

Code Connection

Message from our Assistant Director

Happy New Year and thank you San Antonio for partnering with us in making our city, communities and homes safer.

We ended 2016 with the excellent news that our department, Development Services (DSD), became the first in the State to earn a rating of 1 for commercial building from the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO). Being the highest a municipality can achieve, this classification reflects our commitment to adopting and enforcing the newest building-related codes -- San Antonio was one of the first municipalities in Texas to adopt the complete 2015 I-codes. This is a priority for us, and keeping our citizens and customers engaged throughout the process gives our stakeholders a chance to submit proposed amendments, obtain their support, and get buy-in to the new codes once adopted. This achievement recognizes our community's investment in code enforcement and insurance companies use this information to establish premiums. It's a win-win for San Antonio and its residents!

Did you know that your landscaping and home projects can actually affect how the water flows not only within our property, but also on that of your next door neighbors and those down the street. As our City continues to grow, it's an important component to consider when designing your next project. We've provided more on this topic in this month's edition.

Planning is key to having successful city-wide events, and Code Enforcement begins to prepare for these months before each one. Getting the parade and marathon routes ready, clean and free of any obstructions is our contribution to making San Antonio shine. Take a peek into what we do behind the scenes.

Speaking of being in the background, our *Grow Over Graffiti* program is a great, novel way to fight graffiti. Through a partnership with the Parks Department, we're able to offer free trees to plant in front of those highly vandalized walls in your home, business or around the neighborhood. There is more information about it on the article in this issue.

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

- Call 311
- Download the free "311" app onto your smart phone

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

CodeConnection@sanantonio.gov

We look forward to another year of partnering with all of you.

Best Regards,



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

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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.

"Partnering with our Community to build and maintain a safer San Antonio."

We’re #1 in Texas! - Staff

Our Development Services Department (DSD) is the first in Texas to receive a Business Code Effectiveness Classification rating of 1 for commercial building by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO). ISO is an independent statistical, rating organization providing advisory insurance underwriting and rating information to insurers. In 1999, DSD’s ratings were 8 for both commercial and residential.



departments across the nation every five years and recently completed its DSD audit. Collecting information from communities across the nation on their adoption and enforcement of building codes, it then analyzes the data and assigns a classification number to the community. This classification, ranging from 1 to 10, measures a city’s commitment to the adoption and enforcement of the most recent building codes affecting the construction of new buildings. Class 1 is the most favorable classification.

retically the better the score, the lower the premiums are.

Cities adopting and efficiently enforcing the most recent code revisions have a significant reduction in damages to buildings, thus reducing the number of claims during catastrophic events and natural disasters. Insurance companies can use the classifications to grant premium credits to buildings constructed within these municipalities.

Key reasons contributing to the DSD’s exemplary rating include its dedication to adopt the latest building codes, certification requirements for staff, heavy focus on training, first-rate staffing levels, and strong, effective plan review and inspection processes.

First in Texas and twelfth across the nation to receive the highest rating a municipality can achieve, this is a major accomplishment not only for DSD, but for the city as a whole.

- ISO evaluates building enforcement

• Changing Topography - Michael Uresti

Topography refers to the surface shapes and features. This includes not only valleys, hills, mountains, but also roads, bridges or any other land and water feature of an area. It becomes an important element to consider when choosing a location to build your new home. For example, a flood plain would not be the ideal place for a house.

Whenever topography is changed without getting the input from necessary experts to properly distribute rain runoff, you could be exposed to flooding your house, having excessive overflow to your neighbor’s property or onto the street. Putting in a new addition to your house or patio slab will change the topography. How you may ask? This will happen because the house will have to be leveled, excess dirt will

be relocated and now, rather than having a natural run off, it’s blocked by cement or diverted by a roof.

How does the City of San Antonio help shape the topography for San Antonio?

Through our department and with our Code Enforcement Officers, the City works diligently with owners to ensure all necessary permits are obtained and the proper studies are conducted before something is built within the city limits. If permits weren’t issued prior to construction start then we, at Code Enforcement, work with the owner so that all needed permits are acquired.



We should all be mindful of changing topography because as our society grows, so does our geographical footprint. Whenever we alter the natural landscape at one location, we may inadvertently affect other properties.

If you have a problem with flooding on your property that may be related to a neighbor’s project, you can call “311” to request for someone to go out and review the location.

Michael Uresti, J.D., is the Zoning & Permitting Code Enforcement Supervisor. He’s been with the City for 10 years and graduated from St. Mary’s Law School while working for Code

and maintain a safer San Antonio”

Behind the Scenes - Dale Russell

Every year, San Antonio is showcased in two major events: the

Martin Luther King (MLK) March and the Rock n’ Roll Marathon. Bringing a myriad of people from across Texas and the nation, for many it’s their first trip to our great city. Visitors,

new and old, participate in these great events for the chance to see the City and enjoy all it has to offer. Here’s a little peek behind the scenes of how we here at Code Enforcement prepare and help San Antonio put its best foot forward.

Our team begins preparing months before the events. We drive through event routes to assess appearance



and safety, looking for overgrown lots and right-of-ways, illegal dumping and other types of obvious code violations. For most, we’re able to reach out and partner with local volunteer groups to address the needs of the community.

