

# Code Connection

## Message from our Interim Director

Development Services (DSD) has been through some big organizational changes in the past month. Rod Sanchez is now an Assistant City Manager and I have been appointed as the Interim Director for DSD. I feel privileged to take on this new role and continue moving this department forward.

As I begin to settle in my new role within our department, Amin Tohmaz, P.E., will be stepping in as the Interim Assistant Director for Field Services. He will have oversight of DSD's Building Inspections and Code Enforcement Sections and I'm confident his leadership will reflect DSD's values.

There is no question that these past four years as Assistant Director for the Field Services Division were challenging, at times demanding, but always very gratifying. I had the opportunity to meet and work with many neighborhood representatives, tackling amendments to the City's building-related and property maintenance codes, new programs like the Absentee Property Owner Registration program, and improve our processes to make them more efficient and effective for all San Antonio residents.

This will be a new challenge for me, but I'm committed to continue and strengthen our partnership with the community to maintain and build a safer San Antonio.

A few weeks ago, we had five confirmed tornadoes in our area. The vast amount of damage caused by this storm make

our residents vulnerable to fraud. We thought it important to remind everyone of a few simple steps everyone can take to protect themselves from becoming victims of this crime.

In this issue, we've included a couple of articles with two very common concerns often voiced by neighborhoods: inoperable (junked) and oversized vehicles. The articles provide an overview of the do's and don'ts per City Code.

We're also approaching the spring cleaning season. For your ease, we've included locations where you can take unwanted items or how to call for pick-up service in your area.

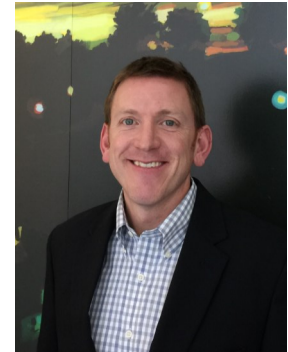
As always, if you have any compliance issues, there are a few ways you can let us know:

- 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](mailto:CodeConnection@sanantonio.gov)

Best Regards,



Michael Shannon, PE, CBO  
Interim Director, Development Services Department

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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."**

## Protect Yourself Against Contractor Fraud - Staff

This last storm, with several tornadoes touching down in San Antonio, caused considerable damage to many of our homes.

Unfortunately, this also makes the environment suitable for frauds, scams and criminal behavior.

Fraudulent unqualified contractors or “storm chasers,” come from all over the country looking for vulnerable

consumers. With resources, materials and contractors limited, homeowners might try and seek a quick and easier road. Here are some things you can do to protect yourself:



- Call your insurance company first.
- Use local companies, making sure

you check their references and phone numbers.

- Research, research, research. Check the Better Business Bureau, your insurer or agent, and internet.

- Be leery of contractors coming to your door or those in unmarked vehicles.

- Get multiple bids and ensure they are members of an association, such as Roofing Contractors Association of Texas.

- The written estimates should be on company letterhead, with clear contact information.

- Check if the contractor is registered with the City of San Antonio

- It's a red flag if the contractor asks for payment up front or offers to cut a deal if you pull the needed permits. Never pay the total cost of the project upfront.

To find out if a contractor is registered, call us at (210) 207-1111 or visit our website at [sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd) and click on “Contractor Registration & Licensing.” Permits are not issued to unregistered contractors.

## • Ugh, Another Junked Vehicle! - John Kelly

One of the most common code violations we encounter across San Antonio as Code Officers is junked, or inoperable, vehicles.

There are a few things we look for to determine if a car falls into this category. First, we determine if the vehicle is in public view, meaning it's visible from any public right-of-way, adjacent land, or from the first floor of a home or business next door (as long as the owner or occupant is not the same person as the one in which the inoperable vehicle is parked). What if it's covered by a tarp you ask? The same applies.

The second step is to verify if the vehicle is operable. We look to see if the car is wrecked, dismantled (fully or partly), or has been converted for an-

other use such as storage.

