



Colorado Springs Police Department

Code Enforcement Unit



Mission Statement

Our mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the City residents by mitigating physical signs of urban blight and social disorder through the enforcement of the City Code of Colorado Springs.

The Code Enforcement Unit is responsible for the inspection of publicly and privately owned residential buildings to assure that they meet the Minimum Housing Standards for the City of Colorado Springs and to ensure safe and sanitary living conditions for all residents within the city limits.

Code Enforcement also ensures compliance of fifteen (15) additional codes:

Public Health and Sanitation - Noise Enforcement - Unlicensed/Inoperable Vehicles - Oversize vehicle parking and storage in residential zones - Recreational vehicle parking and storage in residential zones - Junk - Light Intrusion - Weeds - Litter - Graffiti - Obstruction of Public Ways - Maintenance of adjacent rights of way - Signs on public property or right of ways - Garage Sale sign regulations - Inspection and licensing of garbage/trash removal trucks

The City of Colorado Springs encourages neighbors to become community-minded and to join together in providing safe, attractive neighborhoods and sanitary living conditions for all citizens. Walk your neighborhood and meet your neighbors! Working together is the most effective program. The City invites residents to cooperate with one another in a "neighbor to neighbor" manner to resolve minor problems before contacting the Code Enforcement Unit (444-7891) for assistance.

Code Enforcement has to allow due process to occur when requiring abatement of violations. Upon verification that a violation exists, an officer may give a verbal warning to the occupant; issue a written notice and hang it on the door; or, send a letter of notification; all with a specific compliance date. Upon re-inspection, if the violation still exists, a notice and order is sent to the last known property owner; in addition, you may see a notice posted on the property, and again a compliance date is given. Continued non-compliance results in a contractor being hired to conduct the work, and the property owner is charged for that abatement plus a twenty-five per cent (25%) surcharge. Non-payment within thirty (30) days results in a lien placed on the property with the amount due with the property taxes.



WHAT IS THE PROPERTY OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY?

The owner is ultimately responsible for his own property. Many times we try and get the offender, which may be a tenant, to abate a violation. If unsuccessful, the owner is notified. Of sixteen

codes, ten have "contractor abatement" procedures attached. That is, after proper owner notification and violation/s still exist, we request bids from private contractors to abate the situation. The owner of the property receives a bill for that service of which the City has added a 25% surcharge. Failure to pay the bill results in a lien being filed on their property.

WHAT IS A "REPEAT VIOLATION" IS THERE A FEE?

A "**repeat violation**" is defined as any violation, of the same nature, which is verified within a six- month period.

There is also a "**repeat violation**" inspection fee. A repeat violation is charged to the property owner, \$100.00 for every scheduled inspection until abatement is achieved. The minimum amount of a repeat violation fee is \$200.00. This fee was approved and implemented by City Council in July 1997 and is effective in dealing with negligent owners and occupants. Some owners charge those fees back to the tenants. That option is between the property owner and tenant, the Code Enforcement Unit does not play a role.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE A SUMMARY OF CITY CODES ENFORCED BY THE CODE ENFORCEMENT UNIT

CLICK TO CONTINUE

To send a code enforcement violation complaint, **click here!** Please provide as much information as possible. Please read through the descriptions of the violations and then mark as many as are appropriate for your complaint.

[PRINT](#)

[CLOSE](#)

*****ALL PICTURED EXAMPLES ARE VIOLATIONS OF THE CITY CODE*******• RECREATIONAL/UTILITY VEHICLE STORAGE AND PARKING**

All recreational vehicles, utility trailers, boats and trailers, etc. must be stored/parked in the rear yard whenever possible. If the back is not accessible, they must be placed in the side yard or may be kept in the front if they are at least ten feet back from the inside of the sidewalk or city right of way. Example 1...Example 2...Example 3...

• NOISE ENFORCEMENT

Involves industrial, residential and commercial zones. Certain levels of decibels cannot be exceeded in certain zones. Investigation sometimes has to be conducted at night. Violators are notified to make the necessary corrections.

• OVERSIZED VEHICLE PARKING OR STORAGE

This code applies to vehicles over 10,001-lbs. gross vehicle weight rating. This type of vehicle can not be parked or stored in any zone except C-6 or M-1, M-2. This is applicable to dump trucks, semis, most tow trucks, "Snap On Tool" trucks, etc. Example 1...Example 2

• LIGHT INTRUSION

States that "all exterior lighting must be arranged to reflect away from any adjoining premises and any public right-of way, and it shall be shielded to contain all direct rays on the site."

• GARAGE SALE SIGN REGULATIONS

These signs may be placed on private property only. It is not permissible to place them on light poles, utility boxes, stop signs or any City property, including the right of way. (Garage sales are also restricted to two a year, not more than two consecutive days).

• SIGNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Garage sale signs lead into part of the litter code, signs on public property or right of ways, obstruction of public ways and maintenance of adjacent right of ways. Everyone has seen these types of signs littering the roadways. The code states, no temporary or "bandit" signs, as we call them, will be allowed anywhere in the city/public right of way without a Revocable Permit issued by the City Planning Department. Code Enforcement Officers or volunteers remove "Temporary" signs.

In March, 2003 City Council passed an ordinance allowing posting of temporary signs within the City/Public Rights of Way, without obtaining a Revocable Permit, and, such posting had to meet specific criteria; that code, in part, is below:

3.2.218: OBSTRUCTION ON PUBLIC WAYS PROHIBITED; REMOVAL:

1. It shall be unlawful for any person to place upon or construct upon any sidewalk, street, alley or other public way or upon any natural watercourse or improved drainway any sign or signpost except under the terms of a revocable permit as provided in this article. The Code Enforcement Administrator or a designated representative shall be authorized to remove and dispose of any unauthorized sign or signpost without notification to the owner. (1980 Code; Ord. 94-80; Ord. 98-184; Ord. 01-42)

2. Exceptions: The provision of subsection D of the Section shall not apply to any sign or signpost between the hours of 12:01 p.m. on Friday through 12:00 noon on Monday, provided that it is not placed upon any median, park property, utilities easement or pole, but is placed within the public right-of-way and meets the following minimum standards:

**The sign does not exceed six (6) square feet in area; The sign is not placed within the Downtown Core as defined in City Code § 7.4.406(I)(6); and
The sign is not placed in the right-of-way adjacent to any residentially zoned property.**

Example 1...Example 2...Example 3

• **RIGHT OF WAYS**

This code includes shrubs, trees, flowers and bushes that grow over sidewalks obstructing pedestrian traffic. Owners/occupants are ordered to trim back these different growths. If there is no compliance, it is turned over for contract abatement. If the offensive vegetation is within the actual city or public right of way, the complaint is referred to the Forestry Division of the Parks & Recreation Department. The Forestry Division removes the entire growth. Example 1... Example 2

• **WEED CODE**

The weed code includes grasses. It states that no weeds/grass can be over nine inches (9") tall and growing within fifty-five feet (55') of a building, creating a fire hazard; or along sidewalks/curbs/roadways to obstruct pedestrian traffic, on corners causing a traffic hazard or blocking the flow of water, i.e. drainage ditches. Owners/occupants are notified and if not abated, a contractor is scheduled to do the work and the owner is billed. Example 1... Example 2

Code Enforcement is also required by the State to enforce the "Noxious Weed Ordinance". The State has declared five weeds as "noxious" and must be controlled, as they are a great threat to the agriculture and livestock industry. The Noxious Weeds are: Diffuse, Spotted and Russian Knapweed, Leafy Spurge and Canada Thistle. The ordinance states that the weeds must be controlled on all public, private and government owned property. Examples...Diffuse...Spotted Knapweed...Russian Knapweed...Leafy Spurge...Canada Thistle

- **JUNK**

Applies to any manufactured good, appliance, fixture, furniture, machinery, vehicle, personal property or any other thing or part thereof, whether of value or valueless, that is demolished, discarded, dismantled, partially dismantled, dilapidated, or so worn, deteriorated or in such a condition as to be generally unusable and/or inoperable in its existing state. This shall include by the way of illustration only and without limitation, wood, used lumber, paper, glass, bottles, rags, rubber, scrap metal, tin cans, scrap material, waste, concrete, rubble, boxes, crates, building materials or machinery parts. If there is no compliance, contractor abatement is ordered after obtaining a Seizure Warrant signed by a Municipal Court Judge. *See "Seizure of Property"*. Example 1... Example 2

- **UNLICENSED/INOPERABLE VEHICLES**

Applies to vehicles on private property, anywhere on that property, be it front, side or rear. All vehicles must have a current license plate and be operable or removed from the property or stored within an enclosed building,

The one exception is a vehicle which is considered an antique (25 years or older), which if it is operable, it does not have to be licensed and it may be stored anywhere on the property. A person may have one "Collector" or "Parts" vehicle that is not operable, if it is screened from view from any adjacent street, alley or neighboring property.

If there is no compliance, a Seizure Warrant is obtained, signed by a Municipal Court Judge, and the vehicle is towed to the Colorado Springs Police Impound Lot. Example 1... Example 2

- **SEIZURE OF PROPERTY**

a) The inventory required by the Colorado Municipal Court Rules of Procedure (C.M.C.R.) shall state that with specificity all items removed from the property. Where necessary, due to the nature or volume of the items taken, a photograph of the seized property may be used to supplement the inventory.

b) Any motion for return of the listed items must be made within 20 days of execution of the warrant.

c) Any property seized shall be held for a period of 30 days. Should the owner of the property move the Court for return of the property, the property shall be held during the pendency of the motion. Failure of the property owner to timely file a motion for return of property shall result in the forfeiture of the property seized.

d) If the motion for return of property is denied, or should the owner fail to file a motion for return of property within 20 days of the execution of the warrant, the property may be disposed of by the City in any lawful manner.