Over the years we’ve come to know many along the routes we cover that are elderly or handicap. They don’t have the financial nor the physical ability to participate in the clean-up effort. In situations like these, our Code Officers assist on a case by case basis. Our team is augmented with restitutioners. Working with us in removing code violations, they find this a more rewarding way to complete their

community service hours because they’re helping their fellow citizens in need.

We also loan equipment to residents for upkeep of their yards through our Tool Shed program. One of a kind, we’re one of few cities offering this to our citizens by lending lawn mowers, grass trimmers and other lawn maintenance tools.

It’s a true sense of accomplishment to help citizens and keep San Antonio beautiful for these events that place our city on the national stage.

Dale Russell is the Code Enforcement Supervisor for the Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET). He’s been with the City for the past 10 years. Dale graduated from the University of Texas—Pan American with a major in Criminal Justice.

Grow Over It! - Lisa McKenzie

We’re always looking for innovative programs to deter graffiti. Our newest one is a concept from Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), encouraging planting greenery in front of tagged walls, or in areas with high incidences of graffiti vandalism. *Grow Over Graffiti*, in partnership with the Parks & Recreation Department, offers **free** trees through an application process.



Has your commercial or residential property (within city limits) been vandalized lately? Are you ready for a 3-year tree maintenance agreement? If you answered “yes,” then you’re ready to deter graffiti. Applications are

accepted year-round with an attached, signed, 3-year tree maintenance agreement.

Don’t forget, call 811 for free utility line locator service before choosing the final planting site. Once its been cleared to dig, there are seven drought-tolerant tree species you can select

from. If a tree isn’t suitable for your location because underground utility lines prohibit digging, consider planting ivy, or other plants, along fence lines or walls. Reducing the surface will help in keeping the wall graffiti-free.

Need an application or have any ques-

tions? Call 210.207.BUFF [2833]. Applications are also available online at:

www.sanantonio.gov/CES/Graffiti/GrowOverGraffiti.



Interpreters at BSB

- Language interpreters are now available at every Building Standards Board meeting.
- For more information call (210) 207-5422.





**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

Cliff Morton Development & Business
Services Center
1901 S. Alamo

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

We're on the web!
www.sanantonio.gov/ces

Did You Know...

...you can now see weekly reports listing all the commercial and residential plans submitted for processing, as well as building permits that have been granted for developments in your area by visiting:

www.sanantonio.gov/DSD/Resources/Reports

The reports include a description of the work being performed and contact information for the permit applicant.

To see San Antonio's Property Maintenance Code, visit sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes.

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



Performance Measures - Nov./Dec. 2016

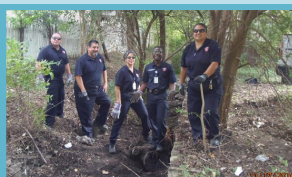
	NOV.	DEC.	TOTAL	FY 2017 (FY = Oct. 2016 - Sept. 2017)
Cases initiated by Code Officers (Proactive)	6,188	5,142	11,330	18,259
Cases initiated through complaints/calls (Reactive)	1,183	893	2,076	3,772
Pro-activity Rate (Goal of 50%)	81%	82%	82%	81%
Response Time—Tier I (Goal of 2 business days)	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4
Response Time—Tier II (Goal of 6 business days)	2.1	1.9	2.0	2.1
Compliance Rate (Goal of 90%)	95%	96%	95%	95%
Graffiti locations abated	3,675	4,013	7,688	10,967
Graffiti response rate (Goal of 3 days)	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1

What You're Saying

"On Nov. 17, 2016, Code Officers Elida Canales, Esteban Rubalcava, Gloria Gutierrez, Rene Campos, and Rita Bigler went above and beyond, rendering assistance to an elderly couple to clean an utility drainage going through their property. The was filled with debris, tree branches, empty trash and recycling bins, and vegetation. The Code staff received complaints about this issue. Knowing that the elderly couple wouldn't be able to clean this utility drainage, the above named officers, without hesitation, offered their help to clean it. The drainage is now clean after four truck loads of debris and tree branches were removed.



The residents as well as the District 1 City Council staff greatly appreciated this action."



Graffiti Corner

It takes a village, better yet, a city to fight graffiti! Volunteer for one of our many wipe-out events throughout San Antonio. With the help of more than 2,000 volunteers, we abated graffiti on over 59,000 sites this past year! Interested? You can register online at <http://www.sanantonio.gov/Commpa/Volunteer>

The City offers many opportunities to get involved through volunteering. The next Volunteer Workshop will be held on Saturday, Jan. 28, 10am - noon at the Public Safety Headquarters (315 S Santa Rosa). To RSVP, call 210.207.8178. or send an email to Melissa.Escamilla@sanantonio.gov.

***Don't miss this chance to learn about volunteer opportunities within the City of San Antonio!**

Parks & Recreation, Development Services, SAPD Volunteers in Policing, Department of Human Services, Animal Care Services and the San Antonio Public Library will be in attendance to answer any questions.

VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017
10AM-12PM
PUBLIC SAFETY HEADQUARTERS
315 S SANTA ROSA, ROOM 1110

Questions? Want to RSVP? Call
210.207.8178 or email
Melissa.Escamilla@sanantonio.gov

SA Volunteers

*Donuts and other light refreshments will be available.