

Code Enforcement Section, Development Services Department

Message from our Assistant Director



Code Connection

“Partnering with our Community to build and maintain a safer San Antonio”

Thank you for partnering with us in making our homes, neighborhoods and community safer. Letting us know what is a priority, gives us the opportunity to review and readjust how we respond to your calls.

This past year, we handled a little over 47,000 complaints. We are responding faster to health and safety complaints (such as high grass) and have maintained an average of 2 days in responding property maintenance calls. Our goal is always to find ways to improve our efficiency and effectiveness in our community.

Front yard parking continues to be one of the most common compliance problems we have in San Antonio. Simply, there are guidelines and standards defining where to park vehicles (and what kind of vehicles) in residential zones. The community has made it clear that this is an important issue. As a result, effective Jan. 1, we increased the priority of these types of calls.

It's a new year, and a time when many new ordinances come into effect. One that will be affecting property maintenance is the Vacant Building Registration Program. Vacant buildings can become health and safety hazards, diminishing the quality of life in the community and neighborhoods. They have a high incidence of code violations and are vulnerable to fires. This pilot program affects specific areas in our City. You can find out more about it on one of

the featured articles in this issue.

One last thing. In this issue you will notice a new “column” written by one of our Neighborhood Code Enforcement Task Force members and current President of Hills of Park North Neighborhood Association, Bud Little. We are planning to periodically include articles like this one in the future.

If you have any compliance issues, there are a few ways you can let us know:

- By calling 311
- Downloading the free “311” app onto your iPhone or Android
- By visiting our website and clicking on the “Online Code Enforcement Request” icon on the right hand side of the page.

Please continue to send your comments, ideas and suggestions to us at:

CodeConnection@sanantonio.gov

Best Regards,

Mike



Michael Shannon, PE, CBO
Assistant Director-Field Services
Code Enforcement & Building
Inspections

Contact Us

Cliff Morton Development & Business Services Center
1901 S. Alamo
San Antonio, Texas 78204

Hours: Monday – Friday
7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

To report Code Compliance issues call 311 or download City's "311" Phone App.

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Front Yard Parking—Jennifer Garza

In San Antonio, we have a chapter in our code that includes all the motor vehicle and traffic ordinances in our City. As a Code Officer, one of the most frequent code issues I see and deal with is front yard parking. So what is it?

Chapter 19, Sec. 194, regulates the standards for parking, and types of vehicles you can and cannot park, in residential zones. Let's take a closer look.

Unless you have a permanent surface of concrete, brick, asphalt or gravel with defined borders that delineate the area for parking, residents are not allowed to park their vehicles, boats and trailers on the front or side yard of their home. They also need to be clearly delineated with a curb, brick, landscaping timbers or metal borders. Keep in mind that you can't park your vehicle in the city's right-of-way or blocking a sidewalk. Front yard parking violations result in a citation.

A common question that I am often asked by residents is whether or not gravel driveways are permitted in residential zoned lots. The answer is yes, but it needs to be at least three (3) inches

deep.

City Code specifies that motor vehicles, watercrafts on trailers, campers and other trailers may be parked on the side yard setback or front yard with all wheels on permanently



Example of gravel with a barrier design

maintained parking areas constructed of: (1) Gravel with barriers or permanent curbing to define the driveway; (2) concrete; (3) brick, or (4) asphalt. The area can't be wider than 50% percent of the average width of the lot, unless: (1) the residential building doesn't meet the minimum setback requirements (Ch. 35, Sec. 310.15); (2) the width of the lot is 25 feet or less; or the building is abutting a street without a curb, or which is less than 30 feet wide.

If you see front yard parking in your neighborhood, don't hesitate to call 311.

Jennifer Garza is a Code Enforcement Supervisor. She oversees a team of 7 Code Officers. She has been with the City for 19 years.

Do You Own a Vacant Property? There is a New Ordinance in Place



Vacant Building in Downtown

The Vacant Building Registration Pilot Program, created by City Council during the FY2015 Budget Process, is off to a strong start. The program, effective January 1st of this year, requires that owners of vacant properties in the Central Business District, Historic Districts and within a 1/2 mile of an active military base must maintain the exterior and structure of a vacant building to the same standard of care required of an occupied one. Owners of these properties must register with program staff in the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and pay for an annual inspection of the building. Vacant properties that have been designated as historical landmarks also must register and comply with the ordinance.

Letters requiring vacant property owners to register are being mailed this month, continuing

throughout the year as additional vacant properties are identified. OHP has hired a program manager, and the remaining three positions are in the process of being filled, with the goal of having all staff on board in February.

If you would like to learn more, please visit:

www.sanantonio.gov/VacantBuilding/About.aspx

In addition, an informational session for the public will be held on Saturday, Feb. 21, at 9:30 a.m. at the Cliff Morton Development and Business Services Center, 1901 South Alamo (the "One Stop"). A presentation detailing the Ordinance will be provided and resources to help vacant building owners comply with the ordinance will be on hand.

You can also contact John Stevens, Manager of the Vacant Building Registration Program, at (210) 207-7999 or at John.Stevens3@sanantonio.gov.

