

**Community
Revitalization Division**

DEVELOPMENT and RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

559-621-8400

Community Revitalization's
**NEIGHBORHOOD
GUIDE**



What's in a Name ? Our New Name....Our New Focus !

**Code Enforcement is now known as
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION!**

As we move forward, the Community Revitalization Division needs the cooperation of residents and business owners to be effective and efficient. This Guide has been written to assist Fresno residents in bettering the neighborhoods where they live. Because there are so many different codes—many involving complex technical or legal issues—residents frequently have questions about enforcement and about their role in keeping Fresno a great place to live and work. The information in this Guide will answer the most frequently asked questions about code enforcement in our community.

If your question is not answered, please call and we will be happy to discuss the matter with you to assist in resolving your situation. The information provided here is a brief description only. However, we have made every attempt possible to ensure the accuracy of this information. If you have additional questions or need more information regarding an ordinance or regulation, you should reference the City's Municipal Code or call Community Revitalization at

559-621-8400. You may also use our on-line reporting service.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Inspectors respond to complaints according to the impact of the violation on the community. Situations that appear to pose a serious risk to health and safety are given top priority; while others are pursued in the order in which they are received. In general, either a courtesy notice or a notice of violation is issued, requesting the owner/tenant to correct the violation in a timely manner. The City may also issue citations or take court action if the situation poses a significant risk to the community or if the individual has ignored the notice of violation.

**WHAT DOES THE DIVISION DO
WHEN WE RECEIVE A COMPLAINT?**

Our goal is to have all investigations started within less than seven days of the initial complaint. Some violations can be solved with a courtesy letter sent to the property owner/home owner. For all complaints, the first step in the follow-up procedure is an inspection to verify if a code violation exists. An Inspector must personally observe the violation before initiating any enforcement action. Some investigations take longer than others to investigate. If the violation is an on-going activity rather than physical violations, the



**Promoting Pride of
Ownership and of
Community**

investigation may take longer to verify. However, you may call after eighteen days to inquire about our initial finding and to ascertain the status of the investigation process.

WHEN IS A CITATION ISSUED?

"Compliance" means taking action to resolve a situation that violates City Ordinances. Citations are used as a tool to gain compliance in difficult code enforcement cases, and in zoning cases where "abatement" is not possible. Issuing a citation can be a very effective way to bring a case closer to a resolution.

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Community Revitalization's Mission Statement:

The Community Revitalization Division is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of the City of Fresno by providing effective public service through the enforcement of the City's Housing, Zoning, and Public Nuisance Ordinances. Services are provided in order to enhance quality of life and improve the neighborhoods where we live, shop, work, and play. We are committed to serving our community in a safe, professional, and effective manner.

Our Mission is to work with the community to resolve issues impacting the quality of life and the wellbeing of the citizens living and working in Fresno.

Our Goal is to enforce policies and regulations that promote strong, vibrant neighborhoods and communities and to encourage the positive and orderly growth and development of our City.

To this end, we strive to constantly evaluate the type of service, method of delivery, and resources needed to perform our duties. The pursuit of excellence and commitment to customer service are of primary importance.

We are accountable to the community we serve. Integrity, fairness, and compassion are practiced in all our endeavors. Our value to our community is measured by the fulfillment of these commitments.



CALL: (559) 621-8400 to file a complaint or to get further information

Commonly Reported Items of Interest in Community Revitalization

ABANDONED BUILDINGS which may attract malicious mischief activity or trespassing should be reported to Community Revitalization.



ANIMALS Farm animals such as ducks, chickens, pigs, goats, sheep, cows, and horses are not permitted in residentially zoned districts of the City. Animal neglect or loose/stray dogs should be reported to the SPCA at 233-7722. Animal bite complaints can be reported to the County at 445-3384.



FENCES should be kept in good repair. There are rules for building a fence. Use wood, chain link, or wrought iron when constructing fences. Backyard and side-yard fences cannot be over 6 feet in height. A front yard fence cannot be over 3 feet in height.



