent property owners. If the grass is not cut by the date specified in the Official Warning Notice, the City may send out a contractor to cut the grass. The grass cutting bill plus \$100 administration fee will be placed on the next property tax bill.

Inoperable or Unregistered Vehicles – Inoperable motor vehicles cannot be stored in any yard except in a fully enclosed building. Inoperable vehicles do not display current license tabs and/or are not equipped with all parts to legally and safely operate on public streets.

Blight – Poorly maintained properties that will likely have negative financial impacts upon neighboring properties and are visually unappealing. For all buildings, all exterior surfaces must be sealed against rain, weather, insects, and other pests. Doors, windows, and screens must be in good repair, operate properly, and lock. Driveways and sidewalks must be in good repair and free of debris. All buildings, fences, pools, and other structures must be structurally sound and maintained in good repair. Fences must be erect and without missing boards. Any rotted wood, broken or missing boards, siding, roof shingles, soffit, fascia, stairs, railings, etc. must be repaired.

Attractive Nuisances – Items that may prove to be of interest to children and others including abandoned pools, refrigerators and other appliances, neglected machinery, excavations, and stagnant water must be addressed.

Outdoor Storage – Storage of indoor items outside or such items as old bicycles and lawn mowers, etc. and use of tarps over items visible from roadway is not permissible.

Junk, Trash, or Debris – These items include junk, auto parts, appliances, furniture, building materials, tires, trash, and debris such as tree trimmings and fallen limbs cannot be left in the yard and must be properly disposed of.

Sidewalks with Snow and Ice (GO 102-222)– To ensure public safety, all sidewalks are to be cleared of snow and ice within 24 hours after snow/ice storm.

Vehicles Parked On Unpaved Areas – Vehicles may only be parked on areas paved with impervious dustless surfaces comprised of asphalt, concrete, brick pavers, or some other permanent material. Parking on grass or in unpaved portions of front yards is not permitted. Vehicles must be parked only on paved driveways.

Improper Storage of recreational vehicles, campers, boats, or utility trailers – none of these items may be stored within the front yard of a residence, even if on the driveway. Only one recreational vehicle/camper/boat may be stored with an additional utility trailer. These items may only be stored in the side or rear yards on paved surfaces ten feet from any structure.

Dead, Diseased, or Hazardous Trees – Dangerous, dead, or dying trees that are not located in the parkway strip between the sidewalk and the street are the responsibility of the property owner. All dangerous trees must be taken down and large dead branches must be removed. Tree trunks that have been cut down, large limbs, and branches must be hauled away.

Trash and Recycling Receptacles Stored Visibly in Front or Side Yard – Garbage cans and recycling bins are a visual nuisance and must not be stored in the front yard or visibly in the side yard of any structure.

Delivery of Trash Receptacles to the Street – Trash, recycling, and yard waste should not be placed to the curb sooner than 6 PM the day prior to scheduled pick-up. All food related waste should be kept in rodent-proof containers with tight fitting lids (no bags). Collection begins at 7 AM on your trash day, and empty containers are to be removed from the curb within 24 hours after trash pick-up. Pontiac’s Department of Public Works Sanitation Code Enforcement Officer monitors this requirement.

Prohibited Signs - Rotating, flashing or animated signs, or roof-mounted signs are not permitted. Temporary signs in the right-of-way are also not permitted and will be removed by Code Enforcement Officers and disposed of. Signs may not be secured to utility poles.

Dangerous Buildings – Damaged buildings, buildings open to trespass, and buildings with broken windows are not permitted. Foreclosed and abandoned homes must comply with all health and safety codes. Buildings must not be open to the elements.

Premises Identification – Every principal building on a lot must be identified by legible address numbers, visible from the road right-of-way. Address numbers enable first responders to quickly find the appropriate location of an emergency call.

Infestation (GO 22-611) – Rodents - All places that may harbor rodents in yards or within homes must be eliminated, and poison distributed in a safe manner. All holes in structures must be filled-in to prevent rodents from being able to move inside structures.

Infestation (GO 22-611) – Bugs – Infestations of bugs must be safely addressed by the property owner.

Overgrown/Unkempt Landscaping – All site landscaping must be maintained in a trimmed and tidy manner.

Stormwater – No rain run-off or flooding that leaves a site and creates a public nuisance on an adjoining property is permitted.

Donation Boxes – These large boxes cannot be located within the public right-of-way and property owners must grant permission for them to be located on their properties.

Licensing Violations –

Annual Business License – Every business operating within the City of Pontiac must obtain a business license from the City.

Operation of Businesses in Residential District – Unless it is a permitted home-based business, commercial and industrial businesses cannot be located within residential districts.

Unregistered Residential Rental (GO 22-763) – All rental properties must be inspected every three years to ensure life safety issues are maintained and the property is in good repair. Each rental unit within the building must also be inspected and a Certificate of Compliance issued.

Unregistered Vacant Property (GO 22-910) – To deter potential blight, all vacant buildings must be registered with the City each year and property owners must check on the properties every two weeks throughout the year to ensure that they remain secure and not open to trespass.

Working without Permit(s) – To ensure all work is completed to code, all work finished on commercial properties and work completed by contractors on residential properties must have an appropriate building permit. Most non-maintenance work on single family residential properties requires a permit as well.

Zoning Ordinance Violations –

Clear Vision Area (ZO 2.302) – To protect bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists, clear sight vision areas must be maintained at all street corners.

Woodland Preservation (ZO 4.602) – Requirements are designed to preserve existing trees and limit impacts of new development upon existing woodlands.

Signage (ZO 5.100) – All signage must comply with the signage requirements found within the Zoning Ordinance for size and placement.

Livestock (ZO 4.206) – Up to three livestock may be permitted on lots measuring larger than two acres.

Barrier-free Parking Requirement and Signage (ZO 4.305) – Accessible Parking Spaces and the required signage must be maintained at all parking lots in the numbers proscribed in the Michigan Barrier-Free code.

Parking Lot Maintenance (ZO 4.301) – Parking lots must be maintained in a good manner.

Commercial Vehicles Parked In Residential Districts (ZO – 4.205) – Only one commercial vehicle, under one-and-one-half ton capacity or small cargo van, may be permitted to be parked on a residential property, either along-side or to the rear of the home.

Keeping Animals That Are Prohibited (GO 18-6) – Housing of roosters and any poisonous/dangerous/exotic animals is prohibited.

Exceeding The Allowable Number of Pets (ZO – 4.206.A.1) – Only three pets of the same species may be permanently boarded or kept.

Non-Permitted Uses Within Specific Districts (ZO 2.202) – Only uses expressly permitted within the Zoning Ordinance for a specific district may be allowed within said district.

Other Items may violate local and state codes or the International Property Maintenance Code and Code Enforcement Officers may write tickets against these issues. Each ticket will include a citation to the law/ordinance that prevails.

For more information, several of the different laws and the specific sections are listed below:

Property Maintenance – goal is to ensure that all properties are maintained in a clean, safe, and appropriate manner