City Code doesn't require a valid registration sticker or state inspection certificate, nor does having these exempt a vehicle from investigation and abatement. However, not having them may be a factor in determining if the vehicle is inoperable. What exactly is inoperable? For us, it's defined as a vehicle no longer usable for the purpose for which it was manufactured, regardless of the potential for repair or restoration.

Inoperable vehicles in the street are normally routed to the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), who remove them within 72 hours. SAPD takes them to an

impoundment lot, where they are stored. Owners can recover their vehicles by paying a fee. Code Enforcement can also issue notices for this same violation, but vehicles removed by Code Enforcement are taken to a

salvage yard, where they are destroyed.

Remember, an inoperable or *junked* vehicle is one that's self-propelled, in ordinary public view and remains inoperable for a continuous period of ten days (City Code,

Sec. 19-357 and Sec. 19-358).



**John Kelly** is the Supervisor for San Antonio's eastside section. He retired from the U.S. Air Force and has been in Code Enforcement for 15 years.

## Can That Huge Truck Park Here? - Arturo Arredondo

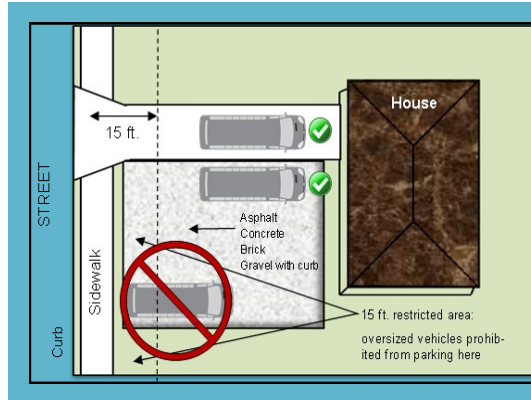
Within the past few months, we've gotten quite a few questions from homeowners regarding oversized vehicles and where they can legally park in a neighborhood.

Recreational vehicles are not considered oversized. Per our municipal code an *oversized vehicle* is a vehicle, trailer, or boat (either by itself or together with other structures or vehicles attached) exceeds any one of the three following dimensions: 24 feet in length, 8 feet in width or 8 feet in height. If you happen to own one or see one in your area, keep in mind they cannot be parked in front of a home or home business unless it's needed to load or unload passengers, freight or merchandise. Another exception is if it bears a valid special handicapped parking permit.

This doesn't mean recreational vehicles can be parked anywhere. They shouldn't be on the front or side yard, unless on a parking area built of gravel (with barriers or permanent curbing to define the driveway), concrete, brick or asphalt.

Whenever we see an oversized vehicle parked illegally, the first step will be to attempt to contact the person living in the home to explain where they can park following the City's code. In instances where we are unable to contact anyone or it is a continued offense, we will issue a citation carrying

a fine of \$200 if 'No oversized vehicle' signs are posted or a \$35 fine if signs are not present.



For further information regarding oversized vehicles, refer Sec. 19-194 of the San Antonio Municipal Code and Sec. 35-383 of the Unified Development Code.

**Arturo Arredondo** is the Supervisor for the Central Field Unit. He's been with the City 18 years, 16 of which have been in Code Enforcement. He's passionate about his job and works to positively impact the communities he serves.

## Planning for Spring Cleaning - Alice Guajardo

Spring is in the air and it's that time of year when you roll back your sleeves, hit it into high gear and get rid of all those things you thought you really needed and never used. Did you know there is a place for everything to be disposed of properly? It's actually as easy as 311 and asking for an *out of cycle pick up!*



placing items on the curb outside of a scheduled bulky or brush collection day or without scheduling a pick up is considered illegal dumping. (City Code, Sec. 14-47).

If you're like me and want to get rid of those big items all at once, you can go to a Bulky Waste Collection Center near you. Don't forget to take a current CPS bill and a

picture ID to be able to dispose of those items for free! Solid Waste has 4 convenient locations for drop off:

- BITTERS BULKY WASTE COLLECTION CENTER, 1800 Wurzbach Parkway
- FRIO CITY ROAD CENTER, 1531 Frio City Road

- CULEBRA BULKY WASTE COLLECTION CENTER, 7030 Culebra Road
- RIGSBY ROAD BULKY WASTE COLLECTION CENTER, 2755 Rigsby Road

They're open Tues. - Fri., 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Sat. 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Alice Guajardo** is a Code Enforcement Supervisor, committed to partnering with residents and enhance the quality of life and safety of San Antonio's Westside.