HOME

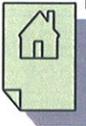
BUSINESSES

You may not operate a business out of your home for any type of repair, manufacture, process, sale, display; or for trade of goods, materials, or objects. There are strict rules regulating running a business out of your home. Very few professions comply with the provisions of the home occupation code. Call the Planning and Development Dept. at 621-8277 for more information.



HOUSING STANDARDS

Minimum standards for dwellings are required by the Uniform Housing Code and the California State Health and Safety Code. These standards include such items as requiring adequate heating, plumbing, and electrical systems. If



repairs are needed, tenants are encouraged to first work with their landlords to have repairs made.

ILLEGAL DUMPING of trash or debris lowers the standards of our neighborhoods. Please keep your eyes open for this kind of activity. If possible, get a description of the person doing the dumping, and vehicle information, including the license plate number, if possible. Call Community Revitalization and we will have an Inspector investigate.



LEAD PAINT

HEALTH HAZARDS Lead-based paint poisoning is especially dangerous to children under the age of six. If you suspect lead-based paint poisoning from paint chips or powder in a pre-1978 home, call Housing at 621-8300.



MOBILE VENDORS are required to have a permit to operate within City limits. Permits can be obtained from the Business Tax Division at 621-6880. Vendors on private property are illegal and can be fined up to \$800. Illegal vendors can also be a traffic impediment, and also might be selling items NOT approved by the County Health Dept. If approached by someone selling merchandise on City streets, pass them by, and report the location to us.



NOISE Excessive noise can detract from the quality of life in a neighborhood. It is important that neighbors work together, privately, to solve minor problems. The City does not get involved in these disputes and encourages cooperation. However, if there is a problem with industrial or Commercial Noise/Activities call Community Revitalization.



POOLS Pool fencing is required around swimming, wading, and bathing pools that

have a depth of 18 inches or more. You must have a permit to drain your pool. **Green pools** are a hazard to small children and to the environment. A small child cannot be seen on the bottom. Green pools also attract mosquitoes and can breed diseases such as West Nile. The Fresno Municipal Code requires that all pools be kept clean and clear. If not, the owner can be cited and the City will drain the pool at the owner's expense.



PUBLIC NUISANCE

Some common code violations related to property maintenance are a failure to remove rubbish and/or junk. This includes garbage, scrap metal or lumber, concrete, asphalt, tin cans, tires, and piles of earth. Also included are unsecured vacant buildings and failure to maintain yard landscaping such that it can create a fire hazard or provide obstructions to traffic or a blight to the neighborhood.



SHOPPING CARTS are provided to customers as a convenience, and are intended to take purchases to the parking lot of the store. Carts left on streets, alleys, or sidewalks are dangerous and a blight in our community. State and City codes make it illegal to remove them from the store premises. Removal can result in a fine. If you see a cart somewhere that it should not be; please contact the store that it came from and if the store does not pick it up contact us.



SIGNS play a vital role in identifying businesses. However, signs which are abandoned, illegal, or block public right-of-way have a blighting influence on the City.



STORAGE CONTAINERS (ISOs) Cargo containers are allowed only in conjunc-

-tion with a non-residential use, in a non-residential zoned district. Approval for the ISO containers are subject to review of the site plan or obtaining a conditional use permit. Call Planning.

TIRES It is unlawful to store or dump tires in alleys or on residential and vacant lots. If you see someone dumping tires call us at 621-8400. We sponsor several "Tire Amnesty Days" throughout the year where you may dispose of used tires for a reduced fee. City residents wishing to dispose of tires at the City operated tire facility may call us to arrange for an appointment. A disposal fee is charged. To help solve this growing problem, please remember to leave your old tires with your dealer.



TARP AND POLE STRUCTURES are illegal under the zoning codes. Even though they are popular, laws governing their placement are enforced. The use of tarp and pole structures can carry fines up to \$800. If you have one, please take it down. And, if you don't have one, please, don't buy one!



