

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long does it normally take to clear the title of a code lien?

- A code lien cannot be cleared until the violation is corrected. If corrected, the process can be done within 10 business days.

How long does it typically take a buyer to get a Stipulation Agreement through the City?

- Typically, it can be done within 10 business days.

Can the Agent get water and electricity turned on at a vacant property?

- The owner or agent can get the water turned on in the property owner's name by contacting the appropriate utility company.

What should the Agent do to ensure that escrow is not held-up due to code violations?

- Contact Neighborhood Service at (209)937-8813 and determine if there are violations and have them corrected.
- Inspect the property frequently. If there is evidence of code violations not cited, have the problems corrected. Don't wait until the property is in escrow to start the abatement process.

How can a property owner keep from being cited for garbage toters being left out at a vacant property?

- Keep the garbage toters in the garage or back yard where they are out of site.

Can the garbage service be stopped at a vacant property?

- No, garbage service is mandatory inside city limits. Garbage service cannot be stopped.

What should the Agent do if their telephone call is not returned by a code officer in a timely manner?

- Contact Neighborhood Services at (209)937-8813 and ask to speak to a supervisor. Code officers are to return calls within 24 hours.
- Send a request to Neighborhood Services through "ASK STOCKTON" or NSS@stocktonca.gov and someone will respond.

How should an emergency at a vacant or abandoned property be handled?

- An in-progress emergency like a fire, break-in, or vandalism should be reported to 9-1-1.

EXAMPLES OF CODE VIOLATIONS



Graffiti/Yard Maintenance



Junk/Trash/Debris/Yard Maintenance



Vandalism



**VACANT &
ABANDONED
BUILDINGS &
PROPERTIES**

AGENT EDITION

**Police Department
Neighborhood Services Section
22 East Weber Avenue, Rm 350
Stockton CA 95202**

**Phone: (209) 937-8813
Fax: (209) 937-7264
Email: NSS@stocktonca.gov**

VACANT & ABANDONED BUILDINGS & PROPERTIES

The City of Stockton has an ordinance to protect neighborhoods from becoming blighted through the lack of adequate maintenance and security of vacant buildings and properties, S.M.C. Section 15.32.

Vacant and abandoned properties, and the costs associated with monitoring and upkeep, are the responsibility of property owners and must not become a nuisance and liability to the surrounding community.

Vacant properties and buildings:

- Attract transients and criminal activity, and become a danger to children,
- Increase risk of fire for the building and adjacent properties,
- Become a dumping ground for garbage, junk, debris, and overgrown with weeds and vegetation,
- Attract vandals, encourage graffiti, and disrupt neighborhood stability,
- Depreciate property values and discourage economic development, and
- Deny neighboring property owners and residents the full use and enjoyment of their property.

Property owners subject to this ordinance are required to:

- Comply with all laws and codes, including zoning, historic preservation, housing and building codes.
- Actively monitor and maintain the exterior appearance of the property and inspect vacant or abandoned property at least on a monthly basis.
- Post the property with a sign containing the telephone number(s) to reach a local owner or property manager. (See below)

This property managed by
(name of property owner or manager).

To report problems, please call (telephone
number (s) where property owner or
manager can be reached)

24-hours a day/7 days a week.

- Sign must be 4 by 6 inches, posted on the interior of a window facing the street, to the front of the property.
- Contact telephone numbers must be for both business and non-business hours, 24 hours per day/7 days a week.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What can a Code Enforcement Officer inspect at a vacant property?

- Anything that is open and unsecured and does not violate the owner's expectation of privacy.

How can I find out if there are violations at a vacant property?

- Call neighborhood Services at (209) 937-8813, email NSS@stocktonca.gov, or send a request into the City through "ASK STOCKTON" on the City web site.

How can a property representative get a list of the violations?

- Owners or their agents can call (209) 937-8813.
- Non-owners must submit a Request for Public Information to Neighborhood Services and pay a small fee for the copies. The form can be obtained by contacting Neighborhood Services at (209) 937-8813 or by email at NSS@stocktonca.gov

Why do new violations show up every couple of weeks on some properties?

- Some properties are more susceptible to ongoing vandalism or problems than others. New violations are cited as they are reported.

What should the Agent or Owner do if they need more time to correct violations?

- Contact the code officer who issued the citation and make arrangements for an extension. The code officer's name and phone number are on the citation.

If a Agent asks about violations at a property will it generate an inspection?

- Requests for information do not generate inspections.

Why do violations have to be corrected if the buyer is willing to buy the property "as-is"?

- It depends on the violation. However, we will generally clear the title if the "Buyer" will sign a "Stipulation Agreement" that acknowledges the violations and agrees to the City's conditions to bring them into compliance.