### Interpreters at BSB

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

Once the service is requested, Solid Waste staff comes to your home and provides an estimate for removal. (Tip: separate bulky items from brush when placed on curb to avoid delays). Once you have a cost, you'll have three days to pay the fee. Remember,



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**We're on the web!**  
[www.sanantonio.gov/ces](http://www.sanantonio.gov/ces)

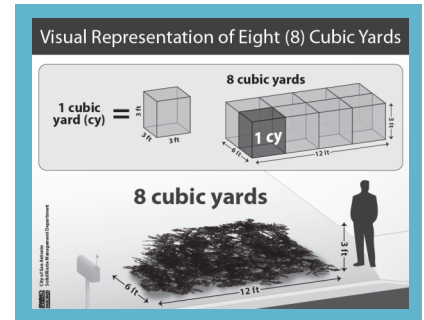
## Did You Know...

There are some guidelines to keep in mind as you get ready for brush collection:

- The piles must be manageable, about 8 cubic yards or less.
- Place brush piles within 8 feet of the curb (try not to block sidewalks)
- Don't put the piles in front of parked cars, near fences, trees, mailboxes, beneath overhead wires or low-hanging tree limbs, or on top of water meters.
- Set them out by 7:00 a.m. on the first day of your scheduled collection week.
- Don't place material at the curb after crews have passed by your house.

To see San Antonio's Property Maintenance Code, visit [sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes).

For all of San Antonio's Codes, go to:  
[www.municode.com/library/TX/San\\_Antonio](http://www.municode.com/library/TX/San_Antonio)



## Performance Measures - Jan./Feb. 2017

	JAN.	FEB.	TOTAL	FY 2017 (FY = Oct. 2016 - Sept. 2017)
Cases initiated by Code Officers (Proactive)	8,638	8,748	17,387	35,646
Cases initiated through complaints/calls (Reactive)	1,247	1,181	2,428	6,200
Pro-activity Rate (Goal of 50%)	84%	85%	84%	82%
Response Time—Tier I (Goal of 2 business days)	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.4
Response Time—Tier II (Goal of 6 business days)	2.5	1.7	2.1	2.1
Compliance Rate (Goal of 90%)	97%	99%	98%	97%
Graffiti locations abated	5,537	4,108	9,645	20,612
Graffiti response rate (Goal of 3 days)	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0

### What You're Saying

The month of February brought about tornadoes that affected many homes in San Antonio. We want to recognize and thank all the Code Enforcement Officers from our Dangerous Assessment Team (DAT) and Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET) who took the lead on talking and helping these residents.

"Friday, (Feb. 24) Code Enforcement Officers and city officials were busy double checking homes marked unsafe, answering questions and distributing post-disaster information." - Spectrum News



Code Enforcement Officers signed in more than 100 volunteers on Saturday morning (Feb 25) at Sharon Dr. / Linda St., one of the storm damaged areas. Residents of San Antonio are a wonderful example of partnering to help our community.

"Code Enforcement Officers and inspectors are on their (residents) side." - Councilman Roberto C. Treviño through KENS 5 Eyewitness News

## Graffiti Corner

Graffiti has it's own terminology. Let's start with our own hotline, 207-BUFF. *Buff* is to remove painted graffiti with chemicals and other instruments, or to paint over it with a flat color. Need graffiti buffed? Give us a call!

Shoplifting or robbing paint, markers, inks, caps or clothes is called *racking*. Spray paint sold within the City of San Antonio must be locked and secured. Have you been to a store where the paint is not secured? You can call 207-SAPD and ask for a SAFFE officer to do a spray paint check.

Stickers are referred to as *labels* or *slaps* with the writer's tag name on it. Because putting them on is quick, they're found on places like newspaper stands or traffic signs. As of August 2014, stickers applied without permission are considered a graffiti implement.