ALLEYS are the property owners responsibility—from their property line to the middle of the alley. They should be clean and clear of debris and weeds. If you wish to have your alley closed contact your local Councilperson.

VACANT LOTS If you own a vacant lot in the City, make sure it is kept free of weeds, trash, and debris all year long. You may be charged for cleanup if the lot is not maintained.



OPERATION CLEAN UP Do not put items out more than 7 days before any scheduled pickup day. If your discards are put out earlier, you may be asked to remove the pile from the street and/or receive a citation. For more information call 621-1452.

In order to minimize fire and health risks, and to make neighborhoods more pleasant, Fresno has laws that require the removal of weeds.

Beautiful Fresno ~ RESIDENTIAL Do's and Don'ts

What You Need to Know

- Property should be kept trimmed and free of tall weeds and trash.
- After clearing weeds or trimming your lawn, immediately dispose of all clippings.
- You are also responsible for maintaining the land between your property line and the street, even though this strip is owned by the City.

Laws to Remember

- If your lawn or weeds reach a growth that exceeds the six inch limit, you may receive a written notice stating your viola-

tion.

- If you receive a notice that your property is in violation of these laws, you need to comply and fix the violation. You can file an appeal within ten days of receiving the notice.
- Ownership and responsibility of a shared fence is a civil issue and not dealt with by Community Revitalization unless it is dilapidated to the extent that it is a safety hazard or there is a pool on one of the properties. If Community Revitalization is asked to get involved, both parties would be considered equally responsible. Any ownership disputes should be dealt with by the property owners through cooperation or civil action.

Commonly Reported Code Items—*continued*



VEHICLES

VEHICLE PARKING Over-sized vehicles (buses, semi-trucks) cannot be stored at residences. Vehicles parked on private residential property must be parked on driveways, in a garage or carport. Vehicles CANNOT be parked on dirt, lawn, or landscaped areas. Call us to report vehicles parked illegally on private property. If a vehicle is parked illegally on City streets – call the Streets Division at 621-2085.



INOPERABLE VEHICLES cannot be parked on the street or stored on private property unless fully enclosed within a legal structure, such as a garage. Car covers are not acceptable. Call us to report inoperable vehicles parked on private property and if they



are parked on the street, call the Streets Division at 621-2085.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (including boats, trailers, or motor homes) may be parked or stored on private property as long as: (1) they are enclosed within a legal structure; (2) they are within a side or a rear yard enclosed by a solid wall or fence between 5'-6' in height; (3) they are not used for housing purposes; (4) they are parked on approved surfaces.



REPAIRING YOUR VEHICLE Open repair of vehicles is prohibited in residential zoned areas. You may add fluids, change a flat tire, jump start, and repair your own personal vehicles **INSIDE** your garage.



STORAGE of items such as metal,



lumber, appliances, & furniture in your yard is not allowed. Store unused furniture and appliances in your garage. PODS may stay in residential districts for 72 hours, when parked on a driveway.

TREES on private property are for the most part, a civil issue. Unless an eminent hazard (dead), City codes do not allow us to interfere. Call Community Revitalization if there is an easement obstruction-low overhead branches.



YARDS & LANDSCAPING In order to minimize fire and health risks, and to make the neighborhood more pleasant, Fresno has laws that require you to remove weeds and trim your lawn. Water and maintain your lawn and park strip area between the sidewalk and curb in front of your house.



WEEDS The accumulation of tall, dry grass on vacant lots is prohibited. Property owners are required to maintain their lots year round. Property owners are required to ensure all weeds that constitute a fire hazard are cleared from their property or that the land is turned with a disc. For further questions, or to file a complaint, call 621-8400.



YARD SALES / GARAGE SALES City residents may have up to two sales in any calendar year. They must conform to the following conditions: (1) each sale is limited to no longer than 72 hrs., (2) no items may be displayed in a public right-of-way, (3) all items sold must have been used and no longer needed by the occupant of the residence, and (4) no signs are to be posted on any public property.