Graffiti Isn't Art — Bud Little, Neighborhood Code Enforcement Task Force Member

For those who don't know me...I need to explain right off-the-bat that I believe graffiti is a cancer on society and that it's an addiction. I believe punishment should be much stronger and don't have much compassion for those that commit the crime.

Over the years I have been involved with the apprehension of four taggers in my neighborhood, catching them red-handed. On one occasion, two taggers were in action close to my home...in the daylight, in front of people working in their yards. They had been tagging the neighborhood for weeks and, a few months later, one of them was arrested again for tagging a building on Broadway.

The second time I surprised two teens tagging a house that had been hit before. Again, I was lucky. Two SAFFE officers that I had worked with before were a few blocks away (I called them on my cell). And in minutes they had the boys in custody. There were two other teens that had backpacks loaded with marking pens who were also detained. Catching taggers is a matter of being in the right place at the right time.

During a graffiti seminar I attended one time, a young artist did a presentation saying that graffiti was "art." I sat there in disbelief. Once the presentation concluded, I simply asked: "if some irresponsible person scrawled a vile message on your garage door, would you leave it there calling it 'art'?"

There was dead silence.

Oh! and I gotta' say...my neighborhood has a 24-hour policy on graffiti. From the time a tag is discovered to the time it's gone, it usually 24 hours or less. I have organized a crew of six volunteers that are available to help, depending on the size of the tag.

I love my neighborhood and I bristle when someone attempts to make it look bad. Graffiti is one of the first signs of deterioration in an area if it's left alone. Removing graffiti is the best deterrent.

Bud Little is currently the President of Hills of Park North Neighborhood Association and member of the Neighborhood Code Enforcement Task Force. He has also been President of Keep San Antonio Beautiful.

"Removing graffiti fast is the best deterrent."

Performance Measures — November/December 2014

We want you to know what we are doing! Our main goals are to be more proactive and to gain quicker compliance. These performance measures track our level and effectiveness of our service for Tier I and II issues. *Tier I* includes key health and safety issues, such as high weeds, trash, unsecure structures, visual obstructions. *Tier II* encompasses building maintenance and zoning.

	NOV.	DEC.	TOTAL	FY 2015 TO DATE (FY=Oct. 2014 to Sept. 2015)
Inspections initiated by Code Officers (Proactive)	3,169	2,906	6,075	11,972
Inspections initiated through complaints/calls (Reactive)	655	481	1,136	2,241
Pro-activity Rate (Goal of 50%)	83%	86%	84%	83%
Response Time—Tier I (Goal of 2 business days)	2.1	1.7	1.9	1.7
Response Time—Tier II (Goal of 6 business days)	2.4	1.5	1.9	1.8
Compliance Rate (Goal of 90%)	94%	95%	94%	94%
Graffiti locations abated	1,495	1,548	3,043	4,562
Square footage of Graffiti Abated (Goal of 4 million)	254,019	224,360	478,379	928,123

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Did You Know...

If you own or operate any building that rents or leases units, you are required to provide heat to the occupants from November 1 through March 31. The temperature maintained shall be of not less than 60°F (16°C) (2011 Property Maintenance Code, Sec. 602.3). To see the City's Property Maintenance Code, log on to:

sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes.asp

For all of San Antonio's Codes, go to: www.municode.com/library/TX/San_Antonio

Top 5 Violations — November/December 2014

VIOLATIONS RESOLVED	TOTAL
Property Maintenance	3,533
Bandit Signs	2,551
Graffiti	1,575
Alley Inspections	1,362
Junk Vehicles	801

Before and After



Crews remove graffiti near downtown

Graffiti Corner

There are upcoming meetings we want you to know about:

TerminAte Graffiti (TAG) Meetings

TAG is a team of law enforcement officers and citizens who meet monthly to discuss hotspots, cases, issues and solutions to graffiti.

When: 1st Wednesday of each month
Time: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Where: Public Safety Headquarters Building
 315 S Santa Rosa, Room 1410

Newly elected District Attorney Nicholas "Nico" LaHood will be the guest speaker for the March 4 meeting. He will be working closely with law enforcement on graffiti strategies moving forward.

If you want to attend, contact Lisa McKenzie at Lisa.McKenzie@sanantonio.gov or call (210) 207-5430.



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San Antonio, Texas 78204

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We're on the web!

www.sanantonio.gov/ces

What You're Saying

"Officers Ronnie Paniagua and Garry Martinez went above and beyond providing assistance in the cleanup of my mom's house and alley. They are a true blessing for my mom and our community." - Resident

"I spoke to Officer Richard Zertuche today and told him what a GREAT job you were doing!!! I told him how impressed I was with how the entire Code Compliance System seemed to be working and how helpful everyone was. Thanks again for all your hard work in our neighborhood!" - Colonial Hills Neighborhood Association

"I just wanted to express how impressed I was with you (Liza McKenzie, Neighborhood Services Coordinator for Graffiti) and your (graffiti) team. I sent you and email yesterday at 12:59 hrs. about the graffiti close to the North Substation. You answered immediately and forwarded to your team. By 15:30 hrs., I noticed the graffiti at the location removed and checked on the second location a few blocks away and saw your crew cleaning the reported graffiti. Ya'll are awesome! Very impressed." - North SAFFE Supervisor