- **PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION**

Inspection of trash removal trucks occurs on a yearly basis with fees paid to the City Clerk of a \$30.00 license

fee, \$50.00 per truck and a \$15.00 application fee. A sticker is placed on the inside left window.

Sanitation covers trash, garbage, rubbish, tree limbs, animal droppings, etc. Animal droppings must be removed every three days during warm weather with weekly removal during the winter. The Code Enforcement Officer has the discretion to order more frequent removal based on the size and number of animals.

Trash and garbage must be stored in watertight/weatherproof containers at the side or rear yard except for scheduled removal, which must be made at least weekly whether you hire a private contractor or haul it to the landfill or transfer station.

In 1997, an ordinance passed requiring multiple dwellings, that have dumpsters, build an enclosure; at least six feet high and on three sides. Individual trash totes may be used, one per unit. This ordinance is currently being applied to wherever there is a continual problem with overflowing/blowing trash. If there is no compliance, a contractor will build the enclosure and the owner will be billed for the work.

Again, the owner is ultimately responsible for his/her own property. This applies to vacant land or lots that have illegal dumping. Upon being unable to trace whom did the dumping, the owner is ordered to clean the property. Non-compliance results in contractor abatement. Example 1... Example 2

- **GRAFFITI**

On graffiti violations, a brochure is given to the property owner, it explains the violation and includes a permission slip to allow Workout, Ltd. to come out to the property and eradicate the graffiti. If the owner does not sign the permission slip and does not want to take care of it himself or herself, a Notice and Order is issued. Non-compliance results in contractor abatement. Example 1... Example 2

- **MINIMUM HOUSING CODE**

The Code Enforcement Unit provides enforcement of the Minimum Housing Code within the city limits of Colorado Springs. These are more common sense items, the way we would all like to live, and can be as simple as a leaky faucet or as serious as a collapsed ceiling due to a roof leak, raw sewage, no utilities or fire damage. There are approximately 25 items that we inspect which includes rodent or insect infestation. Dwellings with two or more units are the responsibility of the owner for all pest extermination. Single family residences, rental or not, become the occupant's responsibility for extermination, however on single residences we also inspect to order the filling of holes and/or cracks that may allow the entry of rodents.

A housing complaint can be taken over the phone. Upon notification from the occupant, the assigned officer will conduct an inspection of the property at a mutually scheduled time. Any noted violations, at the time of inspection, are referred to the property owner and/or property manager in the form of a Notice and Order requiring abatement of the housing violations within a specified time period. It is the officer's discretion on the amount of time allowed for compliance. It can range from two or three days for a plumbing/sewer leak to thirty days for less hazardous violations. Example 1... Example 2

- **RESIDENTIAL DWELLING FOUND TO HAVE UNSANITARY CONDITIONS INSIDE**

Unsanitary conditions on the inside of a residential property may cause a Code Enforcement Officer to placard the property as "Unlawful to Occupy". If the owner/occupant does not abate the conditions, they may be ordered to vacate the property. Example 1...Example 2...Example 3...

- **RESIDENTIAL DWELLING FOUND TO BE OPEN, VACANT AND SUBJECT TO VANDALISM**

Code Enforcement Officers placard the property as "Unlawful to Occupy". We can order a contractor to clean and board up a dwelling on an emergency basis if it is a health or safety hazard, and terminate all or part of utilities to ensure it will not be occupied until the minimum code is met. Example 1...Example 2...Example 3...Example 4...Example 5...Example 6

- **THE UNIT RESPONDS TO ALL RESIDENTIAL FIRES TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE FIT TO BE OCCUPIED AND PLACARD/CONDEMN IF NECESSARY AND MAY TERMINATE ALL OR PART OF THE UTILITIES.**

Properties can be condemned (Placard) if housing violations constitute a health or safety hazard, such as a roof leak, partial utilities or none at all, raw sewage or from numerous violations, which the owner has not abated, according to the Notice and Order that is sent. Example 1...Example 2...Example 3

RELATED LINKS

Keep Colorado Springs Beautiful

The American Association of Code Enforcement

REFERENCE NOTES¹

- There are eight Code Enforcement Officers that provide enforcement within the city limits of Colorado Springs. The officers work four ten-hour days, staggering Monday through Saturday. The officers are available in the office from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. or from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and can be reached at (719) 444-7891.
- An anonymous complaint can be filed over the phone (719) 444-7891 during office hours: Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Noise concerns involving loud stereos or disturbances should be reported to the non-emergency number of Police Dispatch at (719) 444-7000 at any time of day or night, any day of the week.
- Any questions regarding towing fees and/or storage of a vehicle at the Colorado Springs Police Impound Lot can be answered at 667-2777.
- The Colorado Springs Land Fill & Recycling Center is located at 13320 East Highway 94 and can be contacted at (719) 683-2600, regarding their hours of operation and fees.
- Graffiti complaints can be reported to Workout, Ltd. at (719) 634-5713.

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