Housing Issues—Substandard Housing and Hazardous Conditions

City Codes authorize the Division to evaluate dilapidated, fire damaged, or other severely distressed residential (or commercial) structures. It is Community Revitalization's primary responsibility to legally pursue renovation or demolition if the property owner fails to remedy the situation.

A housing code violation only makes a building "substandard" within the meaning of the Code when the violation is to such an extent that it endangers the life, limb, health, property, safety, or welfare of the public; or deals with Illegal additions, alterations, or work without permits.

The following are some examples of **LIFE, HEALTH, & SAFETY** issues:

Electrical Hot, open electrical components. Overloaded systems. Illegal additions. Alterations, or work without permits. Hazardous use of extension cords.

Plumbing Open waste lines. Potable water cross connections. Anti-siphon devices. Stopped up waste lines.

Mechanical Non-working heating and air conditioning units, or gas water heaters. Improperly installed gas supply systems.

Improper venting of fuel burning appliances. Illegal additions, alterations, and working without a permit.

Structural Roof structures sagging or failing. Walls leaning and/or deteriorating. Beams sagging or failing. Deteriorated and/or failing flooring member, floor joist, sub-floor under floor supports, or foundations.

Keep your roof, garage, fence, etc. in good repair and compatible with City codes.



Do's and Don'ts *continued*

- DO respond to any rodent or insect problems. If you are renting, inform your landlord of any such problems.
- DO park your car or truck on a paved driveway or paved parking area. Parking on the lawn or dirt is not allowed.
- DO make sure that boats, trailers, or RVs are stored in your side or back yard behind a five-foot fence.
- DO park non-working vehicles in a garage. Parking them in a driveway, front yard, or street is not allowed.
- DO dispose of old tires legally. Leave them with the tire dealer or call us at 621-8400 to arrange for an appointment to dispose of them at the City-operated tire disposal facility.
- DO keep the alley behind your home clean.
- DO store old furniture, washing machines, refrigerators in your

garage. Using your yard as a storage area is not allowed.

- DO remember that each resident is responsible for watering and maintaining the park strip area between the sidewalk and curb in front of their home.
- DO make sure, if you own a vacant lot in the City, that it is kept free of weeds, trash, and debris all year long. You may be charged if your lot is not maintained.
- DO make sure that fences are in good repair and are not over six feet high in the back yard or three feet high in the front.
- DON'T park large trucks at your home.
- DON'T keep chickens or other kinds of farm animals at your home.
- DON'T put out items for Operation Cleanup more than seven days before the scheduled pick up date. If you put discards out earlier, you may be asked to remove them from the street, and/or receive a citation.



COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION DIVISION
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3070
Fresno, CA 93721-3605

Phone: 559 - 621 - 8400

We're on the WEB !!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I report a complaint for something I think is wrong-like bug infestation? Call 621-8400 and you can talk to a representative from 9:00 to 4:00, or leave a message. You can also use our web based reporting form located on the City's website.
2. I have some tires I would like to dispose of; or someone has illegally dumped in my alley or street—what can be done? The City operates a waste tire facility where we will take your waste tires for a small fee. The dates and times for this are on an appointment basis and must be arranged in advance at 621-8400. The City also sponsors several "Waste Tire Amnesty Day" events.
3. What is considered a "Violation?" There are numerous items that can be a violation of the City of Fresno's Municipal Code. The most common are: rubbish/junk/debris, illegal vehicle and RV storage, tall dry grass/weeds, parking on lawns, illegally placed signs, lack of landscape maintenance, oversized vehicles, unfenced or green swimming pools, tarp/pole structures, and tarps attached to a building. For more information regarding these items you can visit our website.
4. Who do I contact for junk and debris, tall, dry grass, and weeds on a vacant lot? Contact us at 621-8400, or you can use our on-line reporting form on the City website.



5. Would someone from Community Revitalization come and talk about various code issues during a civic, church, or other type of forum? Most definitely! Call us at 621-8400.
6. There is a vendor selling items on the street in front of a school or a church, can they do this? It is illegal for vendors to set up a semi-permanent location on any street corner or median within the City. Call us at 621-8400.
7. In my neighborhood, there are several inoperable vehicles, what can be done? Inoperable vehicles on a vacant lot or residential property are a blight and often a hazard to the public. Call 621-8400 for assistance or use our on-line reporting form. Vehicles parked on City streets should be reported to the City's Streets Division at 621-1492.
8. Does the Community Revitalization Division handle issues located in the County? Code enforcement issues within the County should be reported to their office at 600-4550.
9. There is a house in our neighborhood that is vacant, has overgrown vegetation, and is UGLY. I think people are getting into the house because I have seen people hanging around at night. What can the City do? While it is not against the Fresno Municipal Code to have a vacant house; having one that is blighted is. Long term, vacant buildings often have overgrowth, deteriorating roofs, faded/chipped siding or paint, etc. It is best that we check out every reported vacant building regardless if it is open to the public or not. This way, we can determine if the property and house are blighted enough to address with our Vacant Building Ordinance. You may call our primary number at 621-8400 to report a suspected violation or visit our website.

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

CITY of FRESNO NUMBERS:

- City Information number: 621 - CITY (2489) After Hours: 621-1100
- Building Permits: 621-8084
- Business Tax: 621-6880
- City Council / Mayor: 621-8000
- Farm Animals (in residential areas): 621-8400
- Fire Department : 621-4000
- Garbage (Solid Waste Division): 621-1452
- Graffiti Hotline: 621-TAGS (621-8247)
- Housing & Community Development: 621-8300 for these City Programs: Homebuyer Assistance / Senior Paint / Lead Paint Issues / Rental Rehab
- Illegal Dumping Info: 621-8473
- Inoperable Vehicles ON PRIVATE PROPERTY: 621-8400
- Illegally Parked/Inoperable Vehicles ON CITY STREETS: 621-2085
- Operation Cleanup (Solid Waste

Division): 621-1452

- Police Department (Dispatch): 621-7000
- Public Nuisance Issues: 621-8400
- RDA (Redevelopment Agency): 498-1885
- Recycling Hotline: 621-1111
- Sewer Maintenance: 621-1496
- Smoke Detectors: 621-4153
- Streetlights / Sidewalks / Potholes / Tree Service (Street Maintenance Division): 621-1492
- Utility Billing: 621-6888
- Water Conservation: 621-5480
- Weed Removal-Vacant Lots: 621-8400

OTHER LOCAL NUMBERS:

- Adult Protective Services: 255-3383
- Animal Nuisance (SPCA): 233-7722
- Better Business Bureau : 222-8111

- CA Contractors Board: 800-321-2752
- CA Dept of Fair Employment & Housing: 800-884-1684
- CA Legal Services: 441-1611 OR 570-1200
- Centro la Familia: 237-2961
- Chamber of Commerce: 495-4800
- Child Protective Services: 255-8320
- Environmental Health: 445-3357
- Evictions: 1-888-498-FAIR (3247)
- Fair Housing: 244-2950
- Flood Control (Metro Flood Control District): 456-3292
- Fresno County Code Enforcement: 600-4550
- Health Department: 600-3229
- Household Hazardous Waste: 600-4259
- Housing Authority: - Section 8: 443-

- 8400 Rehab: 445-8905
- HUD: 487-5033
- Labor (Dept. of Labor-NLRB): 510-637-3300
- Mental Health: 453-4099
- Mosquito Abatement : 268-6565
- Poison Control: 445-1222
- Ponding Basins (Metro Flood Control): 456-3292
- Red Cross: 455-1000
- RENTSENSE (tenant/landlord disputes): 488-3500
- Senior Assistance/Info.: 453-4405
- Small Claims: 457-2174
- Small Business Administration (SBA): 587-5791
- Social Services (Adult and Family Intervention): 255-3383
- Tenant / Landlord Disputes: 570-1200
- United Way: 211